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PEOPLE SAVING PLACES
LANDMARKS ILLINOIS 2018
MOST ENDANGERED HISTORIC



STATEWIDE NEWS
THE STATE OF PRESERVATION

PLACES IN ILLINOIS



PEOPLE MEET LIZ SAFANDA



EVENTS LANDMARKS ILLINOIS ANNUAL MEETING



CONTRIBUTIONS THANK YOU

Front cover: The Nite Spot Café in Fairmont City along Route 66 is among the historic sites on Landmarks Illinois' 2018 Most Endangered Historic Places in Illinois. LI announced its 2018 Most Endangered list in Springfield on April 25. Read more about this iconic Route 66 site and other 2018 Most Endangered sites on pages 2 and 3.



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#### FROM THE PRESIDENT

### TO OUR MEMBERS

"Illinois. Are you up for amazing?" The Illinois Office of Tourism adopted this brand for the state's travel and tourism industry, and I find it fitting. Having called Illinois home for only the last six years, I have been learning about the indelible mark left in history by its people and its places. To me, Illinois is just that: amazing.

"Preserving people's stories, through the places where they occurred, provides great context for conversations about our relationship to one another and to our past."



Invariably, when I begin to delve into an area of interest, there will be some Illinois tie. I find our state's central role in history to be a matter of pride. Preserving people's stories, through the places where they occurred, provides great context for conversations about our relationship to one another and to our past.

Illinois' 2018 Bicentennial is an opportunity to elevate our historic places and to show how their stories share common themes with our own daily experiences. Share what you know about an historic site in your community by writing a letter to your local newspaper, or share a tip with a local reporter about the importance of that site.

Landmarks Illinois' contribution to Illinois Bicentennial programming is two-fold. First, our 2018 Most Endangered Historic Places in Illinois has a Bicentennial theme. Because it is our most widely covered program, the Endangered list gives us a chance to highlight 200 years of stories. Despite this deep history, you'll see several early Illinois buildings in this extended issue of *The Arch* that are unconscionably under threat. Read what you can do to take action.

Our monthly, free Snapshots lectures will provide a venue to hear from scholars preserving places of relevance to the Bicentennial. This public education component also fits with our strategic plan goal to provide a platform to tell people's stories of preserving place. I hope that you were able to join us in early May for board member Jean Follett's phenomenal lecture about the Sheldon Peck Home in Lombard, one of Illinois' Underground Railroad sites. Jean is working with local advocates trying to preserve this 1839 site, including an effort to list the home in the National Register of Historic Places.

If you enjoy hearing stories of perseverance in preservation, please join us for this year's annual member meeting. In the vein of telling people's stories, we are taking you to the Anthony Overton Elementary School in Chicago's Bronzeville neighborhood to hear from developer Ghian Foreman about his efforts to repurpose this closed former Chicago Public School. Take a tour of the building, which was designed by famed school architects Perkins & Will and completed in 1963. Come hear about the Landmarks Illinois accomplishments made possible through your support, as well as an announcement of the first loan from our new Reinvestment Program. Mark your calendar for Monday, June 25, for this free member event. (If you receive this newsletter, you are a member.) I look forward to seeing you and profiling just some of the 235 historic places we have helped in the last year because of your membership.

Very best regards



Bonnie McDonald President & CEO LANDMARKS ILLINOIS 2018 MOST ENDANGERED HISTORIC PLACES IN ILLINOIS

### PEOPLE SAVING PLACES

Landmarks Illinois announced its 2018 Most Endangered Historic Places on April 25 in Springfield. This year's Most Endangered sites commemorate unique points in our state's 200-year history in honor of the Illinois Bicentennial. Below, we focus on just a few of these sites - from the State Fairground buildings in Springfield and Du Quoin where hundreds of thousands of visitors gather each year for fair activities that celebrate Illinois' agricultural history, to an assembly hall on the South Side of Chicago that shaped the social and cultural landscape of the Bronzeville neighborhood. These, and the other 2018 Most Endangered sites, are places that represent Illinois' past as well as its future and require attention so they can live on and continue to tell the story of our state.



JAMES R. THOMPSON CENTER

SECOND CHURCH OF CHRIST, SCIENTIST Chicago

THE FORUM Chicago

CHAUTAUQUAS & TABERNACLES

VARSITY THEATER BLOCK

THE NITE SPOT CAFÉ Fairmont City

CENTRAL CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH Galesburg

EARLY SETTLEMENT-ERA BUILDINGS Geneva

OLD NICHOLS LIBRARY Naperville

KINCAID MOUNDS Pope and Massac Counties

#### STATE FAIRGROUNDS BUILDINGS

Illinois has two State Fairs - one in Springfield and another in Du Quoin, buildings in need of roof repairs and other immediate attention is the Coliseum designed by W. H. Reeves of the Peoria architectural firm Reeves and Baillie. The building originally was designed for horse and livestock shows, but has been closed since October 2016. Barn 13, built in 1909 and also at the Springfield State Fairgrounds, has suffered water damage and is need of approximately \$100,000 in repairs. At the Du Qoin State Fairgrounds, the Grandstand building also needs roof the site by this summer. repairs. Although this Art Deco structure, built in 1947, is the largest building on the fairgrounds, no agreement has been made as to how to pay for the necessary restoration work.

#### STRAN-STEEL HOUSE

The Stran-Steel House, built of steel and baked iron enamel, was originally

created for the "Homes of Tomorrow" exhibit at the 1933 Century of Progress Fair in Chicago. It was designed for the and both sites are home to a number of Stan-Steel Corporation of Detroit to feature the company's modern product restoration work. A building that requires for residential construction. Despite its historical significance, the 1,300-squarebuilding in Springfield, built in 1901 and foot home, relocated to Wilmette after the Fair, is not protected and was only recently authenticated. The current owner purchased the property with the intention of using the lot to build two new homes, and the Wilmette Village Board has approved the development plan. The owner has offered the home to anyone willing to move it, but time is short as construction is anticipated to begin on

#### THE NITE SPOT CAFÉ

Located in Fairmont City along Route 66, the Nite Spot Café is an iconic stop along Illinois' portion of the "Mother Road" featuring a mid-century neon sign that continues to grab the attention of passersby. In 1947, a local family purchased the one-room building that

would become the café and renovated it into a restaurant that catered to tourists and truckers traveling on Route 66. The café also sold personal care items, household goods and gifts that truck drivers could purchase on their way home. The café closed in 1984. Today, the vacant space is in need of structural repairs and is threatened with demolition.

#### THE FORUM

The Forum in Chicago's Bronzeville neighborhood was constructed in 1897 and served as an assembly hall that, throughout its history, attracted musical greats like Nat King Cole and Muddy Watters. It also was the site of important civil and labor rights meetings. Use of the space dwindled in the 1970s, and by the 1990s, the once vibrant hall sat vacant, suffering from over 40 years of deferred maintenance. Local community development firm, Urban Juncture, Inc., saved The Forum from demolition when it purchased the building in 2011 and has since invested \$250,000 toward its stabilization. The Forum still requires significant rehabilitation to return it to a lively community space. Investment dollars for this unique historic building on a retail corridor challenged by decades of disinvestment have been difficult to secure. In addition, the city's Building Department continues to threaten demolition.

For more information on LI's 2018 Most Endangered Historic Places, visit our website www.Landmarks.org.

Clockwise from top right: The Forum in Chicago's Bronzeville neighborhood.

Kincaid Mounds near Brookport. (credit: Mike Walker, Kincaid Mounds Support Organization)

Central Congregational Church in Galesburg.

The Stran Steele House in Wilmette.

The Coliseum building in Springfield is among the many state fairground buildings in need of restoration and a new roof. 12. The Nite Spot Café in Fairmont City.



These are places that represent Illinois' past as well as its future and require attention so they can live on and continue to tell the story of our state.



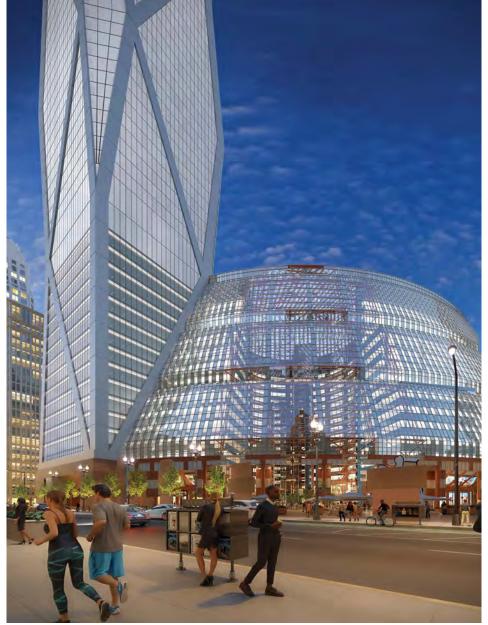


LANDMARKS ILLINOIS 2018 MOST ENDANGERED HISTORIC PLACES IN ILLINOIS

### THOMPSON CENTER REIMAGINED

Landmarks Illinois included the James R. Thompson Center on its annual Most Endangered Historic Places in Illinois in 2017 and again this year in 2018, demonstrating its extraordinary significance.

The building is now one of only four sites that have a repeat appearance on the 24-year-old annual Most Endangered list. At the time of LI's 2017 listing, the Illinois General Assembly was planning legislation for an accelerated sale of the building. While Gov. Bruce Rauner vetoed the bill, it remains a goal of his administration to sell the building, viewing the site as a valuable asset that could accommodate a new skyscraper in the heart of Chicago's downtown and bring needed revenue to the state. As the building continues to be threatened, Landmarks Illinois commissioned renderings that visually demonstrate Thompson Center reused as an exciting mixed-use destination, which could include the addition of a super tower at the southwest corner of the block to maximize zoning and revenue on the site.





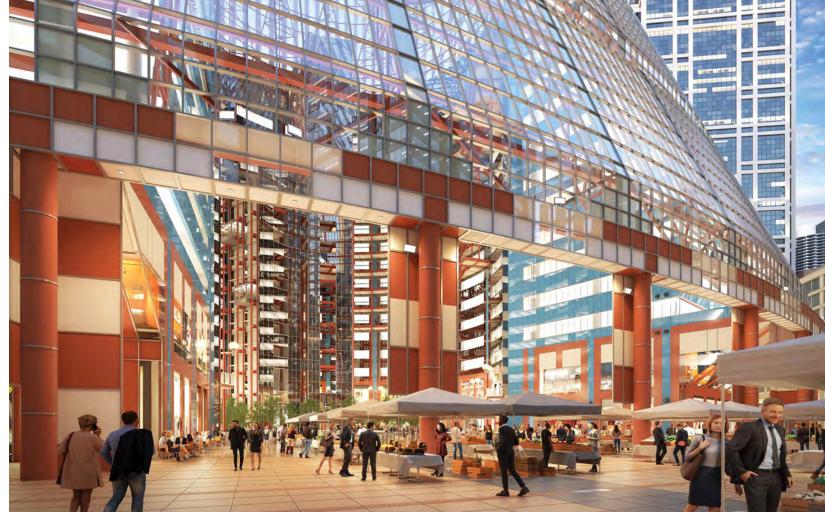
Clockwise from left: Adding a tower at the southwestern corner preserves the dramatic, public atrium while providing cash flow to underwrite Thompson Center's revitalization. As proposed by Thompson Center architect, Helmut Jahn, last year, the super tower could accommodate residential and hotel uses.

Thompson Center is renewed by enclosing living and working spaces and opening the atrium to expand public use.

The renewed Thompson Center is open at the ground floor as Chicago's most dramatic public plaza. This design changes removes four, two-story entrance bays at the plaza and similar removals at LaSalle and Lake Streets, creating open connections between the outside and the voluminous atrium.

Thompson Center is a civic landmark that will remain a public amenity while being transformed by the private market. The renewed plaza and open atrium could feature cafes, seasonal food markets and expanded retail space as well as landscaping and public art.

(Credit: visualizedconcepts)





#### **VARSITY THEATER BLOCK** EVANSTON —

The 1700 block of Sherman Avenue is one of the last remaining historically intact blocks in downtown Evanston. The Evanston Preservation Commission's 2007 survey of downtown's historic buildings identified the former Varsity Theater and the building at 1712-22 Sherman Avenue as possessing architectural merit. Evanston's 2009 Downtown Plan identified three "Traditional Zones," which included this block. The plan aimed to "Protect and rehabilitate character-giving buildings...that provide historical and architectural context to the downtown." While a recent proposal to replace the buildings with a high-rise development was withdrawn, multiple high-rise proposals have demonstrated that development pressure is threatening these "Traditional Zones."

#### **ROCK ISLAND COUNTY COURTHOUSE ROCK ISLAND**

Serving as the seat of county government since 1897, the Rock Island County Courthouse is threatened by demolition following the completion of a new Justice Center in late 2018. While the authority to retain or demolish the historic courthouse resides with the county board, members of the Public Building Commission have been lobbying for the ability to clear the site for green space. Unsubstantiated cost estimates are frequently cited to support calls for demolition. Yet public support for courthouse reuse remains strong, and evaluating reuse options and cost estimates would be the most fiscally responsible use of taxpayer funds.

#### **SECOND CHURCH OF CHRIST, SCIENTIST** CHICAGO

This significant, 1899 S.S. Beman-designed church is for sale and unprotected. It is in the National Registerlisted Lakeview Historic District, which is only honorific. It cannot be landmarked without owner consent. The Lakeview neighborhood continues to experience strong development pressure. Neighbors and the alderman want to see the building saved and reused. Christian Science churches (like so many others) continue to close as their membership declines. Although the building would be ideal for community use, especially with its tiered theater seating, the \$1 million-plus price tag makes that an unlikely outcome.



#### UPDATES ON PREVIOUS "MOST ENDANGERED" SITES

## IN THE FIELD



#### HARLEY CLARKE MANSION Evanston

On April 9, the Evanston City Council voted against entering into a lease agreement with Evanston Lakehouse & Gardens (ELHG), the nonprofit citizens group formed to rehabilitate and reuse the city-owned lakefront mansion, which the city had considered for demolition after a long-time cultural institution vacated. ELHG hoped to convert the building to a multi-purpose venue for environmental education, community events and cultural programming. Since the mansion was included on LI's 2016 Most Endangered Historic Places in Illinois, the city formed a Harley Clarke Planning Committee, which after a nine-month study, recommended the city enter into a lease agreement with ELHG. In the city's subsequent Request for Proposals process, ELHG was the only qualifying organization to submit. It is now unclear what next steps the city will take to address the future of this vacant, historic landmark. For more information, go to: http://evanstonlakehouse.org/.



#### MCKEE HOUSE Lombard/Glen Ellyn

The McKee Preservation Group (MPG) recently renegotiated parts of an intergovernmental agreement with the DuPage County Forest Preserve and the Village of Glen Ellyn that gives the Village an immediate lease agreement. This will allow access to the property for MPG, a volunteer group, to do clean-up and condition assessments. It will also help with fundraising efforts. MPG is now raising \$65,000 to replace the roof. Citizens for Glen Ellyn Preservation has contributed \$10,000, and Landmarks Illinois has provided a \$2,000 grant through its Preservation Heritage Fund. McKee House was included on LI's 2017 Most Endangered Historic Places in Illinois. The 1936, Colonial Revival home built by the Federal Works Progress Administration functioned as a forest preserve headquarters and superintendent's home. It was closed by the DuPage County Forest Preserve in 2002. MPG welcomes donations, volunteers and potential board members. Contact: McKeePreservationGroup@gmail.com





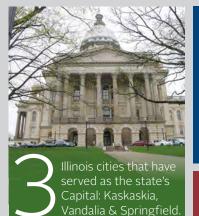
#### URSULINE ACADEMY Springfield

In March, Benedictine University officials announced they will close the Springfield branch of the university, which includes the historic Ursuline Academy buildings. Two of the buildings date to the 1860s, when the Ursuline order of Catholic nuns opened the all-girls school in Springfield. Landmarks Illinois listed Ursuline Academy on its 2008 Most Endangered Historic Places in Illinois, prior to the school's closure in 2009. Benedictine University took over the campus in 2009 but has struggled with low enrollment and deferred maintenance, which it says totals approximately \$5 million. The 1869 Brinkerhoff Home is listed in the National Register of Historic Places, while several other campus buildings have been determined eligible for listing. Finding a developer with experience in preservation incentives, like the Federal Historic Tax Credit, will be key to achieving a preservation solution for Ursuline Academy.



Illinois is celebrating its Bicentennial this year. In honor of our state's 200-year anniversary, here are some interesting facts you should know:





# \$18,000 ===

The amount the General Assembly appropriated in 1855 to build the Executive Mansion in Springfield. The home was designed by Chicago architect John M. Van Osdel.



12.8 million The number of residents in Illinois in 2017.







### GRANT PROFILES Preservation Heritage Fund Grant

#### SHELBYVILLE CHAUTAUQUA AUDITORIUM Shelbyville

The Shelbyville Chautauqua Auditorium, located in Shelbyville's Forest Park, is a circular-shaped, wood-clad building with 20 sides and a 150-foot diameter clear span with a patented radial roof truss system. The auditorium was built in 1903 and is the largest building of its kind in the world.

The Chautaugua Auditorium Preservation Committee has been working recently to determine the specific needs and priorities to repair the building. The Committee will use the \$5,000 Preservation Heritage Fund grant from Landmarks Illinois to address the most immediate need: shoring up the southeast corner of the building in preparation for a roof restoration project planned for later this year.

#### MCCORMICK HOUSE Elmhurst

In 1952, Mies van der Rohe designed a home for Robert Hall McCormick III and his wife. Isabella Gardner. The house—one of

only three single family homes designed by Mies in the United States—originally served two purposes: it was home to the McCormick family and a prototype for a proposed group of smaller, affordable homes in nearby Melrose Park that McCormick was planning to develop. The glass and steel home served as a prototype for this unbuilt series of speculative houses and served as a lab for Mies' design development.

In the early 1990s, the Elmhurst Art Museum purchased the house and moved it to its current location to become part of the new art museum. The house was physically connected to the existing museum building. The Museum wishes to detach the two buildings and restore the original entry to the McCormick House. With the assistance of the \$5,000 Preservation Heritage Fund Grant from Landmarks Illinois, in June 2018, the full exterior of the McCormick House will be visible for the first time in over 20 years, complete with its original carport and new front door, allowing the full design of the house to be better recognized.

### MEET LIZ SAFANDA

Liz Safanda is the Executive Director of Preservation Partners of Fox Valley (PPFV), which was founded as **Restorations of Kane County in 1974** by a group of dedicated women who organized to save the 1843 Durant House located in the LeRoy Oakes Forest Preserve. Safanda began volunteering with the group in 1979 with the restoration of the Beith House in St. Charles, and in 1985, she became one of two of the group's first paid employees. After 39 years with the organization, Safanda is retiring. We asked Sadanda to reflect on the nearly four decades with Preservation **Partners of Fox Valley.** 



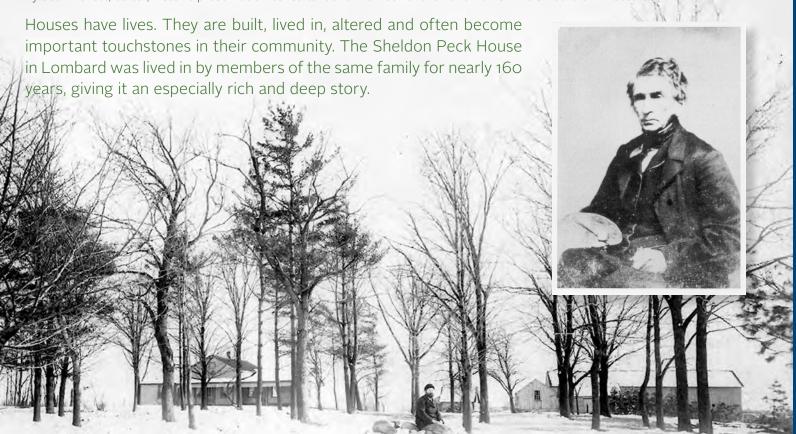


aligned us with new partners who care of preserving our past for the future.

### SHELDON PECK HOUSE

ONE OF THE BEST DOCUMENTED UNDERGROUND RAILROAD SITES IN ILLINOIS

By Jean Follett, editor, historic preservation consultant and member of the Landmarks Illinois Board of Directors



in Chicago from upstate New York in rough town of fewer than 4,000 people. Sheldon had been an itinerant portrait painter since the 1820s, traveling up and down the Erie Canal plying his trade. Harriet raised merino sheep to provide a steady source of cash from the farm. Having been in Vermont and along the Erie Canal, the Pecks had lived in the heartland of three of the strongest reform movements of the early 19th-century: and Abolitionism. They brought to Illinois a passionate devotion to all three.

family headed west, to a piece of high young settlement of Babcock's Grove. In newly built, two-room house on 80 acres. household to household. The Peck

Harriet and Sheldon Peck arrived This house still stands today—one of the oldest houses in suburban Chicago.

the fall of 1836 when Chicago was a As the Peck family and the town grew,



evangelical Protestantism, Temperance summers were spent working on the farm, attending church and hosting Temperance picnics. In the winter, Sheldon would hit the road with his painting supplies. His The Pecks spent their first winter in travel and his speaking abilities enabled Chicago. The following spring the him to actively participate in the antislavery network that existed in western ground along St. Charles Road in the and northern Illinois. He carried antislavery newspapers and the stories just east of downtown Lombard, ready November of 1839, they moved into their behind the news as he traveled from

homestead was soon hosting important Abolitionist speakers and serving as a stop on the Underground Railroad, in defiance of federal law.

After the Civil War, the little house by the railroad continued its busy life, as the town of Lombard grew up around it in the early decades of the 20th century. Everyone knew the Pecks as a founding family and, when it came time, there was no question that their house must be saved. With the city taking ownership in 1996, a full-scale rehabilitation plan was prepared while local researchers began painstakingly documenting the house and its stories. Thanks to their work, the Sheldon Peck House has emerged as one of the best documented Underground Railroad sites in Illinois. Today the house continues to stand by the railroad tracks, and waiting to tell its amazing story.

(Photos courtesy of Jean Follett)



Landmarks Illinois: What about Princeton's architecture, history and character make it a unique place in Illinois?

Mayor Joel Quiram: The city is unique in its layout. It has a 2-mile, traditional main street. It has two separate and distinct business districts, with a standalone county courthouse sitting on a New England-style square that is surrounded with a mix of businesses and residential housing.



LI: Why did you support the process of listing Princeton on the National Register of Historic Places?

been, always will be. The potential of this doing so. Revitalization will make it so. community has never been realized. Our historic past is significant. We've known LI: In what ways do you plan to leverage new group of involved residents, youth Register Historic Districts in Princeton? mixed with community experience, have set us on this path. My support is nothing JQ: We consider it a great honor. We more than a natural reaction, a natural are currently planning marketing progression for a great community.

## PRINCETON MAYOR JOEL QUIRAM

TALKS ABOUT NATIONAL REGISTER LISTINGS. PLANS FOR DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION

Early this year, two of Princeton's unique downtown districts were named to the National Register of Historic Places. This follows two years of collaboration to revitalize Princeton's downtown between city officials, Landmarks Illinois and community organizations, supported by a grant from the Richard H. Driehaus Foundation. Landmarks recently asked Joel Quiram, Princeton's Mayor, about the ongoing revitalization efforts.



revitalization efforts?

his home here. And the family members the path we're on. of America's first national poet, William Cullen Bryant, settled this town and are buried here. Our historic buildings stood as they walked here. Several housed them for speeches, performances and a couple served as overnight accommodations. These buildings speak of our past. They JQ: I'm all about Princeton, always have deserve every opportunity to continue

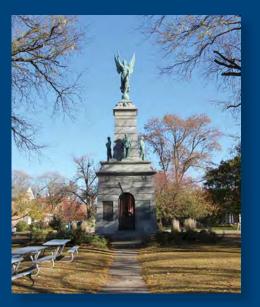
it, but have not fully appreciated it. A the two recently designated National

strategies highlighting our districts to

tourists. Strategies are being developed to market investment opportunities for business owners and outside developers interested in federal tax credits for renovating buildings.

LI: How have partnerships with organizations like Landmarks Illinois helped to advance your goals?

JQ: The Richard H. Driehaus Foundation is LI: How do you view the historic buildings a principal financial partner in the planning as part of Princeton's downtown of what we are accomplishing. The Illinois Institute of Rural Affairs, located at Western Illinois University, led the JQ: Princeton has a rich history. Abraham community vision workshops that helped Lincoln spoke here. Carl Sandburg courted set our goals in action. Nothing that we his wife Lilian Steichen here. Mark Twain have accomplished thus far could have lectured here at least twice. Owen Lovejoy been accomplished without Landmarks led a national abolitionist movement from Illinois and its leadership in putting us on





### Landmarks Illinois **Annual Meeting**

Monday, June 25, 2018 5:30 - 7:30 p.m. Anthony Overton Elementary School

An important example of Mid-Century Modern school design in Chicago, the Overton School was designed by Perkins & Will. The school opened in 1963 and served Chicago's Bronzeville neighborhood for 50 years before closing in 2013. The building was sold to the Washington Park Development Group in 2015, which is planning to convert the building to a work incubator space. Check our webpage for reservations and sponsorship opportunities: www.Landmarks.org/ events/annual-meeting.

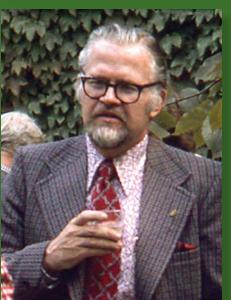
(Credit: Photo © Sandra Steinbrecher 2018)

### 2018 Legendary Landmarks Celebration

Landmarks Illinois held its 13th Annual Legendary Landmarks Celebration on March 8, 2018, at the Hilton Chicago. The event attracted over 830 guests, who helped LI honor the 2018 Legendary Landmarks: Daniel Levin, Founder and Chairman of The Habitat Company; Toni Preckwinkle, Cook County Board President; and Berglund Construction. LI supporters also helped raise more than \$850,000 to fund LI's Advocacy Program, the heart of our work. Thank you to everyone who joined us at the 2018 Celebration! To view photos, read more about the Legendary Landmarks and learn more about this annual event, visit our website.



Landmarks Illinois President & CEO Bonnie McDonald; 2018 Legendary Landmark Daniel Levin, Founder and Chairman of The Habitat Company; Landmarks Illinois Vice Chair Sandra Rand; 2018 Legendary Landmark Toni Preckwinkle, Cook County Board President; President of 2018 Corporate Landmark Berglund Construction, Fred Berglund; Landmarks Illinois Board Chair Mark Henning. (credit: Pivot-Photography)



### Tribute

Wilbert R. Hasbrouck, a Chicago preservation architect and former Landmarks Illinois Board member, passed away in February 2018. Hasbrouck served on the Landmarks Illinois Board of Directors from 1971-74. Throughout his career, he restored historic structures including Frank Lloyd Wright's Dana-Thomas House in Springfield and the Manhattan Building in Chicago. He also helped save the Glessner House, at 1800 S. Prairie Ave., from demolition and he was involved in moving the 1836 Clarke House, known as Chicago's oldest home, back to the Near South Side.

(Courtesy of Glessner House)



#### **SAVE THE DATE**

June 8, 2018

### **Skyline Council Pub Crawl**

Chicago Loop

More details coming soon!

### CONTRIBUTIONS

### THANKS TO OUR SUPPORTERS

#### DECEMBER 16, 2017 - MARCH 24, 2018

Through membership dues, contributions, event sponsorship and grants, Landmarks Illinois is able to preserve, protect and promote Illinois' historic buildings and sites. The Board of Directors, volunteers and staff sincerely thank all our supporters for their contributions. However, space allows us to only list the following.

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