

The Progress Fund

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GROUNDBREAKING PLANNED FOR NEW VISITOR CENTER AT KENTUCK KNOB

A ceremony is planned to celebrate breaking ground for construction of a new visitor center at Frank Lloyd Wright's house on Kentuck Knob. The event takes place on November 6 at 10:30 a.m. at the site of the new visitor center adjacent to Kentuck Knob on Kentuck Road in Chalk Hill, PA. Pittsburgh architect Arthur Lubetz, of Arthur Lubetz Associates Architects PC, designed the facility, which will accommodate the thousands of visitors to the popular Frank Lloyd Wright-designed mountain home. Financing for the project is being provided jointly by The Progress Fund, an outgrowth of Congressman Murtha's federal Southwestern Pennsylvania Heritage Preservation Commission, Fay-Penn Economic Development Council and PNC Bank.

More than 100,000 people have toured Kentuck Knob since it was opened to the public in 1996. Recently designated a National Historic Landmark, Kentuck Knob is owned by Peter Palumbo, a London based real estate developer, collector and patron of the arts. Lord Palumbo purchased the estate from original owners I.N. and Bernardine Hagan of Uniontown, PA who commissioned Wright to design their home in 1953. Plans for a much needed visitor center had been under

consideration for some time, becoming a reality with the acquisition of 20 acres of land adjacent to the existing property last fall.

Hosting the groundbreaking ceremony are Lord Palumbo and Kentuck Knob Director Susan Waggoner. The program will include remarks by Fay-Penn Economic Development Counsel president Robert Eberly, David Kahley, President of the Progress

Fund, and Annie Urban, Executive Director of the Laurel Highlands Visitors Bureau. Architect Arthur Lubetz will interpret his plans for the extraordinary 2000 square foot building, a green and sustainable structure which rises out of the ground beneath a wedge of earth.

“The entire Kentuck Knob staff is thrilled at the prospect of improved visitor amenities,” states Director Susan Waggoner. “Every visitor to Kentuck Knob is inspired by the architecture, enchanted by the exquisite setting and enthralled by the art and artifacts,” Waggoner maintains. “We need amenities such as proper rest rooms, convenient parking and exciting retail space that are consistent with the richness of our site.” Mr. Kahley, whose Progress Fund has loaned over \$1,650,000 in the last three years to travel and tourism enterprises, recognizes the contribution of Kentuck Knob to the development of tourism in southwestern Pennsylvania. “Kentuck Knob is a nationally significant work of America’s greatest architect.” states Kahley. “We are pleased to be helping to finance this project.”

Located 7 miles from Wright’s masterpiece Fallingwater, Kentuck Knob will remain open to the public throughout construction, which should be completed by spring of 2001. Information about Kentuck Knob can be obtained by calling 724 329-1901 or on the web at www.kentuckknob.com.