

KENWORTHY APPRECIATION DAY REMARKS

It is a great pleasure on this beautiful day in this gorgeous park that is the product of the creativity of the City of Moscow and the Paradise Path Task Force to honor a person and a family who have contributed to the fabric of Moscow to make our town an urban and urbane place. Of all of the private developers of Moscow, perhaps no one single force has 'found' so many interesting properties to enhance the sense of place that we enjoy than Bethine Kenworthy and her family.

Bethine Kenworthy got started by helping her father in law, Milburn Kenworthy, with projects. He came to Moscow in 1917 and bought a theater close to Third and Washington on the north side of Third Street.

The family bought the property for the Kenworthy Theater, remodeled it and opened in 1925. It continued as a movie theater until 2000. At that time, the family donated Kenworthy theater to Kenworthy Performing Arts Center.

Beth found a home for Bookpeople, Ivar Nelson's original project in 1974. Ivar Nelson called, talked with her about the possibility, and she thought it was a good idea. She remodeled the space for them. Hayden Ross was upstairs... then a doctor and eventually an apartment. Café Libre was another 'found' opportunity in the former stage behind the theater and operated as a café and gathering place from 1979-85. The backstage area became Kenworthy Enterprises offices in 1987 where they are today with the round brick edged window on the alley. The attractive brick alley was Beth's idea and done in cooperation with the City of Moscow when the City had to improve the pavement in the alley. In 2000, Bookpeople moved across Main Street to its new quarters and change happened again, remodel one more time.

In the late 1960s, what is now Kenworthy Plaza was the Ford agency. When they moved from Washington between Second and First Streets to the Troy Highway, the Kenworthys acquired the property. They razed the leftover building, leaving only the western wall. Pritchard and Blanton did the design.

Why the breezeway? Beth knew Moscow's weather and thought that some invitation to the public for protection and a pleasant place to walk was a great idea. Parking was an essential element as was ground floor access. Beth knew Smart Growth before it was smart! Her take on it was this:

"I could live within this block... my travel agent, doctor, accountant, lawyer if necessary... flower shop, dentist, Short's across the street."

Sixth Street saw the mark of the Kenworthy creativity. In 1974, the property at 6th and Main was acquired and remodeled for Travel by Thompson, Budget Tapes and Records, later a deli and then the entire building was the travel agency. Change arrived again and the travel agency left. With only a month vacancy, came Nectar. Apprenticed at Luna in Spokane, Nickie Woodland would be the chef and her husband, Brett Woodland who had operated a wine store, named outstanding place in Portland, would see to the sommelier duties. The 8 feet of concrete out front was perfect for some urban patio dining.

Further down Sixth Street, close to the University they bought the building that was Garrett Freightlines in 1976... an industrial use on 6th Street, right in the middle of downtown and the university area. The building was horrible... They thought about building a motel/restaurant...but the study didn't pencil out for motel; In 1976, PW Hoseapple's was born and in 1987, when the restaurant left, it was remodeled into office spaces, as Plaza West.

Then there is the area down by the railroad tracks on Sixth. The City wanted 7 more feet for development at 6th and Main. In a trade with the City, the Kenworthys acquired 50' frontage on 6th Street and an oddly shaped lot that is part of the little commercial buzz at the west end of Sixth before reaching Ghormley Park and the University. They are also the developers of some nice student apartments across from Hoseapples.

All of these developments have had an emphasis on landscaping and pedestrian access.

Not all of the Kenworthys' great ideas involve their own property. Pritchard Gallery downtown was Judd Kenworthy's idea...suggested to Architecture Department. With Beth and Judd's help, they pursued it and got the first gallery location. It was a coup for downtown, one of the best things that has happened to downtown Moscow.

A new generation of Kenworthy's, son Brian and daughter Kimberly, are coming into the business. They have been trained well. Beth and Judd made them plant plants, water and all those fun things as their projects took shape.

We honor the Kenworthys and especially Beth Kenworthy, for all of the creativity that they have showered on Moscow, giving us a sense of place like no other. We look forward to many more 'found spaces' that will make Moscow a unique, walkable, inviting and productive place to live, work and play, with the help and support of Beth Kenworthy and her family.