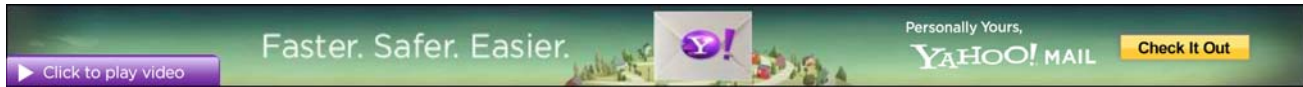


YAHOO! NEWS



Esther Gordy Edwards, founder of Motown Museum, dead at 91

 **REUTERS** By James Kelleher | Reuters – Thu, Aug 25, 2011

DETROIT (Reuters) - Esther Gordy Edwards, the sister of Motown Records founder Berry Gordy Jr. and the driving force behind the museum that continues to preserve the label's legacy, has died at age 91.

The Motown Historical Museum, which Gordy Edwards founded in 1985, announced her death on Thursday.

Gordy Edwards, who died on Wednesday, held a number of positions in her brother's legendary company, including director of Motown's Artists Personal Management Division, where she helped guide the careers of Diana Ross, Stevie Wonder, Smokey Robinson, Marvin Gaye and Mary Wells.

In the 1970s, Gordy Edwards was the first woman to serve on the board of the Detroit Bank of the Commonwealth and the first woman elected to the board of the Greater Detroit Chamber of Commerce, according to the Museum's website.

Her late husband, George Edwards, was an accountant who help manage Motown's finances and served in the Michigan state legislature.

The museum Gordy Edwards founded, located on Grand Blvd. in the row of single-family homes that housed Motown's original headquarters and recording studios, is one of Detroit's most popular tourist destinations.

One of the highlights of the museum is Studio A, Motown's first recording studio, which was open 24 hours a day, seven days a week, from 1959 until 1972.

Studio A is where Martha Reeves and the Vandellas, Smokey Robinson and the Miracles, the Temptations, the Four Tops, Gladys Knight and the Pips, Diana Ross and the Supremes, and the Jackson Five recorded many of their hits.

(Writing by James Kelleher; Editing by Bob Tourtellotte)

(c) Copyright Thomson Reuters 2011. Check for restrictions at: <http://about.reuters.com/fulllegal.asp>

Copyright © 2011 Yahoo! Inc. All rights reserved. | Yahoo! News Network | /