



# THE CHICAGO COMMUNITIES

## Photographers notes from Chicagoland

Chicago is a wonderful city that extends vastly beyond "The Loop", its famous downtown area. There are 77 official Chicago Community areas. In my quest, as I walk and drive the streets, I see many things of note. These notes document my impressions, and point at photos of notable places along the way.



### **E**NGLEWOOD

This low income community in Southwest Chicago is not for the casual visitor. You need a reason to go there. The residential streets are not very photogenic and, for a predominantly African-American neighborhood, the commercial streets are less colorful than you might hope. Most of the vintage single family houses have seen better days. Many are boarded up and occasionally, but not occasionally enough, burnt out. On my second visit to [Englewood](#), the smell of burning tires wafting in the early morning air made me wonder about the reasons for so many burnt dwellings.

However, for the hardcore curious, there is some architectural eye candy. Let's start with "[The Yale Building](#)" on 66th street. Built in 1893, this beautifully restored seven storied apartment building has some nice Victorian embellishments, not counting the senior citizens which it now accommodates. Not all of the old buildings in Englewood are as well taken care of. An example badly needing some TLC is the Classical Revival style [South Side Masonic Temple](#) on South Green Street. This 1921 building has been empty for two decades and is steadily deteriorating. It's interior rooms are decorated in a variety of styles, including Art Deco, Beaux Arts Classical, Egyptian Revival, and Islamic Revival. Let's hope someone comes to the rescue. A short walk to the North of the temple, there is another notable 1920's building in better condition: the old [Engine Company 84 fire station](#) built in 1929. Now, alas, replaced by a bigger and better facility on 59th Street.

Although the area boasts few landmark buildings, the Englewood community makes up for it by supporting a hodge-podge of churches. I don't mean church-like churches, although there are plenty of those, but un-church-like buildings advertising singular forms of Christianity, with names like "[Wards Chapel M.B. Church of God](#)", "[Spiritual Awakening Church](#)", and "[House of Prayer](#)". I found 39 Englewood churches listed on the web, that's thirteen per square mile. However, none of the three churches noted above were on the web list, so the true density of churches must be impressive indeed.

Finally, Englewood's big green space is [Hamilton Park](#). It has some beautiful old trees, space for baseball and other field sports, and a rather plain field house. I found it a little disappointing compared with other big parks in the region, but better than nothing.

# GARFIELD PARK

There are two adjacent [Garfield Park](#) communities: East Garfield Park and West Garfield Park, and they are quite different in character. East Garfield Park is the one with the park. It's a get out and walk around place with, as its main attraction, [Garfield Park Conservatory](#). In contrast, West Garfield Park is more of a drive around and see what you can see sort of place ... at least that was what the kind police officer explained to me when he saw me wandering around with a camera around my neck. Actually, he said it a little more forcefully, through the window of his police car ... after which he was happy to spend a few minutes chatting about the local architecture. His parting shot was to advise me that if I must walk around, it would be better to hide my camera beneath my coat, and even better if I walked around East Garfield Park rather than West Garfield Park.

If you go to East Garfield Park, visit the conservatory. It's right next to the [Garfield Park L Station](#) ... so you can go there on the L. If you prefer to drive, there is also good parking at the conservatory. The L station is quite an ornate affair, mounted on the bridge that straddles the intersection of Central Park Avenue with Lake Street. The conservatory, which is just north of the station, was conceived by Jens Jensen and dates from 1906. It is a wonderful glass complex with a classic [Palm House](#) that lures you in to a [lush interior](#). Opposite the Conservatory entrance is the [Flower Vocational High School](#) on [Fulton Street](#). This vintage orange brick building, which dates from 1927, has pleasingly clean lines.

After visiting the conservatory, on a sunny day it's nice to walk around the park, which offers some more architectural eye-candy. Walking back to the L station on Central Park Avenue, and then beyond, you arrive at the 1928 gold-terra-cotta-domed [Field House](#). This building, which has an impressively ornate facade, is sandwiched between two lagoons. To the southwest of the Field House, is a slightly run down nineteenth century [Bandstand](#) - a marble Arabian inspired octagonal masterpiece that boasts a Copper roof which can apparently accommodate a 100-piece orchestra. To the east of the bandstand, on Central Park Boulevard, is [Providence-St. Mel School](#), a fine piece of Tudor Revival architecture from 1929. Finally, to the northwest of the bandstand, at the intersection of Madison Street with Hamlin Boulevard, is another 1920's building: the Spanish Baroque Revival [Midwest Athletic Club](#). You are now at the boundary between East and West Garfield Park ... so back to the car to explore the west.

From the conservatory, drive south along Central Park Avenue to Washington Boulevard, and then head west along Washington Boulevard, through the park, and into West Garfield Park which begins at

at Hamilin Street. If you now continue along Washington Boulevard, there is some interesting architecture on the right side. A few hundred yards along Washington Boulevard there is a high rise: a [retirement home](#). Keep going, and in another couple of hundred yards, at the intersection with Pulaski Road, you come to [Guyon Towers](#). This Moorish inspired red- and cream-brick architecture is another Jens Jensen design, and dates from 1928. Continuing along Washington Boulevard, you will see more vintage residences, including some nice apartment buildings, and some fine [Chicago Greystones](#).

Returning to Guyon Towers, one block north of Washington Boulevard is West End Avenue. A few blocks down this street is the [Tilton Public School](#), an interesting example of Edwardian architecture. Just beyond the school there is a nice row of Victorian single family houses with deep porches and Dutch-style roofs. This is where the kindly police officer expressed concern about my well being, and is a good place to finish.

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### **H**UMBOLDT PARK

Strangely, there is no large green space within the community of [Humboldt Park](#) which, even more strangely, does not include the park "Humboldt Park". However, the park is right next door, on its eastern boundary, in neighboring [West Town](#). The community of Humboldt Park has houses, lots of them, from the early twentieth century. In addition there is the railway, and near the railway lines there are some nice art deco style vintage factories. Humboldt Park is evidently a place to live and a place to work.

On my first visit to the area, I was visiting the park, not the community. However, I strayed into the streets around West Pierce Avenue. There are some nice [Graystones](#) on this street, right next to the red brick "[Salvation and Deliverance Ministries International Church](#)", which includes within its structure a stone that displays the date July 9, 1899. The church is within a densely packed residential neighborhood with vintage well kept houses of various sorts. For example, quite different to the greystones are the single family homes on [West LeMoyne Street](#).

My second visit to Humboldt Park was also a peripheral one. I had been visiting [Garfield Park](#) and happened to drive a little beyond its northern boundary, eastwards along West Franklin Boulevard. The thing that lured me along this route was a distant view of an [art deco style vintage factory tower](#) at Franklin Square, which is at the end of the boulevard. The factory is presently owned by the Lakewood Engineering and Manufacturing Company, although perhaps not for much longer since their website suggests they are in liquidation. Adjacent to the factory building, a vintage smokestack tells us that the original owner was the Racue Warner Co. On the other side of the street there are more vintage factories from the same period. If you like old industrial buildings, head next for the intersection of Homan Avenue and Potomac Avenue, and then walk or drive south to West Division Street. You pass two magnificent twin [factories with impressive art deco towers](#), and end at another [lower profile art deco factory](#).

Two subsequent visits to Humboldt Park enable me to cover the area. In addition to vintage houses and factories, there are some nice old school buildings, and the usual quota of churches. Examples of the former are the Tudor Revival style [Harriet Beecher Stowe Public School](#) on Wabansia Avenue, and the [Polaris Charter Academy](#) on North Sawyer Avenue. Examples of vintage church architecture are the orange windowed [New True Vine Missionary Baptist Church](#) and the [Bethel Lutheran Church](#), both on North Springfield Avenue. Finally, there is a nice traditional [Chicago Fire Station](#) on Kedzie Avenue.

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### IRVING PARK

Significant pieces of residential [Irving Park](#) date from the Edwardian period, and its wealthy neighborhoods offer many architectural gems set within tree-lined back streets. If you are interested in period residential architecture, a quiet stroll within the Villa District, for example, will be rewarding.

My trips to Irving Park were in the winter. With bare trees, more of the residential architecture is visible, so winter is not such a bad time to visit. The first thing to catch my eye as I was driving down Milwaukee Avenue is the striking [Carl Schurz High School](#), eye-catching not only for its beautiful 1908 design, but also for its large scale. To get a closer look, I parked in the residential streets behind the school. There are some nice houses in this area. One of the earliest homes in the neighborhood, built sometime before 1870, can be found at [3800 North Keeler Avenue](#). This Victorian mansion includes an Italian-style corner tower. Not far away is [Irving Park School](#), another nice Edwardian building, although smaller and less impressive than the Carl Schurz High School. Also worth seeing, a little to the East, on North Kostner Avenue, is the quaint stucco covered [Saint John Episcopal Church](#), which was remodeled in 1924.

As interesting as the area immediately behind the Carl Schurz High School is, even better is the [Villa District](#), which is just on the Southern Boundary. This is an area of single family bungalows, a little pocket of calm from the Prairie School era. Represented are both the long narrow Chicago style bungalow and the wider California style bungalow.

Given the impressive parks in other Chicago community areas, I was expecting something great in "Irving Park". There are indeed green spaces in the area, the largest are Horner Park and Independence Park. However, these are in no way comparable to, for example, Humboldt Park in West Town. I was a little disappointed ... but with plenty of great residential architecture, one can hardly complain.

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### **L**AKE VIEW

Outside of the downtown Chicago area, if there is a Chicago community that "has it all", or at least most of it, then [Lake View](#) is a candidate. There is the lakeshore, Lincoln Park and its golf course, Belmont Harbor, upper-end real estate, specialty shops, cafes, restaurants, and interesting vintage architecture.

Where to start, or of more practical importance for a north lakeshore community, where to park? There is a convenient cheap car park that serves Lincoln Park. It is just off Lakeshore Drive and to the immediate north of Belmont Harbor. From here you can see the [Waveland Clock Tower](#) and Field House in Lincoln Park, a Collegiate Gothic affair dating from 1932. On the East side of the Field House, it is pleasant to walk along the concrete lined lakeshore, North or South. Walking to the South brings you to [Belmont Harbor](#), populated by rows of expensive looking yachts in the summer, and icepack in the coldest parts of the winter. Walking around the harbor, the western side is bordered by busy [Lakeshore Drive](#). There are a couple of underpasses that provide access to the other side. There you will find a bronze statue of Sheridan mounted on a horse, overlooked by [The Darien](#), a very desirable vintage red brick apartment block completed in 1951. If you are an early riser, there is a string of vintage and modern residential skyscrapers overlooking Lakeshore Drive that positively glow in the early morning sunlight. Walking to the north along the west side of Lakeshore Drive brings you to the octagonal limestone almost Byzantine [Temple Shalom](#). Someday I would like to peek inside to see if the interior is as interesting as the exterior.

Now there is a choice to be made, whether to go back to the car and try to find a parking place nearer to Broadway, or to remain on foot and walk. I preferred to walk, partly because the route passes through a nice residential neighborhood with interesting vintage buildings. Although I ended up walking several miles, this strategy worked for me because there are cafes on Broadway, Halsted, and North Clark Street, places to recover and top up ones energy levels.

The first interesting landmark I came across on Broadway was the [Lake View Presbyterian Church](#), an attractive red shingle structure with a conical spire capping an octagonal tower. Next door the Salvation Army has its [college for officers' training](#), accommodated in a large Tudor Revival mansion. From Broadway I walked to Halsted Street, and the [12th precinct police station](#), a solid looking red brick box with green awnings over every window that make it easily recognizable. Halsted Street is one

of the most interesting in Lake View, lined with vintage shops and other commercial buildings, many from the Victorian period, and some from a little later boasting art deco features. Noteworthy examples are the ornate Sexauer Garage built in 1924 and whimsically decorated with a winged wheel, and the less ornate but just as pleasing [Mandel Brothers](#) warehouse building, built in 1903. Halsted Street is also decorated with "[Rainbow Pylons](#)" in the Boystown area, the nation's first officially recognized "gay village". Both [North Clark Street](#) and [Broadway](#) also have vintage buildings, cafes, shops and restaurants, but [Halstead Street](#) is my favorite.

After so many streets, and so much walking, I was eventually ready to plot my course back to the lakeshore, returning via Belmont Avenue, and passing the imposing Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Roman Catholic Church, which is just a couple of blocks from the neighborhood sex shop. Lake View caters for all.

Finally, in my wanderings I came across one vintage building worthy of note tucked away in the northwest corner of Lake View: the [Deagan Building](#) which is at the intersection of Ravenswood Avenue and Berteau Avenue. This red brick Edwardian factory, which for many years produced Deagan musical instruments, was built around 1912.

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## PHOTOGRAPHER'S NOTES

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### INCOLN PARK

**L** Famous for its zoo, [Lincoln Park](#) has much more to offer: the lakefront and park, museums, landmark architecture, nice residential streets, interesting shopping streets, and views of the city skyline.

Let's start with the Lincoln Park Zoo. Its free, but you pay to park, and the parking fee is not nominal. However, there is free street parking along Stockton Drive, which is great if you are an early bird or very lucky, and can find a space. The zoo has everything you would expect: big cats and primates, seals and flamingos, reptiles and pachyderms. Of the architecture, I like the [lion house](#) which dates from 1912 and has a nice brick facade with interesting detailing. Of the inhabitants, it's hard to pick a favorite, but if I had to, the Gorillas are real characters. Right next door to the zoo is the [Lincoln Park Conservatory](#), a traditional Victorian palace of glass that houses some spectacular [vegetation](#). If the zoo and conservatory are not enough to fill your day, and you want to see more, a short walk to the north will bring you to the modern angular architecture of the Peggy Notebaert Nature Museum. When I visited it was summer, and inside there was a great butterfly house. If the nature museum does not appeal to you, then from the zoo and conservatory, walk south. You will come to the [Cafe Brauer](#), an impressive Prairie School building built in 1908. The cafe, which overlooks the [South Pond](#), is open in the summer season. If you want to potter around on the water, swan boats can be rented from just in front of the cafe. A little to the west of the cafe is the [Lincoln Park Zoological Society building](#). Beyond the Cafe Brauer to the south, the park opens out to yield a great view of the [city skyline](#). There is plenty of space here to play ball, or lie down and worship the sun. If you decide to just keep walking, a little to the south of Cafe Brauer are the white buildings of the [Lincoln Park Farm](#), a fun place for the kids. The farm is on the banks of South Pond. If you head east, at the southern end of the pond you arrive at the [Grant Memorial](#). According to the American Institute of Architects Guide to Chicago: "The aesthetic quality of the ponderous monument has been the subject of debate since its unveiling". Massive stone blocks certainly give it a very solid Victorian look. A little further to the east, across Lakeshore Drive, is the [lakeshore](#). You can traverse Lakeshore Drive using the [footbridge](#) at the southern end of the park. Finally, whilst in Lincoln Park, if you are interested in Chicago's history, at the southwest corner of the park is the [Chicago History Museum](#), which boasts having 22 million artifacts and documents. To house all this stuff, the older neoclassical part of the museum, which dates from 1932, has been complemented with a [modern addition](#).

Not far from the park there are some other architectural treats. If you are at the southern end, opposite to the history museum, on North Clark Street, is the magnificent Byzantine style [Moody Memorial Church](#). Built in 1925, the church is a red brick masterpiece. To the north, North Clark Street offers a pleasant mixture of shops housed within vintage buildings, some of which are noteworthy. A fine example, at the intersection with Belden Avenue, is "[The Beldon](#)", a pleasing 1892 "shops below and flats above" affair. At this intersection there is also a nice [Queen Anne style shop](#), and a little [park](#) in which you can sit, rest your shopping feet, and take it all in. Further to the north, Clark Street intersects with Fullerton Parkway which, if you head eastward, takes you back to the park. There is one more architectural treat near the park, to the north, which is not to be missed: The [Elks Memorial Building](#), at the intersection of Lakeview Avenue and Diversey Parkway. This 1920's rotunda is a memorial to fallen Elks in the first world war. Impressive on the outside, it is stunning on the [inside](#) with [decorative opulence](#) that is reminiscent of a European palace.

The park area occupies only the eastern fringe of the community of Lincoln Park, three-quarters of which is inland to the west. Much of this is residential, and it is pleasant to wonder around. One curious feature of the local architecture is that many of the [houses](#) have front doors a full story above street level. Although much of residential Lincoln Park is middle class, in the northwest corner there is an interesting exception: The [Lathrop Homes](#), a low income housing development built in the 1930's. Located next to the modern, very red, and pleasing [Damen Avenue Bridge](#), the development is on the banks of the river, and has its own period [power plant](#) with smokestack. You might not want to walk around the development, but driving around is interesting. Finally, there is [DePaul University](#), which has a modest sized campus around Belden Avenue. Although founded in 1898, most of the buildings have been constructed in the last 30 years. Still, it is worth a peek.

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### LINCOLN SQUARE

**L** If you like Victorian and early twentieth century architecture, then [Lincoln Square](#) has much to offer. Even more so, if you like specialty shops, quiet residential streets, or historic cemeteries.

The epicenter of Lincoln Square is arguably along North Lincoln Avenue just north of Welles Park. The main shopping area is delineated on either side by [metal arches](#) that cross the street. Here there are cafes, restaurants, and specialty shops, housed within vintage architecture. Once the shops are open, there's lots of foot traffic. Parking can be a problem, but I had luck on West Sunnyside Avenue, a nice tree lined residential street not far from the shops and right next to Welles Park. My parking spot was opposite to the [Queen of Angels Church](#), a monumental building from the Edwardian era. Once parked I started by walking around the park. The field house and swimming pool were being renovated. The field house is, alas, not the original Edwardian building, but a rather more modern affair dating from the 1970's. The most interesting landmark within the park, which is also relatively new, is the wrought iron [Victorian-style bandstand](#). Walking from the park to the north, along Lincoln Avenue, on the left you pass the Old Town School of Folk Music. Beyond the school and a couple of cafes, the architecture becomes interesting. The commercial buildings date from the early twentieth century. Many have nice art deco embellishments. Among them is the Davis, a nice old cinema. A little further on, and worth the detour of a few yards down Eastwood Avenue on the right, is the [Thomas Jefferson Pumping House](#), a red brick masterpiece with a large elaborate door, completed in 1928. Further down Lincoln Avenue, after passing under the L tracks, you arrive at the first metal archway emblazoned with "Lincoln Square". You have arrived at the epicenter, which ends with the second metal arch, at Lawrence Avenue. Out of curiosity I walked down Lawrence Avenue and, after about seven or eight blocks arrived at the [Ravenswood Sears Building](#). There are reviews on the web that suggest not everyone appreciates this fine old building, but I like the clean exterior lines of this vintage department store and hope it survives into the future.

Lincoln Square has more to offer than just shops. I spent some time walking around the residential streets to the east of Lincoln Avenue, lured on by pleasant vintage houses and the occasional interesting [Victorian mansion](#).

Further away, a short drive to the north, is [Winnemac Park](#), a large open area with sports fields, running track, and a prairie that provides a summer walk through towering sunflowers. [Amundsen High School](#) occupies the northeast corner of the park, an attractive Tudor Revival affair from the 1930's. If

you like old fire stations, then to the north of Winnemac Park, on Foster Avenue, is the [Fire Dept. Engine Company 110 building](#). Even further to the north, at the boundary of Lincoln Square, is [Rosehill Cemetery](#). The main entrance, an ornate Victorian Gothic style limestone archway, is on the east side. The best time to visit is in the fall, when you can see the impressive mausoleums nestled amongst tall trees with bright autumn foliage.

Finally, there is an architectural gem at the western boundary of Lincoln Square that should not be missed: The [North Branch Chicago River Pumping Station](#), best viewed from Ronan Park which is across the river in neighboring Albany Park. The 1930's art deco pumping station positively glows in the late afternoon sunshine. with its riverside arches reflected in the placid river. To the north of the pumping station you can walk along the river on the North Shore Channel Trail for the entire length of Lincoln Square and beyond. I was rewarded on one of my two walks along this trail by seeing a ground hog within a few feet of the footpath, quite unconcerned about the nearby people.

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### LOWER WEST SIDE

**L** As you drive south from Chicago's West Side there is a transition from the campus landscape of the University of Illinois to a working class industrial setting. The transition takes place roughly at the railway lines that run parallel to West 16th Street. This is the northern boundary of the [Lower West Side](#), and the area known as [Pilsen](#). There are some noteworthy buildings in Pilsen, together with Victorian and early twentieth century neighborhood shops and homes. To the south of Pilsen the landscape becomes increasingly industrial as you cross West Cermak Road and approach the South Branch of the Chicago River, which flows along the southern boundary of the Lower West Side

On my first visit to Pilsen I was heading for what is arguably its best known building; [Thalia Hall](#), a monumental Romanesque style building built in 1893, and located at the intersection of South Alport Street and West 18th Street. There was some scaffolding on the exterior of the building when I visited. It is apparently getting a little TLC. At the corner of the Hall there is a convenient cafe, which provides an opportunity to recharge and get a sense of the interior decor. On the opposite side of 18th Street is St. Procopius Church, another Romanesque style building, a decade older than Thalia Hall. There are other interesting nearby buildings on South Alport Street and it is worth walking a block to the north and south. Of particular interest to the south is [Iglesia Presbiteriana Emmanuel](#), a small neoclassical structure that was built in 1965, but has the appearance of something much older.

West 18th Street is one of the more commercial streets in Pilsen. If you walk or drive from Thalia Hall to the west along 18th street you come to Blue Island Avenue, and the commercial heart of the Lower West Side. At the intersection there is a vintage war memorial, and immediately to the south, on the west side of the avenue, there is a colorful cluster of [neighborhood stores and flats](#).

I have an interest in vintage industrial architecture, and therefore spent some time driving around the area close to the South Branch of the Chicago River. A good spot to head for is the [West Cermak Road Bridge](#). From this typical rust-red Chicago river bridge there is a good view of an 8 storied riverside warehouse, which dates from 1895, and has now been converted into lofts. Just behind this building, on South Lumber Street, there are a number of other nice [industrial buildings](#) from the late nineteenth- and early-twentieth-centuries.

From Cermak Road, the river heads southwest to the Dan Ryan Expressway, and then roughly west to "Bubbly Creek" at Ashland Avenue. I was driving north on Ashland Avenue when I spotted on my right the [Canal Origins Park](#) which overlooks Bubbly Creek. The park is small, but it was worth stopping and taking a look. It has a prairie, colorful in summer, and a good view of this part of the [Chicago River](#). The bubbles, once produced by decomposing entrails dumped into the river from the local stockyards, are gone along with the stockyards and the entrails. Now the creek is a quiet backwater favored by local anglers. After spending a few minutes in the park I crossed Ashland Avenue and walked a short distance north to the [Ashland Avenue Bridge](#). From here there is a trail along the river to the west. The walk, which is pleasant enough, passes a glittering scrap metal yard on the other side of the river, and then ends up at some railway tracks and a derelict [silo complex](#).

Finally, there is one other park that should be briefly mentioned; Dvorak Park. Briefly, because I found it rather non-descript apart from its classic [1908 Field House](#).

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# M

## ORGAN PARK

I had heard that [Beverly](#) and [Morgan Park](#) were wonderful pockets of vintage architecture - particularly Arts and Crafts style architecture - on the far southwest side of Chicago. When I visited, I was not disappointed. Morgan Park is a little less affluent than Beverly, its northerly neighbor, but is still a pleasant residential neighborhood that offers many architectural gems.

A good place to start, particularly if you are coming from Beverly, is on South Longwood Drive, at the intersection with 107th Street. This is at the Beverly - Morgan Park boundary. Driving South, Longwood Drive is a nice tree-lined residential street. At 111th Street you arrive at Bohn Park and the 111th Street Metra Station. I parked there and walked around. Across the road there are two churches: the stone built neo-Tudor [Morgan Park Presbyterian Church](#) from 1933, and the brick built prairie style [Morgan Park United Methodist Church](#) from 1912. One has a feeling these two ecclesiastic landmarks vie with each other for business. Until I checked on the web, I had thought the Presbyterian church was older. There is a "founder's stone" on one corner marked with the date 1891. However the original church from 1891 burned down in 1933. One of its original 1891 stones was marked with this date and laid as a corner stone for the new church. From Bohn Park, I walked south on Longwood Drive, crossing 111th Street, and then walked uphill on Lothair Avenue on the right. I was heading for the [Morgan Park Church of God in Christ](#), a Craftsman style church from 1916. As you walk up the hill you can't miss it at the summit. I was hoping to peek inside, but unfortunately it was locked. The church is on the corner of Lothair and Hoyne Avenues. A short way along Hoyne, at its intersection with 111th Street, is another fine landmark building: the [Walker Library](#), with two welcoming entrance towers that are reminiscent of a French Chateau. A short walk to the west, along 111th Street, will bring you to the [Morgan Park Academy](#). There is a mixture of architecture on the campus, including a fine red-brick Tudor Revival affair. The oldest building is the gymnasium, which dates from 1900.

Returning to my car, I explored the area across the railroad tracks to the east of Longwood Drive, along Prospect Avenue. This is another street for a stroll, but this time in a tree-lined residential area: the historic Ridge District. Here there are a string of vintage mansions from the late nineteenth century. My favorite is the [William H. German House](#) from 1884. The houses on either side date from the same period. This is probably the nicest residential area in Morgan Park, but there is another interesting area to the west, just to the east of the Clissold Elementary School on Western Avenue. I found it pleasant walking around the back streets: along and between 110th Street and 110th Place. Here there are some fine vintage houses.

In a place called "Morgan Park" you would expect there to be, somewhere, a large park. The largest is Kennedy Park, on Western Avenue. The [Kennedy Park Field House](#) is an unprepossessing building from the 1960's. Finally, from Kennedy Park I headed south along Western Avenue, and then east along 116th Place, back to Longwood Avenue. At the intersection is the [Mercy Home for Boys and Girls](#), which has a distinctive concrete addition.

Morgan Park is worth a visit, particularly if it is combined with Beverly to the north.

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### **N**EW CITY

If you are interested in Chicago's industrial heritage, [New City](#) has something special to offer. A good starting point, and perhaps it's best known landmark, is the [Union Stock Yards Gate](#), located in the area known as Back of the Yards. If it wasn't for the steer's head proudly protruding above the arch, this ornate neo-Gothic entrance would look in place in front of a French chateau. The gate dates from 1879, and the head is a likeness of the steer that won the American Fat Stock Show in 1878. After more than a century of service, the stock yards closed in 1971. Gone are the animal pens and the sounds of their doomed inhabitants. The gate remains as a monument to the past, isolated within what is now a modern industrial park.

At the Northern boundary of New City, on Pershing Street, there is another industrial treat: The Central Manufacturing District. This was the first American industrial park, established in 1905, and is much more interesting than its modern descendents. A string of Edwardian brick factories and warehouses bordering the southern end of McKinley Park are worth admiring, together with a now abandoned [vintage clock tower](#). To see more of this industrial architecture it is worth wandering into the neighboring community of [McKinley Park](#) to the area just north of Pershing Avenue and east of Ashland Avenue.

There is more to New City than its industrial past. At its southern end is [Sherman Park](#), which consists of a large tree-rimmed island surrounded by a moat which is traversed by four bridges. At the northern end of the park there is a classic [1905 field house](#), along with swimming pool and [tennis courts](#). At the southern boundary of the park is West Garfield Boulevard. There are nice vintage houses along the Boulevard, particularly on the northern side of the street, to the east of the park. My favorite is a [neo-Tudor mansion](#) which is whimsically decorated with a large number of winged gargoyles. James O'Leary's chateausque 1901 mansion can also be found along the Boulevard - he was the gambling king whose mother owned the famous cow that is said to have started the great fire of Chicago in 1871 by kicking over a lantern.

Finally, New City offers some architecturally interesting churches. Notable examples are [Saint John of God](#), a renaissance style Roman Catholic Church at the northern end of Sherman Park, [and Holy Cross Immaculate Heart of Mary Church](#) on South Wood Street, an even more ornate Catholic Church. There are also plenty of smaller scale architecturally less elaborate churches in the neighborhood. One that I

like is the [New Life Community Church](#) which overlooks Davis Square Park; a simple brick affair that proudly boasts a bright red awning and an onion dome that supports an Eastern Orthodox Cross.

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# UPTOWN

There is plenty to see in [Uptown](#), including the lakeshore, Graceland Cemetery, and vintage architecture which includes fine [old apartment buildings](#) and some stunning examples of 1920's theatres and commercial buildings.

Let's start with the lakeshore. A good place to park is near [Montrose Harbor](#), just off Lakeshore Drive. I parked on North Simonds Drive, which is within sight of a nice sandy Lake Michigan beach. From there you can walk almost completely around Montrose Harbor, except for the gap made by the harbor entrance, which is guarded by two [lighthouses](#). In the summer the harbor provides moorings for some expensive looking boats. In the winter it is empty and is often decorated with floating polygons of ice. From the harbor a lakeshore trail goes to the north and south, buffered from Lakeshore Drive by Lincoln Park.

The first time I visited Uptown I was aiming not for the lake, but for [Graceland Cemetery](#) which is quite beautiful in autumn, with bright foliage and Greek-like temples reflected in peaceful lakes. There are some spectacular tombs there, and some famous names. One well know resident is Daniel Burnham, buried on his own island. Even if you're not into cemeteries (at least, not yet), this one is well worth a visit.

The second time I visited Uptown I was in search of the [Uptown Theater](#). This impressive ornate 1925 movie palace is on Broadway, on the side of the street that catches the early morning light. It is abandoned now, but work has been done to stabilize the structure ... the front awning is propped up on metal stilts. Incredibly, there are two other fantastic vintage theatres close by: a few doors away from the Uptown Theater is the slightly older Riviera (1918), and just around the corner on Lawrence Avenue is the [Aragon Ballroom](#) (1926), famous in its day and boasting a very ornate Spanish-style terracotta decorated facade. As if this were not enough, at the intersection of Broadway and Lawrence is the [Uptown Bank Building](#) built in the same period (1924) with a distinctive wedge-like shape. A short walk to the south along Broadway is the ornate yellow colored [Uptown Broadway Building](#) (1927). There are other vintage buildings nearby on Broadway, all-in-all making this area of Uptown a 1920's architectural treat. Before leaving the area there is another building from a completely different era which is worth a peek: the Moderne style U.S. post office from 1939 which is located on Broadway just a few buildings to the north of the Uptown Theatre.

Finally, a short drive to the south along Broadway brings you to Sheridan Road, and a little to the south on Sheridan Road is the Renaissance style [St. Mary of the Lake](#) Roman Catholic Church with its freestanding campanile.

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# WOODLAWN

A mostly residential area on the South Side, [Woodlawn](#) is a little less affluent than Hyde Park, its northerly neighbor. However, Woodlawn has a pleasant lakefront within Jackson Park, with a marina, lagoons, an island, and a golf course. This was the site of the World's Columbian Exposition of 1893, and is the "walk around and see what you can see" part of Woodlawn. The "drive around and see what you can see" bit is inland.

To access the lakefront I parked along South Promontory Drive, near [La Rabida Children's Hospital](#). From there you can walk along the rock-lined fringe of [Lake Michigan](#), and then around the yacht harbor and South Lagoon. All of this is within Jackson Park. The [harbor](#) is a popular spot for local anglers. To the south is a well kept [golf course](#). As you walk around the South Lagoon, at its northwest corner there is a surprise: "The Republic", a gilded statue that was cast in 1918, although it is based on a much larger sculpture from 1893. With hands raised skywards, the "golden lady" is supposed to symbolize progress. Continuing to walk around South Lagoon to the west, along East Hayes Drive, you arrive at a sandy beach and a large concrete bathhouse built in 1919: the Jackson Park Beach House. Returning to "The Republic", a little further to the east along East Hayes Drive there is a footpath that goes north to Wooded Island, which is surrounded by another lagoon. The northern tip of the island, with its beautiful [Japanese Garden](#), is strictly speaking in [Hyde Park](#), beyond the Woodlawn boundary. If you still have some energy, returning to East Hayes Drive you can walk further west to Stony Island Avenue which marks the inland boundary of Jackson park. A hundred yards along the avenue to the north you will find an impressive piece of vintage architecture with a neoclassical facade: [Hyde Park School](#) (presently called Hyde Park Academy) which, despite its name, really is in Woodlawn.

After exploring Jackson Park on foot, I was happy to explore the rest of Woodlawn by car, starting with South Woodlawn Avenue. Driving northwards, there are many vintage houses which are mostly in good repair, and include some nice [Victorian Greystones](#). There are also some impressive churches, the most notable being the "[Institute of Christ the King and Saint Clara School](#)" and the "[St. John Baptist Temple](#)" with its distinctive metallic dome. Further north, as you near Midway Plaisance at the northern boundary, you begin to penetrate into the University of Chicago campus, or at least its overflow from Hyde Park into Woodlawn.

After exploring South Woodlawn Avenue I drove up and down the various parallel streets, which are mostly more-of-the-same vintage residential roads. At some point on this snake-like journey I drove along 64th Street, and past the [Mount Carmel High School](#) (formerly St. Cyril High School). The main building dates from 1924, and is a good example of school architecture from this period. Driving further along 64th street I came to Cottage Grove Avenue. There is an impressively ornate nineteen-twenties style corner shop at the intersection of 64th Street and [Cottage Grove Avenue](#), and some interesting [vintage commercial architecture](#) along the avenue between 64th Street and the Cottage Grove EL Station at 63rd Street.

Finally, as I drove around the various back streets I noted quite a few open wasteland areas in Woodlawn that perhaps formerly had houses on them, but no longer. It would be interesting to return in a few decades to see if these areas grow, or perhaps contract as Hyde Park affluence expands south.

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