



THE FLIGHT OF THE PHOENIX

The Newsletter of the McNeill Street Pumping Station Preservation Society

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Spring 2016

Party Time!

Support from the members of the McNeill Street Pumping Station Preservation Society both financially and as volunteers has been crucial to accomplishing historic site preservation and enhancing the operation of the museum. But we need more friends!

Over and over we get visitors who come in and say "I've lived here forever and never knew this cool place was here." So, the governing board of the SWWM has decided to have a "Friend Raiser" to try and generate some publicity and hopefully draw in more people who will take an interest and will want to be members of the Preservation Society.

The board's idea lady Liz Swaine suggested capitalizing on the current popularity of food trucks by setting up a "food truck mall" in the museum parking lot for lunch, then adding live music, museum tours, and whatever else we can think of to create a fun day at the museum. While we're at it, we'll try to make a little money on the side with a small silent auction, souvenir sales, and solicitation of sponsors (and a donation box, of course).

May is national "Celebrate History Month" and the Food Trucks At The Museum event will be on Saturday, May 7, from 11a until 3p to enable visitors to celebrate history at Shreveport's own amazing National Historic Landmark. There is no admission charge, and you can keep up with the latest news using the museum's web site News page, or by searching Facebook for Food Trucks At The Museum, or by typing in this link: www.facebook.com/events/661084050698724/.

Many of our readers are "friends" already, but old friends are the best ones, so come on out and have fun at the party, and pass the word to your friends to come out and enjoy the day, too!

Preservation Society to Receive Grant

The Preservation Society recently received some great news from the Union Pacific Foundation advising that our grant application for money to work on

repointing mortar in the filter wing of the pumphouse has been approved. We'll be receiving \$10,000 in June. Union Pacific's letter says that they "have a long-standing commitment to improving the quality of life in the communities they serve and have the goal that UP employees will take pride in their company's civic leadership and appreciate UP as an excellent corporate citizen." Mission accomplished on this grant!



East end of filter wing of pumphouse

Repairing the mortar in the entire filter wing will cost quite a bit more than this, possibly as much as \$105,000, so we will be trying to gather additional funding to put with the grant to get started and do as much as we can. We've received some generous donations in recent months that the board can use where needed, and we'll earmark these toward the mortar and look for more outside money as well.

When the filter wing repointing eventually gets finished, that will complete the work on all the exterior spots that need work right now. We've only been working on the outside so far, which is the most important, but the mortar is crumbling on many of the inside



Wall needing new mortar. Looks even worse than this in some places.

wall surfaces, too, so we'll be plugging away on re-pointing for a while yet.

In some related additional good news, a Red River Valley Railroad Historical Society's also received a \$10,000 grant award from Union Pacific. They plan to use their money to work on expanding the railroad museum on the property next to North Common Street, as has been described in previous newsletters. Discussions between the City and RRVRHS about acquiring the property have begun to lurch forward recently, so hopefully that will fall into place soon.

Give For Good

The Community Foundation of North Louisiana is once again conducting a donate-a-thon fundraising campaign for the benefit of local nonprofit organizations. During the 24 hours of May 3, donors are invited to contribute to the charity of their choice via a special web site called Give For Good. After the day is over, the Community Foundation will distribute the amount received for each charity to that charity plus a share of a bonus Lagniappe Fund contributed by event sponsors. The Lagniappe Fund will be distributed as a pro rata percentage based on a given charity's receipts as a percentage of total receipts. The Lagniappe Fund is still growing, but is over \$100,000. In years past, Give For Good has brought in between \$1 million and \$2 million for the nonprofits that registered to participate.

So, here is a chance to give your donation to the McNeill Street Pumping Station Preservation Society (that's the name to look for online) a small boost, as well as have a little fun with the telethon atmosphere of the event. You can follow the day's progress online, and smartphone users can download an app (will be available in the app stores soon) that will make it a bit quicker to donate and let you follow along like that. The Give For Good website to use is www.giveforgoodnla.org, and you can check on the News page of the museum's web site (www.shreveportwaterworks.org) for further updates as the time draws closer. Donations can be made online only on Tuesday, May 3 midnight to midnight.

More State Money Woes

Those of our readers who live in Louisiana have surely been bombarded in the media news about the State's latest budget crisis. The Legislature was called into special session by newly elected Governor John

Edwards to devise a plan to plug a large shortfall in the current fiscal year budget. The plan that is taking shape involves a mix of higher taxes and expense cuts that are still shifting as we go to press. We hear warnings that museums in general could take such a big hit that some or all would be closed, but nothing is known or certain at the moment. For the SWWM, there could be anything from no impact, to a cutback, to a closure.

There is an even bigger budget deficit for the upcoming 2016-2017 fiscal year that must be addressed, which is very likely to require yet another special session of the Legislature. So, uncertainty about State support of the Shreveport Water Works Museum will be continuing and makes clear why we need the fundraising effort mentioned in another article.

A Setback

In the last issue of the newsletter we reported that the Preservation Society had decided to launch a first-ever major fundraising effort. This will be an effort to provide some financial stability in support of preservation of the site and operation of the museum that has been lacking from the State. Unfortunately, the experienced fundraiser who offered to lead the work for the Preservation Society has felt it necessary to resign because another charity that his family founded and supported for years is in the midst of a financial crisis of its own, and he has been called on to help sort this out. So, we are once again casting about looking for a great candidate to lead the effort for us.

AMAZON SMILE

Here's a way that all of you who shop Amazon can give the SWWM a little financial boost: use www.smile.amazon.com. If you go there, register, and select McNeill Street Pumping Station Preservation Society as your preferred charity (follow the directions to search for it), then Amazon will donate 0.5% of your purchase amount to the Preservation Society. It doesn't cost you anything extra and once you register, from then on when you do your shopping using Smile on Amazon just like always, the little bonus comes this way. When you get to checkout, there will be a "thank you" for using Smile. The Amazon site has more information to answer any questions you may have. Thanks in advance to all the online shoppers out there for your help!

Special Gifts

The McNeill Street Pumping Station Preservation Society has received a donation from the Nuttall family in memory of husband and father Jim Nuttall. Jim, of course, was a stellar volunteer for many years at the Pumping Station who is still greatly missed around the pumphouse. Thank you very much to the Nuttall's for this generous and thoughtful way to remember a special person.

As a bit of a footnote, Jim was a multi-talented guy, and one of his hobbies was playing the ukulele, which he did with a band called the Strumdingers, now known as Ukulele Gumbo. If all goes as planned, Ukulele Gumbo will be playing for the crowd at Food Trucks At The Museum on May 7. So, come on out and enjoy the show!

Board Directors Reelected

The McNeill Street Pumping Station Preservation Society's annual meeting on February 1 reelected Marilyn Joiner, Conway Link, and Paul Williams to a new 3-year term on the board. All of these directors have been serving for quite a few years, and Conway is a charter member of the very first board of directors. Other directors continuing on with their terms of office are Jeff Little, Jim Van Hook, James Mohr, and George Bakowski. The Board of Directors then elected its officers for the upcoming year by seating Conway Link – president, Marilyn Joiner – vice president, Jeff Little – secretary, Paul Williams – treasurer, and Dale Ward - executive director. On behalf of the members of the Preservation Society, thank you very much to all these public spirited individuals for their willingness to donate their scarce time for a great project.



L-R: George Bakowski, Jeff Little, Paul Williams, James Mohr, Conway Link, Marilyn Joiner, Jim Van Hook, Dale Ward

WEB SITE UPDATE

The new web site for the museum and Preservation Society is up and seems to have been well received by those who have returned comments.

There are several new features, and the improved ability to send in an email or schedule a group tour is one that has gotten a good bit of use already. Another handy new feature is the “News” page that we’ve been using to post the latest activities, although you may be noticing that some of this newsletter’s “news” has been preempted by the web site! Depending on your computer’s browser, you could have to click the “refresh” button to get the latest update. It’s now possible to donate online, sign up for a Preservation Society Membership, or order a book or t-shirt. We also have a new web address that you can use: www.shreveportwaterworks.org. The old address still works, too, and they both access the same thing.

Visitors

Winter is typically a pretty slow time around the museum, but this season there were a number of groups who came out for tours and sometimes a party in our rental space. Since the last newsletter edition, we’ve been pleased to welcome Youree Drive Middle School, a “Willie Wonka” baby shower (love that chocolate!), special education classes



Judge with a project at home school science fair

from Airline and Bossier High Schools, the local home school association's science fair, Leadership Shreveport from the Chamber of Commerce, the Steadman wedding reception, a lively and

inquisitive pack of Cub Scouts, and a hardworking group from Global Strike Command. Come again everyone!



Capability Assessment Division, AF Global Strike Command

McNeill Street Pumping Station Preservation Society
P.O. Box 957
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You Can Help.....Make A Donation!

The Preservation Society needs money for restoration and operation of the museum. Your donation can be put to good use!

Name _____

email _____
(If you provide your email address, we can send you occasional updates on activities)

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Mail to MSPSPS, P.O. Box 957, Shreveport, LA 71157. Checks payable to MSPSPS.