

# Ground broken for new Wick-Pollock Inn

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Area dignitaries, businessmen and University personnel gathered Tuesday morning for the groundbreaking ceremony marking the start of renovation and construction that will turn the Pollock House into a full-service inn and conference center.

YSU authorized the Pollock Inn Restoration Associates (PIRA) to undertake the refurbishing project under a 40-year lease. Completion of the 80-room, \$4.4 million Wick-Pollock Inn is scheduled for late summer of 1987.

State Sen. Harry Meshel (D-33), Mayor Patrick Ungaro, and Paul Dutton, chairman of the YSU Board of Trustees, joined representatives of Congressman James Traficant, Jr. (D-17) and Governor Richard Celeste to offer words of congratulations and to participate in the traditional turning of the first earth.

Master of Ceremonies for the groundbreaking was C. Robert Buchanan, spokesman and general partner of PIRA, who told the crowd he was a "firm believer in the future of Youngstown." Three other partners in the firm, Paul J. Ricciuti, Randall J. Watson and Gary G. Balog, were also present for the event.

Sen. Meshel remarked he "once taught classes in

the Pollock House rooms" and that he is "proud of the small role" he, Rep. Gerberry and Rep. Vukovich had to play in the Wick-Pollock Inn project.

Mayor Ungaro praised the "private developers of Youngstown" and said how much he "appreciates their confidence" in this venture. "This [Pollock Inn] is a good thing happening in Youngstown — and good things perpetuate other good things," he said.

YSU Board of Trustees Chairman, Atty. Paul Dutton, said that the Wick-Pollock Inn "offers the University the opportunity to preserve old Youngstown while it enables us to build something for current use."

Dutton also praised the support of Sen. Meshel and said that the Inn will "help to build and revitalize our community."

Governor Richard Celeste was represented at the ceremony by Dan Shield, director of Public Works, who said that the Celeste administration "sees Youngstown and YSU working in the right direction."

Congressman Traficant representative Henry DiBlazio, congratulated the PIRA partners on their "courage and initiative that it took to put a project like this together," and added, "this whole area will prosper by ventures such as this."

PIRA partner Paul Ricciuti explained that the lease for the Inn took 4-5 months to arrange because such a lease between a private organization and YSU had "never been done before."

Buchanan said refurbishing of Pollock House will start immediately. In addition to some 10,000 square feet of space in the mansion, PIRA will build a connecting addition with 43,000 square feet which will be of the same Queen Anne-style architecture.

"The Wick-Pollock Inn will provide an attractive, centrally located public lodging and social center for visitors and business people, and offer a center for conferences and workshops," Buchanan said.

Pollock House itself will contain 15 guest rooms, two dining rooms and a period-style bar and lounge. The addition will include 16 suites, 49 rooms, a ballroom seating 300, five meeting rooms, a kitchen and administrative offices.

Ricciuti assured the crowd that the Pollock gardens in the rear — the last surviving formal garden in the area — would be restored.

The construction of the Inn is expected to create 100 full time jobs and will return the mansion and its 2.5 acres of grounds to city tax rolls.

But along with that, "the Inn will fulfill the needs of this community's finest institutions," Sen. Meshel said.



GEORGE NELSON/THE JAMBAR

Shovel: Ground was broken for the Wick-Pollock Inn.