



THE FLIGHT OF THE PHOENIX

The Newsletter of the McNeill Street Pumping Station Preservation Society

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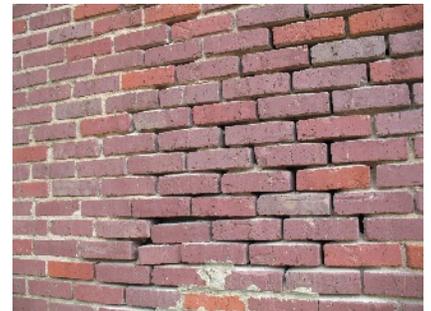
Spring 2017

Lookin' Good Again

Regular readers of our newsletter know that a high priority item on the wish list of restoration work at the Pumping Station has been to repair ("repoint") the mortar that is crumbling out of the brick walls in the oldest parts of the building. The exterior is most important to stop water penetration, and a project in 2013 repointed the parts of the south pumphouse wall that needed repair. This work was funded mostly by the Community Foundation with additional support from the state and the Franks Foundation.

There is some fresh good news. A project to repoint the east and north exterior walls of the building, which houses the indoor filters, has been completed. These walls weren't as uniformly bad as the site of the original work on the south wall, but they were plenty bad, as you can see from the photographs. The Preservation Society paid for the work mostly with grants from the Union Pacific Foundation (THANK YOU Union Pacific!) plus gifts from individual donors. Bossier Remodeling Company was hired to work on the project, and as you might guess, this was not a typical job for them. But, Bossier's Dean Smith had just the man in their roster of subcontractors and brought in brick mason

Wayne Smith who IS an experienced restorer. There will be some more work needed on the outside one of these days as time passes, but for now the exterior is sound and in no danger of falling down. The inside is another story though, and in the future you'll hopefully be hearing about projects to do yet more repointing inside the building.



"Before"



"After"



View of north wall of filter wing

Give For Good

Remember Give For Good? Friends of Shreveport Water Works Museum certainly should because this brought in about \$8,000 in 2017!

Give For Good is a yearly fundraising "donate-a-thon" sponsored by the Community Foundation which is in the format of a 24-hour online giving campaign that is available to all nonprofits in this area who wish to participate. The Community Foundation provides a special website, does all the bookkeeping, does a lot of advertising, kicks some extra money into the pot to be divided up amongst the participants, and does it all for free. Last year there were 173 nonprofits (wow!) who took part and that received \$1.66 million in gifts (another wow!) and that shared in another \$231,000 from the Lagniappe Fund.

Donations are accepted online only with a credit card, and there is a small fee (about 4%) associated with the processing system. The website to



use is www.giveforgoodnla.org, but you'll have to wait for it to go live on the big day MAY 1, 2018 (mark your calendar). Search for McNeill Street Pumping Station Preservation Society and follow the directions to read about us and make a donation. As the time draws closer, we'll have updates on our website (www.shreveportwaterworks.org) and Facebook.

There will also be a new feature this year. To help out anyone who would like to have more information about SWWM, or any of the other charities, and also provide a way to donate on the spot, the Community Foundation will host a Give For Good Fair from 11a to 6p at the Whole Foods Market in south Shreveport. We'll have an information table and there will be a "checkout" station where donors can get help with making a donation before they leave if they wish. To add to the atmosphere, there will be music, snacks in the café, and a KTBS live shot.

Remember: Tuesday, May 1.

Happy Birthday

Shreveport's first water works will be 131 years old in 2018, so don't you think it's about time for a birthday party?

Put Saturday, May 5 on your calendar to come wish the Pumping Station a Happy Birthday! Party details are still being worked out, but there will be fun, food, and games for sure. The Downtown Development Authority's annual Hidden History tour will include the site on that day, and the food trucks will be invited back to be sure there are plenty of yummy things to eat. A silent auction is always popular, so we'll probably try to collect some good stuff for that if we can. There will be emails, web site updates (www.shreveportwaterworks.org), and Facebook updates as plans are developed. Don't miss the fun!



Special Gifts

Peggy and Rory Wisner have made a donation to the McNeill Street Pumping Station Preservation Society in honor of Jim Nuttall, Peggy's father. It has been a while since we've shared Jim's story at the Water Works, so maybe newcomers would appreciate a "behind the scenes" recap.

Jim passed away in 2011, and it would be difficult to find anyone more dedicated or enthusiastic about the preservation of the Pumping Station than he was. He was on hand as a visitor in 1980 to witness that last steam powered run of the steam pumps, and for the next 31 years rarely missed an opportunity to come out and help at McNeill, whether it was a work day to sweep cobwebs or to restore engines. Then, in 2005-2008 he was a member of the "rim drive" team for the No. 3 Worthington high service pump that designed and built the system that put it into motion again. Jim still wasn't done, though, as he followed this up by coming out one day nearly every week to continue other engine restoration projects. Notably also, Jim was an early advocate for launching the masonry restoration work to protect the building that is described in another story.

So, Jim left an enduring legacy at the Shreveport Water Works that is still very much visible today.



Election Returns

The annual meeting of Preservation Society members took place on February 12 with the principal business being the election of directors to the board to fill the seats of George Bakowski, James Mohr, James Van Hook, and Nettie Brown whose terms were expiring. James Mohr has been a valued member of the board for many years, and in addition to offering his general guidance on the affairs of the Preservation Society, he has on numerous occasions been of service through his profession as a civil engineer. Sadly, James felt it was time to move on and let someone else enjoy the job (boo!) and declined to be renominated. Bakowski, Van Hook, and Brown were renominated, and also nominated was David Kunz. David had served on the Shreveport Water Works Museum Governing Board appointed by the Secretary of State before that group was dissolved last year, so he is already something of a veteran of managing the affairs of the museum. David is also a civil engineer like Mr. Mohr, which seems like a handy specialty at a National Civil Engineering Historic Landmark! All four nominees were elected by acclamation by the membership.

Continuing to serve their terms as directors are Conway Link, Paul Williams, Marilyn Joiner, Jeff Little, Liz Swaine, Stacy Brown, and Jeff Cornelius. Thank you very much to all these public spirited individuals for so generously offering their time and talent to making sure that the community's historic crown jewel is cared for and open for the public to visit as the Shreveport Water Works Museum.

Following the board election, the board selected its officers for the upcoming year. Conway Link was named President, Marilyn Joiner Vice President, Liz Swaine Secretary, Paul Williams Treasurer, and Dale Ward Executive Director.

Russell Pedro

We are saddened to report that Russell Pedro, one of Shreveport Water Works Museum's hardest working friends, has passed away recently. Russell was on the Governing Board of Shreveport Water Works Museum before the state museum dissolved and was currently serving on the board of McNeill Street Preservation Society.



Russell's first love was anything and everything to do with railroads. He was an avid and skilled model railroad builder as well as a railroad photographer with a huge collection of pictures and slides.

Russell was the driving force behind getting the Shreveport Railroad Museum installed at SWWM after years of false starts at other prospective locations. This effort began in 2009 when the SWWM offered the Red River Valley Railroad Historical Society the use of the vacant control building formerly used to operate the outdoor filters at the McNeill water works. The building itself was structurally sound, but the interior was a mess and needed a lot of remodeling to be suitable for museum exhibits. This was right down Russell's alley,

as he had built houses professionally for years. He gathered a group of volunteers from the railroad society membership that "got 'er done" with his leadership and hands-on hard work. Everyone was proud indeed when the "open" sign was put out for the first time in 2012.

Russell also called on mostly the same cadre of volunteers to tackle another project in 2013 to remodel the old ozone room into a nice 1500 square foot meeting space that has been a great addition to the facilities available at SWWM. We've had everything from parties to science fairs in the spot since then, and the ability to host activities like these has been a huge benefit to the museum.

Russell will surely be with us in spirit as we continue his work to make the Shreveport Water Works Museum a great place to visit and enjoy the Railroad Museum's story of Shreveport's railroading history. Thank you Russell Pedro.



Interior of Railroad Museum

ARTISTS AT WORK

Critical Mass is an annual, Open Invitational Exhibition and Critic Series that is designed to advance professionalism in the arts in Northwest Louisiana through a system of formal critique by nationally recognized critics. Each critic reviews visual and literary art and names a "Best of Show" winner in each category. This year's exhibition has drawn over 150 entrants, and our own Maria Schmelz has captured an "honorable mention" award for her black-and-white photo of a Shreveport Water Works Museum scene. If you get the chance, you can go see for yourself at the exhibit, which is open through May 5 at Artspace, 710 Texas downtown.



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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 71163. Checks payable to MSPSPS.