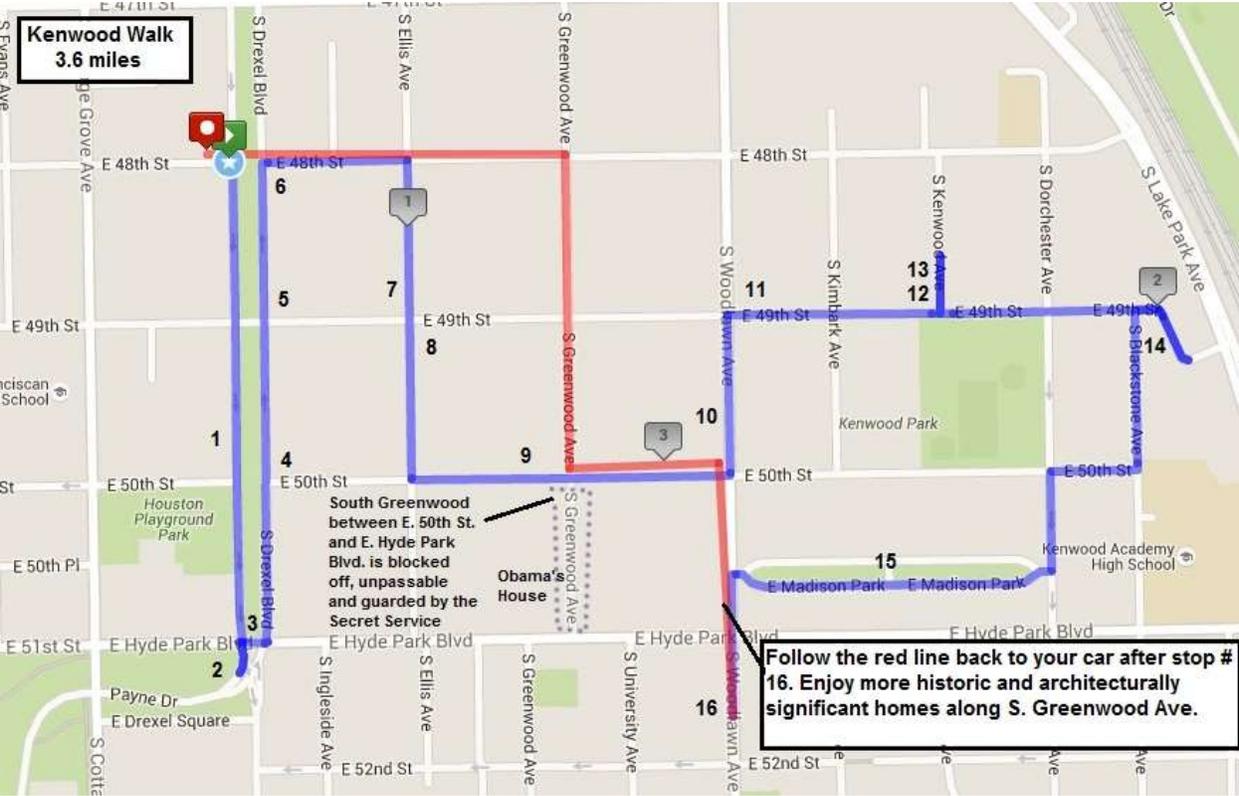


Kenwood Walk



The first resident of Kenwood was John Kennicott who named his home Kenwood after his ancestral land in Scotland. When the Illinois Central built a small depot in the area, they named the station Kenwood and eventually the area became known as Kenwood. Kenwood developed between 1850 and 1880 as a pleasant respite from the congestion of the city. Kenwood became home to many of Chicago’s most prominent citizens and was referred to as the “Lake Forest of the South Side.” It was annexed to Chicago in 1889.

The Historical Kenwood District is on the National Register of Historic Places as are some of its most notable homes. Architectural styles ranging from Italianate and Colonial Revival to Queen Anne and Prairie School can be found here.

Drive to E. 48th Street and Drexel Boulevard and look for a place to park along Drexel Boulevard or nearby. Walk south down the boulevard on the west side of the boulevard and take in the homes on the way to your first stop.

1.) 4938 S. Drexel Blvd., McGill House

One of the grandest mansions in the Kenwood community, the McGill House is a commanding presence on Drexel Boulevard, one of Chicago’s most impressive South-Side boulevards. The massively-scaled “picturesque” mansion was constructed in 1891 as the residence of physician

and entrepreneur Dr. John A. McGill. Drawing inspiration from medieval and French Renaissance building traditions, the McGill House, designed by nationally noted architect Henry Ives Cobb, is an exceptional early example of Châteauesque-style architecture. Following the completion of the McGill House, Cobb was instrumental in the planning of the campus of the University of Chicago and the design of eighteen of the campus's striking Gothic structures in the nearby Hyde Park neighborhood. Cobb's skillful execution of traditional designs made him an outstanding architect in Chicago during the late 19th century and earned him a national reputation as one of the premier architects working during this period in historic revivalist styles. Besides the University of Chicago buildings, he also designed the Newberry Library, the (recently restored) Chicago Athletic Club at 12 S. Michigan and the Harry Caray Restaurant Building on Kinzie.

In 1928 the house became the Carrie McGill Memorial YWCA Building. At that time a three story limestone addition, in a simplified version of the Châteauesque style, was added to the rear of the McGill House, forming a "T" in plan. Respectfully set back from the main residence, the addition was designed by architects Berlin & Swern. Today the house is home to 34 Condominiums.

(from The Chicago Landmark Designation Report on McGill House)

2.) S. Drexel Blvd and E. Hyde Park Blvd in Drexel Square: Francis M. Drexel Memorial Fountain

The oldest public sculpture in Chicago, the figure at the top of this elaborate fountain represents Francis M. Drexel (1792-1863), Austrian-born banker, real estate speculator and founder of brokerage house Drexel and Company, based in Philadelphia. Although Drexel did not live in Chicago, he owned land in the city that he came by through a foreclosure and donated a portion to be used as a boulevard bearing his name. Drexel's two sons, Francis A. and Anthony J. Drexel, commissioned Henry Manger, a Philadelphia sculptor from Germany, to create this \$40,000 bronze and granite monument. The four bronze bas-relief panels feature the god of oceans, Neptune, riding a dolphin, as well as other figures representing lakes, rivers and springs. In 1888, the Drexel brothers funded the addition of jets to allow water to run continuously in the fountain.

Following a series of restorations over the decades, the fountain suffered neglect and was inoperable until the early 2000s, when the Chicago Department of Transportation and Public Building Department performed the repairs necessary to allow the water to flow again.

(from <http://chicagopublicart.blogspot.com/>)

3.) E. Hyde Park Blvd at the base of the green median on Drexel Blvd

There is an interesting sign about the Boulevards of Chicago, including Drexel Blvd.

4.) 930 E. 50th St., Rainbow Push Coalition

This building was built in the 1920s, but I couldn't find any history on it, despite its impressive presence on the boulevard.

5.) 4851 S. Drexel Blvd., Martin Antoine Ryerson House and Coach House

1887; Treat and Foltz, architects

Of those men and women whose contributions to the civic life of Chicago have had a profound and lasting effect, Martin A. Ryerson is rightly placed in the very forefront. Unquestionably among the commercial leaders of the city—the Corn Exchange National Bank, Northern Trust Company, and Elgin National Watch Company were among his directorships—it was in education and art that he was most significant: most probably neither the University of Chicago nor the Art Institute of Chicago would be what they are had it not been for him.

He was one of the University's most important early benefactors. His efforts on behalf of the Art Institute were, if possible, even more significant. He gave his entire collection, one of the most wide ranging in the nation, to the museum. Despite innumerable subsequent gifts and purchases, the Mr. and Mrs. Martin A. Ryerson Collection retains the core of the Art Institute's holdings.

The French Impressionist Paintings seen today at the Art Institute once hung on the walls of this house.

(from: National Register of Historic Places)

6.) 4801 S. Drexel Blvd., Moses Born Residence

1901; Frost and Granger, architects

Moses Born, a native of Germany, came to Chicago in 1876 and engaged in the retail clothing business. In 1877, he began the firm of M. Born and Co., wholesale tailors "to the trade." The house is covered in smooth-faced limestone.

(from: National Register of Historic Places)

7.) 4848 S. Ellis Ave., Gustavus Franklin Swift House

1898; Flanders and Zimmerman, architects

This meatpacker's palazzo features sweeping verandas, Palladian windows, and at each corner of the third floor, a terra cotta lion bearing a shield emblazoned with a huge S.

(from AIA Guide to Chicago)

Gustavus F. Swift, one of the great figures in the business world, not only of Chicago, but of the nation, came to the city in 1875 as the cattle buyer for the Boston firm of Hathaway and Swift. Two years later, he entered the packing business on his own, and,

by 1880, had opened eastern markets to western dressed beef through his pioneering use of refrigerator cars. The result was a revolution, not only at Chicago's Union Stock Yards, but in the nation's whole business of supplying perishable food products. By 1918 Swift and Co. was second in volume among the nation's businesses, exceeded only by U.S. Steel.

Aside from his importance in the development of American industry, Gustavus Swift was also a philanthropist of at least local significance. Among the recipients of his generosity were Northwestern University, the University of Chicago and the Hyde Park Y.M.C.A. (from National Register of Historic Places)

Another notable home is on the NE Corner of 49th and Ellis (4849 S. Ellis Ave.), just across from the Swift and Rosenwald homes. The interior was filmed as Kelsey Grammar's house in "Boss", a TV show about a Chicago mayor that aired from 2011-2012 and only ran two seasons.

8.) 4901 S. Ellis Ave., Julius Rosenwald House and Coach House

1903; Nimmons and Fellows, architects

The outlines of the career of Julius Rosenwald can only begin to indicate the enormous influence he had on Chicago and the nation. He came to Chicago in 1885 and joined Sears, Roebuck and Company in 1895, acquiring a half interest in the company. Closely identified with the rise of the mail order firm and personally responsible for much of its rapid growth, he was its president from 1910 until 1925, when he became chairman of the board.

Important as Julius Rosenwald was in the development of American merchandising techniques, his significance as a philanthropist cannot be termed secondary. He gave the University of Chicago \$5 million in his lifetime, and many, many millions to housing and education in the disadvantaged rural south. One of his last gifts also produced one of the most visible monuments to his charity: an initial \$3 million to restore the World's Columbian Exposition Palace of Fine Arts and establish it as an industrial museum. Those millions finally swelled to \$7.5 million and gave Chicago the Museum of Science and Industry.

(from National Register of Historic Places)

Regarding the house: "Apart from such Prairie School elements as the hipped roof and Roman brick, it's otherwise a grand, styleless galoot." (from AIA Guide to Chicago)

9.) 1030 E. 50th Street, Ezra S. Brainerd House

1867, Architect Unknown

Built by a Civil War soldier with his mustering-out money, this back lot frame house with an extensive veranda evokes Kenwood's era as a community of lakefront cottages.
(from AIA guide to Chicago)

10.) 4944 S. Woodlawn Ave., Muhammad Ali House

Muhammad Ali, the famous heavy weight boxer, once lived here to be closer to his spiritual mentor, Elijah Muhammad.

11.) 4855 S. Woodlawn Ave., Former home of Elijah Muhammad, Current home of Louis Farrakhan

12.) 4858 S. Kenwood Ave., George Blossom House

1892, Frank Lloyd Wright, Architect

To supplement his salary, Wright began taking on independent commissions in violation of his five-year contract with Louis Sullivan. Known as the "bootleg houses," these early designs typically reflect historical architectural styles, yet exhibit elements that would manifest themselves fully in Wright's mature Prairie style. Reflecting the nineteenth-century taste for academic Colonial Revival design, the George Blossom house is nearly symmetrical in plan. A library, reception room, and living room radiate from a hall, and Palladian windows are distributed evenly across the first floor of the western elevation. A semi-circular conservatory at the rear of the building echoes the covered, columned porch at its front. Despite the Colonial design of the exterior, interior elements, such as the centrally located fireplace framed by an inglenook, also appear in Wright's more progressive designs. (From Frank Lloyd Wright Trust)

13.) 4852 Kenwood Ave., Warren McArthur House

1892 Frank Lloyd Wright, Architect

The McArthur house was designed as a "bootleg" project for Wright's friend, Warren McArthur, and his family. Wright built the house at age 24, moonlighting for some extra cash to support his new family. Its dormered gambrel roof and octagonal bays are reminiscent of the Queen Anne style, as well as the architecture of Joseph Lyman Silsbee, Wright's former employer. Wright had a longstanding relationship with the McArthur family. Warren McArthur's eldest son, Albert, eventually became an architect. He apprenticed under Wright at the Oak Park Studio from 1907 to 1909 and is well known for his design of the Arizona Biltmore Hotel in Phoenix. (from Frank Lloyd Wright Trust)

In 2013, Col. Jennifer Pritzker wanted to buy this house and the Blossom House next door, restore them and turn them into bed and breakfast houses. There was some vocal opposition in the community and the deal never happened.

14.) 4904 S. Lake Park Avenue, Blackstone Library

1904 Solon S. Beman, Architect

The Blackstone Library is a stately Classical Revival-style building designed by Chicago architect Solon S. Beman, the noted designer of the industrial town of Pullman. It was presented as a gift to the city by Isabel Norton Blackstone in honor of her late husband, Timothy Beach Blackstone, a Chicago railroad executive and philanthropist. It was the first Chicago Public Library branch. Timothy Blackstone died of pneumonia in 1900 at the age of 71 at his home on S. Michigan Avenue. The home was at the present-day location of the Blackstone Hotel, and the hotel's name memorializes Blackstone. In addition to his executive position with the railroad, Blackstone was one of the incorporators and first president of the Chicago Union Stockyards.

Architect Solon S. Beman's design for the Blackstone Library draws from Classical and Italian Renaissance precedents. The domed rotunda at the Blackstone Library provides a formal and grand entrance to the interior; the space retains its Classical-style floor mosaics, marble-clad walls and columns, and domed ceiling with murals. (From Chicago Landmark Designation Report)

15.) East Madison Park Avenue

This street along the official Kenwood/Hyde Park border is one of just a few private residential parkways in Chicago. All buildings overlook the green parkway and the neighborhood feels very "tucked away" from the city.

16.) 5132 S. Woodlawn Ave., Isidore Heller House

1896 Frank Lloyd Wright, Architect

As the 1890s came to a close Wright experimented with several elongated building plans that connected a series of distinct spaces along a continuous axis. The designs were markedly different from the square plans that characterized Wright's earlier houses, and helped shape the plans of Wright's mature Prairie buildings.

The Isidore Heller house occupies a long, narrow lot in Chicago's Hyde Park neighborhood. Conforming to the irregular shape of the lot, the plan is arranged along a horizontal axis that extends back from the building's street façade. The horizontal emphasis of the design is countered by the vertical form of the building which incorporates a substantial third floor playroom and servants' rooms. The arcaded exterior of the third floor displays a frieze of classically-garbed maidens adapted from Wright's cover design for the *Eve of St. Agnes*, published by his friend and client William Winslow in 1896. The sculpture was executed by Wright's frequent collaborator, Richard Bock, who designed integral sculptural elements for several of Wright's most important Prairie buildings, including the Dana and Martin houses, and the Larkin Administration building. (From Frank Lloyd Wright Trust)

Follow the red line on the map back to your car and enjoy viewing more of the stately and architecturally significant homes of Kenwood.

