

Preservation Wayne VIP News

June, 2003

Welcome to the third edition of the 2003 **VIP (Volunteers in Preservation)** Newsletter. This one is a little later than the 'usual lateness' of this newsletter, but late-breaking news and a few other things caused a bit of a delay.

VIP News this month

- **Note from the Board**
- **Thank you, Katherine (Note from the Editor)**
- **Remembering Pat Flarity**
- **Tour Updates**
- **Publicity Committee Update**
- **Outreach Committee Update**
- **Preservation Success Stories!!**
- **Calendar (Volunteer opportunities - you are always needed!!)**
- **Plaudits (and thank you to Michael Kuentz)**
- **Notes from the Editor**

Note from the Board

By now, you have received the **recent letter** or have heard about some changes at Preservation Wayne. These are very **challenging economic times** and these **changes were very difficult decisions to make**. At this time, we do not have all the answers or plans in place yet and we ask that you bear with us. We **will have more information out to you shortly**.

One of the most-often asked questions asked is about the **staffing of the office**. Today the plans are that retrieval of incoming **phone calls** will be Monday / Wednesday / Friday. A Board member will get back to the caller in 24 - 48 hours. The **office** will remain open on Saturday mornings during tour season. **(Volunteers are needed to help staff these Saturdays. Call PW at (313) 377-3559 if you can help.)**

Again, **more details will follow** on all of these changes.

The letter, which was sent to members on May 9, follows:

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Dear Member:

After much contemplation and discussion, the Board of Directors of Preservation Wayne have voted to discontinue the paid staff position for a period of time until we strengthen our financial position and restructure our operations. The Board, with volunteer assistance, will take on the operation of the office and all of the functions therein. We ask that you bear with us over this brief period as we build the systems necessary to move preservation in the Detroit area to new heights of adaptive reuse advocacy, neighborhood revitalization, cultural tourism and the vision of restoration economics fueling development throughout our unique urban core.

For well over twenty-six years, Preservation Wayne has been privileged to be the only historic preservation advocacy organization in Detroit with a paid staff position to direct its' goals and programs. We have weathered many economic downturns in the past by calling you for financial support and we are happy to say that you have come to our aid in every case. Over the past year our revenues have fallen off more than in any other time in our history. This situation has forced the Board of Directors to review our financial direction, consider a number of options and make some very hard decisions.

Yes, we could ask for additional support but the Board feels that we must first get our house in order. We will begin by implementing the strategic plan we developed two years ago. From there we will continue our partnering discussions with other preservation groups locally and statewide, insure continued sustainability of our tour programs, develop stronger committee structures, seek capacity building grants and build a stable financial base.

Thank you for your understanding and support.

Sincerely,

<signed>

Gwendolyn Esco Davis  
Interim Board President

<signed>

James A. Turner  
Past Board President

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Thank you, Katherine (Note from the Editor)

This is a note from one of our Tour Guides and volunteers, which is a brief overview, but very accurately describes our appreciation for the work that Katherine has done for PW. I am sure we all wish her well.

"I would like to request that your next PW newsletter contain a note of sincere thanks to

Katherine from all the Tour volunteers who worked with her over the past years:

- for her efforts in getting the weekly tour program off the ground
- for coaching us in presentation skills
- for assisting with research
- for filling in as last minute replacement guide when necessary
- a million other things

I'm sure we all wish her the best in any future endeavors....."

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## Remembering Pat Flarity

Preservation Wayne is **sorry to lose member and volunteer Pat Flarity**, who just joined the Eastern Market tour team this year. Pat passed away unexpectedly on April 14 at a 'much too young' age. Unfortunately, due to other reasons, she had not yet been able to participate on the tour. The Eastern Market team regrets not having met a woman who sounded like a very dynamic and full-of-life person who had so much to give. **Please keep Pat and her family and friends in your thoughts.**

## Tour Updates

- **Tour season started on May 3**, and each group was ready to go!! Several teams have been tweaking their tour routes, but things generally are falling in to place. **The 3rd year's the charm!!**
- **Welcome to new VIP Tim Quinn** who has joined the Auto Heritage tour. Glad to have you join us!!
- **Congratulations to the Midtown tour who had 10 walk-ins on their tour on May 10!!** That 'local advertising' really helps!!
- 15 people took the **Skyscraper tour on Tuesday, May 15**. People love that view from the top

of the Penobscot building!!

- On May 30, **Jim Turner and Bob Goldsmith** showed the Fisher Building to a big **group of 3rd graders** from Birmingham, and then gave them a bus tour that headed downtown and ended at Ford Field. Starting off our next generation of preservationists!!

- It was **one of the worst spring days, but 5 brave souls took the Downtown tour on May 31** in spite of cold and rainy weather. Good that you had a few places to duck into to warm up!!

- Bob Goldsmith would like to have some **shepherds and tour guide trainees for the Tuesday evening tours** - contact Bob for details – [Bobgoldsmi@aol.com](mailto:Bobgoldsmi@aol.com) . Or meet at the Pontch by 5:30 pm any Tuesday.

## Publicity Committee Update

**PW's Publicity Committee (mainly Bob Goldsmith and Bob Jocis)** sent out a mass mailing on April 14th. The publications that were targeted include the News, Free Press, Oakland Press, Macomb Daily, Metro Times, Real Detroit, the Monitor, the Renaissance Times, Royal Oak Daily Tribune, Observer & Eccentric Papers, News Herald Papers, Dearborn Press, some Gazette papers, HOUR Detroit, Michigan Living, and a few others.

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Updates from Bob Goldsmith:

Each of these publications received an "event listing" and a full set of "mini-articles" about the tours. There's one about each of the five Saturday am tours, and one about each of the five tours in the Tuesday after-work tour series. All of these mini-articles have a headline plus one paragraph about the tour.

The Publicity Committee also sent letters and brochures to various writers, along with a complimentary pass good for any of our Saturday or Tuesday tours. We invited them to take a tour and write a full-length article about that particular tour, or about the PW tour program.

The committee will try to monitor these papers regarding event listings, mini-articles, and full-length articles. (We can easily keep an eye on the Free Press, News, and Metro Times - but it would help if volunteers could let us know what is printed in some of the other papers around town. We'll be following up on all of this during the tour season.)

To send info or suggestions to the Committee, or if you have any questions, send an e-mail to Bob Goldsmith (Bobgoldsmi@aol.com). Thanks.

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**Thanks to Bob Goldsmith and Bob Jocis in getting our publicity organized and out in time for tour season** - they have done a lot of work on this. Unfortunately, the larger papers have not been proactive in including our events listing or have 'edited' it to be incorrect. The Publicity Committee will be following up on this.

But let Bob G. know if you see something in any of the local media - [Bobgoldsmi@aol.com](mailto:Bobgoldsmi@aol.com) .

We will post the calendar blurbs and mini-articles on the PW website. Feel free to use them to communicate that message to businesses, newsletters, etc. specific to your tour area. Also good is to use this information and our new brochure to communicate this information to any groups that you 'network' with or belong to. Let Bob G. know, so we don't duplicate efforts and we know how to follow up in the future. Thanks.

## Outreach Committee Update

The Outreach Committee is **new this year** and their **mission is to get more people on our tours, 'get the message out', and to positively promote the activities that are going on with Preservation Wayne and in Detroit.**

This committee was a 'spin-off activity' of the Publicity Committee and is in the very capable hands of **chair Norb Keller**. Norb wanted to 'connect' with the 100's of groups in the area that would have interest in our tours (historical societies, schools, corporations, others - but doing a 'person-to-person' connection). The **key members of the committee are Norb, Ellen Howell, Gene Fitzgerald, Gloria Mann, Emily Smith, and Cathy Woodward.**

The committee has done quite a lot of work already - everything from **informational sessions at Compuware** (as they are preparing to move downtown from the 'burbs) to **a Family Reunion Seminar at Cobo** and a **Women's Conference in S'field.**

**Contact Norb for more information** - they can use input, information and help! Norb is at (248) 855-9346 (leave a message and contact info if you get the machine.)

More news on the Outreach Committee activities in a future newsletter.

## Preservation Success Stories!!

- In the last **Preservation Works!** Members newsletter last year, the **Belle Isle stable building** was considered 'At Risk'. It has not been used since the early 1960's and the building has not been well maintained since. The city ordered it razed beginning on May 1. **This building was originally the Central Market at Cadillac Square and dates back to the early 1850's.** It was moved to Belle Isle when the Central Market moved to Eastern Market area in the 1890's. It is the oldest wooden open-air farmer's market building in the country and has some wonderful detailing. Very recently, Greenfield Village became interested in the building. The **current plans are to dismantle the building, put it into storage while fundraising efforts proceed, then reinstall it in its original form in Greenfield Village!!** More here [http://www.freep.com/money/business/build19\\_20030419.htm](http://www.freep.com/money/business/build19_20030419.htm)

- Jim Turner reports that there has been **\$250 million of restorative development in the Midtown district alone in the past 10 years. Shows you why this is 'the scene of hot new development'!!**

- The **Lafayette Towers Shopping Center** was scheduled to be razed, now will be refurbished and replaced by new shops, businesses, and residences. <http://www.detnews.com/2003/business/0305/14/c01-164177.htm> There will be a **public hearing on this effort on June 11 at 5:50 pm** at the city offices. Contact Sheila Bashini (Detroit Historic District Commission staff, phone 313-362-0194 for questions/info.) Lafayette Park is a wonderful area - the largest collection of noted architect Ludwig Mies van der Rohe's buildings in the world. And it is beautiful in the spring, with all of the flowering trees, shrubs, flowers, etc. Another Detroit treasure!!

## Calendar (Volunteer opportunities ~ you are always needed!!)

- June 7 - **Indian Village House and Garden Tour (10:00 am - 5:00 pm)**

The second oldest tour of its kind in Michigan (after the Marshall Michigan Home tour.)

**- June 12 - June 16 – T-Plex**

Celebrate the Ford Centennial at the home of the Model T!! T-Plex will be open from 10:00 am - 5:00 pm on these days for activities including tours, lectures, classic car displays, demonstrations, etc. **Docents/greeters/ticket-takers are needed. Most urgent need is on Saturday** when they expect 4 bus tour groups.

Contact [paul.sloan@gm.com](mailto:paul.sloan@gm.com) for information or to volunteer.

**- July 2-6 – the Comerica TasteFest in New Center.** PW will have a table, and volunteers are needed to staff it. Times are noon to 3:30 and 3:30 – 7. **Contact the office at (313) 577-3559 or send a mail to [preswayne@aol.com](mailto:preswayne@aol.com) to help.** This is always a fun event.

**- August 2 - Theater tour training**

PW will be continuing the ever-popular Theatre tour in August. This is a huge undertaking, always lots of fun, and a great way to show off a unique era in Detroit. Plans are being made for the tour, expect more information soon, but **save the date!! If you are planning to volunteer as a guide or support staff, please contact the office at (313) 577-3559 or send an email to [preswayne@aol.com](mailto:preswayne@aol.com) with the subject line stating 'Theatre tour volunteer' and indicate your area of interest.**

**- August 16 - Theatre tour**

Volunteers are needed as walking guides, shepherds, on-site guides, reception/registration, and setup/cleanup. **If you are planning to volunteer as a guide or support staff, please contact the office at (313) 577-3559 or send an email to [preswayne@aol.com](mailto:preswayne@aol.com) with the subject line stating 'Theatre tour volunteer' and indicate your area of interest.**

**- Ongoing - PW office help on Saturdays**

Volunteers are needed to help in the PW office on the Saturday tour days from 8:45 am - 1:00 pm through September 27. Duties include answering the phone, distributing tour supply bags, etc. If you can help, please **send an email to [preswayne@aol.com](mailto:preswayne@aol.com) and state on the subject line "Volunteer Help for PW" or call the office at (313) 577-3559.** It's a great way to participate in all of the tours without all of the walking!!

**- Ongoing – PW office help during the week**

Over time, we will need office help on weekdays – everything from doing an office inventory, to mailings, to clean-up, etc. If you are available, please **send an email message to [preswayne@aol.com](mailto:preswayne@aol.com) and state on the subject line "Volunteer Help for PW" or call the office at (313) 577-3559.**

**Watch for news on these NEW EVENTS in the future!!** Contact PW if you are interested and can help.

**- The next Loft Forum is scheduled in October** (probably the week of the 20<sup>th</sup>, depending on location availability.) VIP's are needed to help plan this event. As you all know, loft development is a very 'hot thing' in the revitalization of the city, and PW has been a key player in getting the awareness out and promoting this activity over the past few years with the Loft Forums.

**- A new Music/Heritage series – currently called "Fine Music Fine Places" – the first event tentatively planned for November.** Stay tuned for details!!

This calendar will be maintained in the future off of the PW web page. Contact Susan Ebbert [sus\\_chick@yahoo.com](mailto:sus_chick@yahoo.com) with any updates. She will be maintaining the website weekly.

(I will include a copy of the calendar for the people who request mail copies of the newsletter.)

## Plaudits (and thanks to Michael Kuentz)

I hope that you have seen **our wonderful new PW Detroit Heritage Tours brochure** about our weekly walking tours by now. The new brochure was mentioned in the last newsletter, but I didn't mention the work that Michael Kuentz provided. Michael was very instrumental in getting the artistic things set up for the brochure - as well as dealing with the many differing opinions from the committee members. But through all of that, we managed to get something out in time for tour season - yay!! We've gotten **lots of positive comments** on the new brochure. **Thanks, Michael!!**

(When he's not creating brochures, Michael is a guide on the Auto Heritage Tour.)  
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Another Thank You (for the Eastern Market Tour on May 10) from Mary Lou

"Saturday at the Market was great! You all certainly know your history. The experience was thoroughly enjoyed by all.

Thanks again."

(As a note, this was guide Susan Ebbert's first tour - **great job, Susan!!**)
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Please pass along any 'thank you' notes you get for your tours. We'd love to share them!!

## Notes from the Editor

Future VIP newsletters will be posted on the PW website and a reminder notice will go out to the distribution list. We can do better editing, pictures, etc., on the web rather than mail.

**Thank you to all of the contributors to this newsletter** - Bob Goldsmith, Norb Keller (and his contacts), Sandy Novacek, Ken Siver, Emily Smith, Katie Stone, insight from Susan Ebbert, and the input from Board members Gwendolyn Esco Davis, Karen Nagher, and Jim Turner.

Stay tuned for the next VIP newsletter in July, when we'll have more information on the Theater tour and possibly some early news on the Festival of the Arts activities!!

**Happy touring!!**