

**LANDMARKS ILLINOIS**  
53 W. Jackson Boulevard, Suite 1315, Chicago, IL 60604  
[www.landmarks.org](http://www.landmarks.org)

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**SPACE-AGE HOME OF THE ILLINI  
MAKES THE  
“TEN MOST ENDANGERED” LIST**

SPRINGFIELD, IL. Apr. 2 – Assembly Hall, 1800 S. 1<sup>st</sup> St., University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (Champaign County) was named to the list of “Ten Most Endangered Historic Places” for 2008 by Landmarks Illinois, a statewide advocacy group. The announcement was made today in the Press Room of the State Capitol.

“Our under-appreciated Recent Past architecture is being destroyed at an alarming rate,” said David Bahlman, president of Landmarks Illinois. “This impressive feat of engineering is one of the state’s best structures from the era.”

This 16,000-seat arena was designed in 1961 by U of I alumnus Max Abramovitz—whose firm also designed the United Nations Building in New York City—with structural engineers Amman & Whitney.

The vast 400-foot-wide concrete domed structure is listed in *Illinois Architecture* and numerous architectural periodicals. It has been declared eligible for the National Register of Historic Places and was ranked #3 in importance by a 1994 campus historic preservation plan (behind Altgeld Hall and the Auditorium Building). Poet Carl Sandburg spoke at the dedication in 1963 and the arena has hosted such performers as Elvis Presley, the Rolling Stones, Frank Sinatra, and the Fighting Illini basketball teams.

The university expects to complete a study this year to either replace the facility or make major renovations to accommodate luxury suites and elevators.

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The purpose of the “Ten Most” list is to focus attention on sites threatened by deterioration, lack of maintenance, insufficient funds, or inappropriate development. Since the program’s inception in 1995, 143 properties have been identified on the endangered list, calling attention to statewide resources in need of preservation. Less than 20% of these sites have been lost to demolition, but many remain in need of preservation.

This year’s list also includes a site along the Underground Railroad, a parochial school constructed by Civil War veterans, Chicago’s first riverfront plaza, early examples of American skyscrapers, a windmill-themed sandwich shop in Central Illinois, a Mid-Century modern building designed for the Navy, and another Illinois sports icon: Chicago’s Wrigley Field.

Landmarks Illinois is celebrating its 37<sup>th</sup> year as a statewide advocacy and education organization. The not-for-profit works with citizens and communities throughout Illinois to preserve, protect and promote historic places through advocacy and education. In addition to the Ten Most Endangered list, the organization also sponsors the Chicagoland Watch List and the Richard H. Driehaus Foundation Preservation Awards.

### *EDITORS:*

*The complete list of the Ten Most Endangered Historic Places in Illinois, including photos, can be downloaded from our website: [www.landmarks.org](http://www.landmarks.org) through the “Press Room” link.*

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