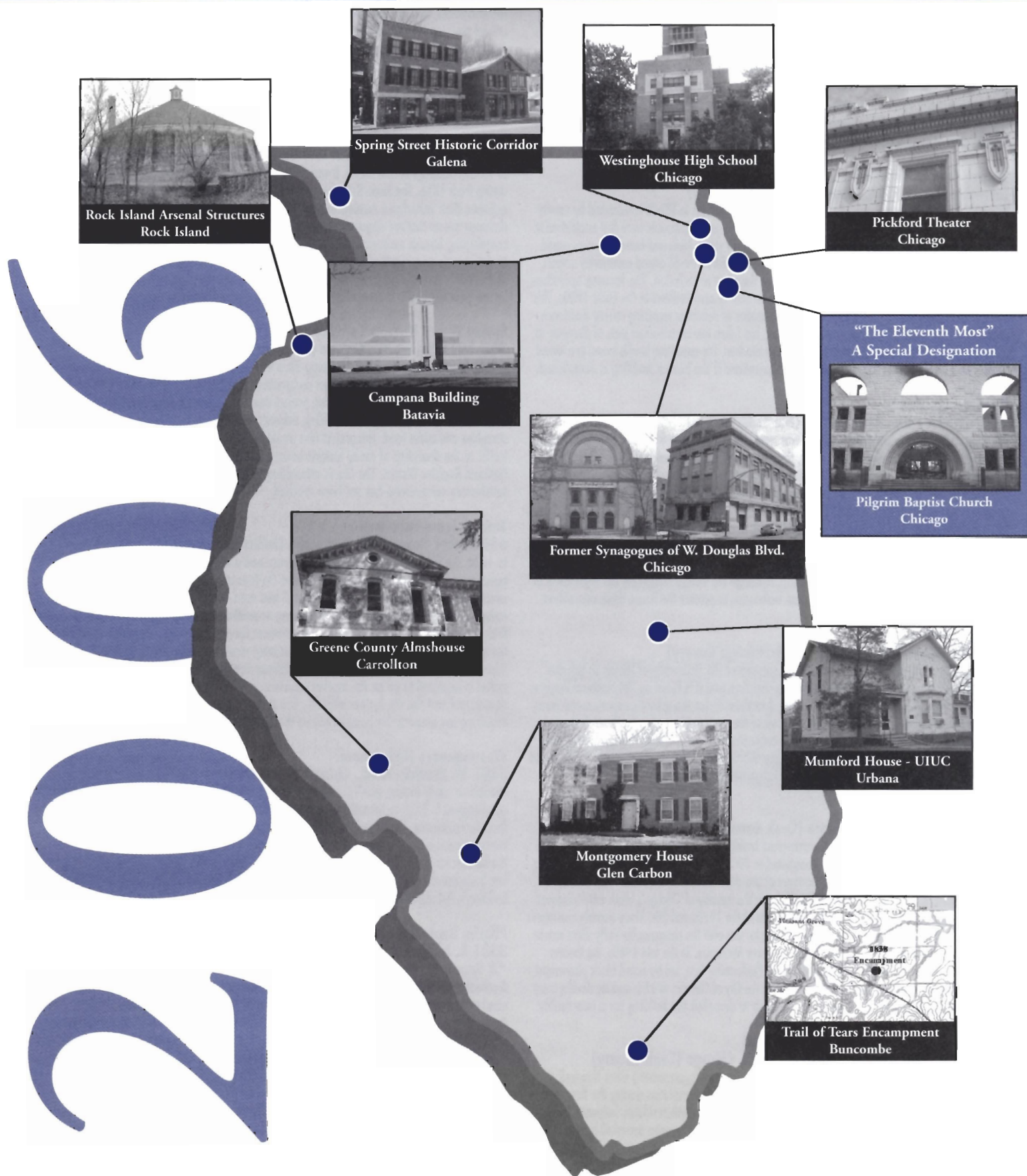


The Ten Most Endangered Historic Places



2006 Ten Most Endangered Historic Places

Campana Building

901 N. Batavia Ave., Batavia (Kane County)

Situated high on the western bank of the Fox River, this expansive building was designed as a cosmetic factory by architect Frank Chase and was completed in 1937. The sleek design and absence of decoration are characteristic elements of the Art Moderne style of architecture. The building's signature bands of glass block windows were used to insulate the building and bring natural light to the interior workspace. In 2003, Campana was designated the first — and still only — local landmark in the City of Batavia. A recent redevelopment plan proposes removal of the original glass block and alteration of the primary façade to insert storefronts on the first floor level.

Greene County Almshouse

Township Rd. TR156A, Carrollton (Greene County)

This 1870 brick Italianate is one of only a few surviving buildings in Illinois constructed by county governments to house and care for the poor and indigent. County almshouses were first established in 1839, pre-dating Jane Addams' Hull House in Chicago by 50 years. Male and female paupers would work on the surrounding farm to provide for themselves; children would attend community schools. Mentally impaired citizens were integrated rather than left in seclusion. The farming operations declined when almshouses were converted for use as elderly care facilities in the early 1900s. This building was abandoned in the 1950s, when the number of residents requiring county assistance dwindled. Over the years, this county-owned building has fallen into an advanced state of disrepair, as evidenced by the collapsed porch, graffiti, and missing windows. The remaining land is leased to a tenant farmer who would like to expand agricultural operations if the historic building is demolished.

Montgomery House

3120 Old Troy Rd., Glen Carbon (Madison County)

This is one of only three surviving pre-Civil War residences in this historic village, located 20 miles northeast of St. Louis. Completed in 1840, the L-shaped residence was built with 18-inch-wide walls, using bricks made on the site. Decorative interior details were carved from local hardwoods on the property. Nelson Montgomery was among the first non-native settlers in this area and was renowned for his family's horse farm. The original 573-acre farm has been dramatically reduced in size over the years; first by the railroads and, later, by residential developments. The house was purchased over 20 years ago by the current owner, who has been a thoughtful steward, receiving a local award for his careful cleaning of the exterior brickwork. The remaining nine acres are now surrounded by a new subdivision. Although the village recognizes the importance of the property, it does not have a preservation ordinance to protect the house from demolition.

Mumford House

1403 W. Lorado Taft Dr., Urbana (Champaign County)

Constructed in 1870, this is the oldest structure on the campus of the University of Illinois. It was designed as a "model farmhouse" for the school's experimental farm, reportedly based on a pattern book design by landscape architect A.J. Downing. The house, which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, sits on a slight knoll, surrounded by mature trees. Its proximity to the NHL-listed Morrow Plots reinforces the site's important agricultural history. The farmhouse was named for former Dean of Agriculture Herbert W. Mumford, a longtime resident. The university has proposed moving the building two miles to the southeast, where it would house a welcome center. Critics charge that this would remove an important feature of the campus, while jeopardizing the farmhouse's historic listing.

Pickford Theater Building

3459 S. Michigan Ave., Chicago (Cook County)

Although largely forgotten, this modest commercial building has multiple layers of significance for Chicago's African-American community. Completed in 1912 as a movie theater with accompanying office retail space, it is one of the rare survivors of the city's famous Bronzeville-Black Metropolis business district. It is the only surviving theater from the heyday of Chicago's black entertainment district which thrived along 35th Street in the jazz era of the 1910s and 20s. Many notable musicians conducted the Pickford's in-house band, and the theater was also the showcase for early silent movie dramas produced by pioneering black filmmaker Oscar Micheaux. In the late 1960s, the theater became the home of the South Side Center for the Performing Arts, led by noted black playwright Theodore Ward. Now vacant, the building is owned by the City of Chicago, which is seeking development proposals. A nearby school has expressed its desire to demolish the building for a new facility.

Religious Structures of Douglas Boulevard

3400-3700 blocks of West Douglas Blvd., Chicago (Cook County)

North Lawndale is one of the city's most historic neighborhoods, surpassing even Maxwell Street as one of the world's most densely populated Jewish communities during the first few decades of the 20th century. After the outward migration of Jewish residents following World War II, most of the area's former synagogues and other structures were occupied by African-

American congregations who have preserved these structures for more than half a century. Unfortunately, due to their large size, three of the structures along Douglas Boulevard have critical maintenance issues: the former synagogues of Anshe Kenesseth Israel (3413-19 W. Douglas) and Kehilath Jacob (3757 W. Douglas), and the former Hebrew Theological College (3448-58 W. Douglas). They date from 1913, 1915, and 1922, respectively.

Rock Island Arsenal Structures

Rock Island (Rock Island County)

Two historic structures in the Rock Island Arsenal National Register District are threatened with demolition. The Stone Reservoir of 1869 was designed to hold water in reserve for distribution to various buildings on the island. It was modeled after an arsenal reservoir in Watertown, Mass., dating from 1816. The Stone Bridge was added in 1881, as part of a path for officers traveling between their waterfront residences and the arsenal's industrial buildings. The bridge has drainage spouts that are disguised by ornamental lion heads. These two structures are listed as contributing historic resources within the National Register District, but they have been allowed to deteriorate as a result of improper repairs and deferred maintenance. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers recently proposed demolishing the stone reservoir and the matter is under review by the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency. The bridge continues to deteriorate.

Spring Street Historic Corridor

300-1015 Spring St., Galena (Jo Daviess County)

This picturesque stretch of U.S. Highway 20 is included in the Great River Road National and State Scenic Byways. Despite this dual designation, the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) has proposed a street-widening project that would intrude upon wooded areas, pave over historic cobblestones, reduce building setbacks, and remove picturesque curves in favor of a straighter and wider road. This project also would bring an increased amount of heavy commercial traffic to the doorsteps of many historic houses and businesses at the western edge of this National Register District. The City is attempting to work with IDOT on an alternate plan, but a satisfactory compromise has not been reached.

Trail of Tears Encampment

6890 State Route 146, Buncombe (Johnson County)

In 1820, the Bridges Family established a tavern and a wayside store in far southern Illinois for guests traveling Old Lusk's Ferry Road, between the Ohio and Mississippi rivers. In 1838, this route, which became known as the "Trail of Tears," was used for the forced removal of Cherokee Indians from the southeastern U.S. According to published sources from the period, part of the Bridges' property was used as a winter encampment for the Cherokees. The timber-plank walls of the wayside store—the state's only known surviving structure with a connection to the Trail of Tears National Historic Trail—remain intact within an existing barn on the property. The nine-acre parcel is expected to go on the market soon and it is feared that the barn and store could be demolished and the site further altered. The Johnson County Historical Society is interested in acquiring the property for possible use as the only Trail of Tears interpretive site in Illinois.

Westinghouse High School

3301 W. Franklin Blvd., Chicago (Cook County)

The former candy factory, which is one of the largest Chicago School-style buildings ever constructed, was designed in 1920 by Schmidt, Garden and Martin. Its large floor areas, which were intended as flexible workspace, facilitated the building's conversion to a school in the 1960s. However, construction is now underway on a new high school, immediately to the east. Once completed, the historic structure is scheduled to be razed for athletic fields and a parking lot. This property has been listed three times on LPCI's Chicagoland Watch List. Attempts to save at least the building's distinctive front section, which features a five-story tower, have been unsuccessful.

Pilgrim Baptist Church

3301 S. Indiana Ave., Chicago (Cook County)

"A Special 11th Designation"

A collective wave of remorse was felt in January, when live footage of a devastating fire on this site aired on local and national media outlets. Sparked by a roofer's torch, the fire completely destroyed the building's ornate interior and wood-frame roof. Originally constructed in 1891 as a Jewish synagogue for Kehilath Anshe Ma'ariv, this was a rare example of ecclesiastical design by Dankmar Adler and Louis H. Sullivan. When Pilgrim Baptist acquired the building in 1922, the church quickly became a spiritual home to African-Americans who came to Chicago during the Great Migration of the 1920s and '30s. The church also is widely regarded as the birthplace of gospel music. Recent structural reports have confirmed that the building's surviving four walls are stable. However, the question of whether—and how—to restore the building remains a difficult financial and philosophical preservation challenge.