

2003

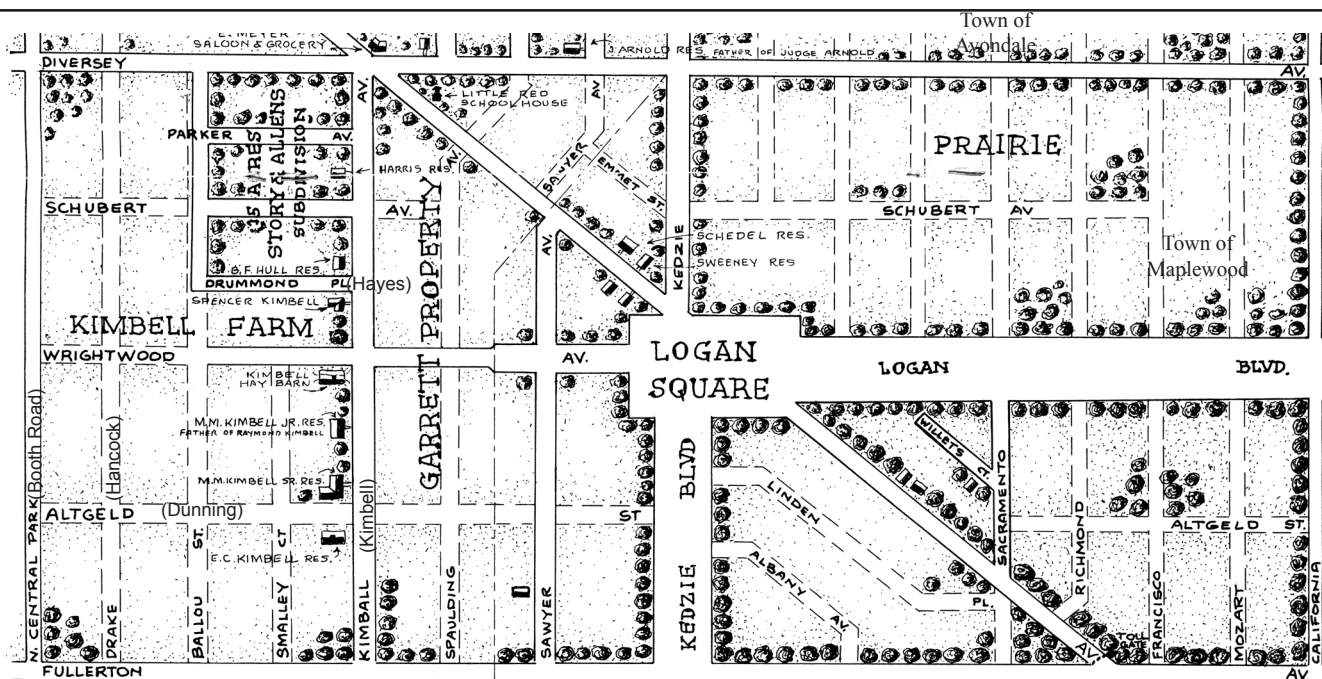
House and Garden Walk

featuring the houses and gardens of Kimbell's farm and the historic town of Jefferson.



Saturday, September 6, 2003

Presented By
Logan Square Preservation



Map of the "Town of Jefferson" in 1881

Logan Square was settled by Martin Kimbell in 1836

In 1800 Logan Square, a vast prairie of grasses and wildflowers, was home to deer, wolves, small fur bearing animals and wild fowl. Trees grew mainly along the banks of the Chicago River on its eastern boundary. Although Indians never established permanent settlements here because the land was too marshy, they did create a trail through it from the mouth of the Chicago River to Milwaukee and frequently entered the area in search of food. This trail later was used by early wagon trains carrying new settlers westward and finally became Milwaukee Avenue.

Fur traders came in 1810 in search of raccoon, beaver, fox and muskrat pelts. Although a few built small cabins, no permanent settlers lived here until 1836 when 24 year old Martin Nelson Kimbell arrived from New York. Originally, Martin considered purchasing land near what is now Dearborn and Lake Streets, but he claimed it was too muddy for farming, so he rode his horse northwest along the Indian trail to what is now Kimball Avenue (notice the street name spelling was changed from "bell" to "ball"). Here he purchased 160 acres at \$2.50 each from the Federal government, an area bounded by Kimball on the east, Hamlin on the west, Diversey on the north and Fullerton on the south. A wooden farm house was built on Kimball Avenue with a barn situated in the corner of the property near Altgeld (Dunning Street) (photo at top).

Due to the marshy condition of the soil, hay was all that could be grown initially. In 1837, after selling 500 tons of hay in one year, he had enough money to marry a descen-

dent of the Pilgrims, Sarah Smalley (photo below: Martin and Sarah) from upper New York, and they raised two daughters and six sons, building homes on Kimball Avenue for them (cover: Kimbell family home #4 on walk).

Since new settlers required temporary housing, in 1840 Martin built and managed a small hotel and store along the trail called the "Prairie Grocery", later changing its name to the "Live and Let Live Hotel", which included a bar and entertainment. Since food was needed not only for horses but also people, in 1841 he hired several workers to help dig ditches to drain his land, and he began growing vegetables for sale in his store. When this proved profitable, he converted more land from hay to vegetables and began trucking the produce into Chicago. Martin Kimbell supplied early settlers with provisions delivered door to door. His business lead to the formation of "Northwest Plank Road" (Milwaukee Avenue). His sons created the Kimbell Saving Bank (Central Park and Fullerton) and the Kimbell Brick Company and his grandson Raymond subdivided lots for



housing development. Other farmers purchased land adjoining Kimbell's and the town of Jefferson was born. Following annexation to the City of Chicago in 1889, the area was renamed Logan Square in honor of General John A. Logan, the famous Civil War General who rode with Sherman in the decisive Battle of Atlanta, ran for Vice President of the United States and founded Memorial Day.

① 3325 W. Wrightwood Avenue - Grace Church



A lot at the southeast corner of Kimball and Wrightwood Avenue was donated by Martin Kimbell, Jr. in June 1904, and a chapel named Kimball Hall was erected on Kimball, just south of the present sanctuary. Soon the chapel which seated 150 people was too small for the growing congregation, so money was raised for a larger building. On Sunday, November 13, 1910 a cornerstone was laid for the present structure, and the church was dedicated on April 2, 1911.

In 1923, the church had over 500 members and became financially self-supporting. It no longer was considered a mission but a church, and its name was changed to Grace United Methodist Church of Logan Square. \$6,000 was raised for a pipe organ which occupied the entire back wall of the sanctuary (photo below), but in 1938 to modernize the altar, the organ pipes were covered. Recently, the interior

has been repainted and the congregation will celebrate its centennial next year.



During the day, the Intimate Opera will be rehearsing their next production, Puccini's "Suor Angelica", in the sanctuary of the church. Visitors are invited to quietly enjoy the rehearsal at any time.

The Intimate Opera was created in 2001 by dramatic soprano Nancy Henniger to provide a "unique up-close and personal" format to encourage citizens to enjoy the grand world of classic opera in an intimate setting. Come join us for relaxation and some wonderful music!

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② 2556 N. Kimball Avenue (1st Floor)

This house, commissioned in 1905 by Spencer S. Kimbell, President of the Kimbell Brick Company and son of the pioneer Martin Nelson Kimbell, was built on the site of the old family hay barn. In 1881, when the hay barn and farm were still operating, there were five families of Kimbells living in houses on Kimball Avenue between Diversey and Fullerton (the street spelling was changed to “Kimball” when the area was annexed to the City of Chicago in 1889). Around 1900, when the farm was subdivided, Mr. Kimbell kept this prime corner lot at Kimball and Wrightwood for himself and built a 2 1/2 story single family home designed by architect C. Whitney Stevens.

The exterior is a stately mix of Georgian and Colonial Revival Styles, including a symmetrical facade, full width front porch and a muscular balustrade. Deep red face brick with quoins at the corners and an arched top dormer complete the traditional look. Although the newly modern Prairie Style made only token appearances on the facade, such as the capitals on the massive brick porch pilasters, it dominates

the interior design. For all the discipline that the Kimball facade demonstrates, the Wrightwood facade is relaxed, with a Prairie Style, ganged window arrangement in the stair hall. It is here and on the south facade that the interior room arrangement governs the placement of the windows. Note the very narrow second story windows on the north and south sides, which provided much needed daylight to closets before electric lighting was common.

In the 1930's, the first floor was converted into a doctor's office, in the 1940's it became a rooming house, and in the 1960's it was re-configured into a 6-flat. Seven years ago the current owners began restoring the original configuration. Although some interior features were removed or damaged during previous renovations, several amazing features remained sealed within the walls for many years. This house represents not only important architectural style and beauty, but also is a reminder of Logan Square's early history from a farming to a residential community.

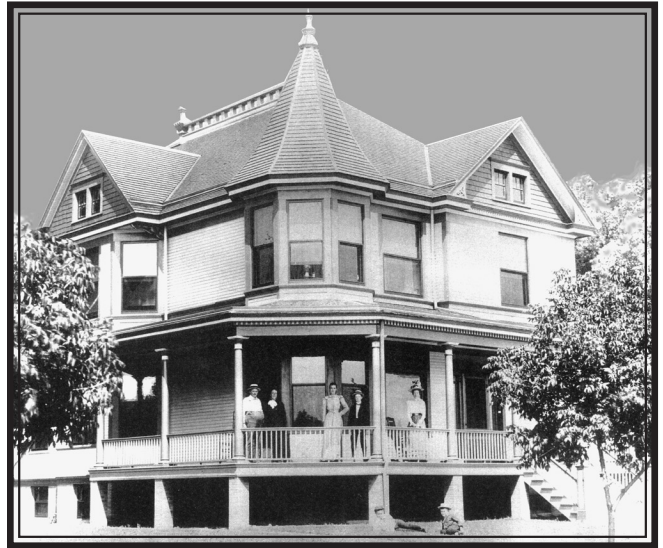


③ 2556 N. Kimball Avenue (3rd Floor)

This unique apartment was originally servants quarters for the Spencer Kimball Family and contained five bedrooms, a sitting room and a common bathroom. After years of being rented as individual rooms, the spaces were most recently rethought and turned into one apartment, creating a very open plan. The current residents have taken advantage of this unique space, within the low sloping roof and eaves of this spectacular house and created a beautiful environment from this series of rooms and are a nice addition to this famed residence.

④ 2524 N. Kimball Avenue (not open today)

While walking south down Kimball Avenue, please note three other Kimbell houses (there are five on this street) that are not part of the tour today. The house shown at the right was built by Martin Kimbell, Jr. and is shown as it appeared in 1900 with the Kimbell family on the porch. Presently, the exterior siding along with the entire house is being restored.



At left is a 1902 photo looking north on Kimball from Altgeld. House # 5 is in the foreground and house #4 is in the background.



⑤ 2500 N. Kimball Avenue

This large frame four square home dates back to 1905 and may have been constructed by one of the Kimbell Family descendants. This structure, once home to a number of dentists and doctors and subsequently subdivided into several apartments, has been reconverted into a large single family residence. The main entry hall, staircase and main parlor all remain intact, along with the original art glass windows. Several of the bedrooms have been restored and the owner has recently

remodeled the kitchen. On the Altgeld side (formerly Dunning Street) is a separate basement entry with a cast iron handrail, which leads down to a former office, occupied by a family doctor for many years. Dr. Miller lived in the house above his office and saw his patients in the lower level. Note the brick columns on the front porch with horizontal ornamental banding, similar to other Kimbell Family houses on this block and which may have been supplied by the Kimbell family brick company.

At the western edge of the lot stands a simple former horse and carriage barn with living quarters above for the coachman and caretaker. This structure which is open for viewing represents one of the few existing original “back buildings” and former horse barns. Although this parcel was part of the original Kimbell estate, it is not known if this was constructed for the Kimbell family.



At the right is a 1900 view of Bernard Street (then called Smalley Court) looking northward from Altgeld Street (then called Dunning Street). House #6 can be seen at the far end.



⑥ 2549 N. Bernard Street



In 1902 this was one of the few masonry structures on the street. It's Dutch /Flemish Revival style and incorporates elements of the Italianate with the simple brick-arched windows and banding on the second floor. The entire composition of the house is eclectic with an elaborate facade and scalloped cornice, pierced by a small oval window, banded in limestone at the attic. Originally the front porch may have been constructed of wood and was later reconfigured in brick and enclosed into the interior front parlor. A close-matching brick was used and a series of diamond-shaped leaded glass windows installed in the transoms. The facade is well executed with the additions carefully integrated into the original building.

In the 1940's Dr. August Wendel opened an office in the basement, which is accessed through an entry located on the North. Beyond the beautiful composition of the interior is a large dining room with large built-in cabinets with glass doors. The ceiling of this room contains a Victorian treatment which is of great artistry and compliments the home. The current owners have lived in the house since the 1970's and have been involved actively in the community .

⑦ 2510 N. Bernard Street

A majestic Queen Anne style house with a wraparound porch was constructed in April of 1901 by F. M. Barthlem. The high gable on the front of the building is clad in a scalloped shingle infill with a small octagonal window and a high six-sided octagonal bay, topped with a "witch's hat". The corner tower takes advantage of the natural light from the South and East exposures, capturing a great amount of natural sunlight, throughout the day. Large fascia boards band the upper wall of the building and wrap all of the window surrounds. The wraparound porch and its intricate detailing are a reflection of the elaborate decorations that were often a part of this popular style of architecture.

The interior reflects much of the same grace as the exterior with large open rooms that flow into one another. A new kitchen was recently added, which is sensitive to the original spirit of the residence.



⑧ 2508 N. Bernard Street

This large Queen Anne style house, constructed between 1900 and 1902, has as unusually massive five-sided bay window, topped with a six-sided hat, forming a Romanesque corner tower. Multiple richly ornamented panels includes a portion of the original three-paired columns framing each side of the entry porch. The original porch may have once wrapped a larger area of the front facade prior to the construction of the adjacent residence to the South. The interior of the house is furnished in a contemporary style with classic modernist furniture. Of special note is a patterned geometric wood floor that is present in the middle sitting room and was thought to be created by a carpenter who resided on the 2500 block of St. Louis Avenue (Ballou Avenue) and installed many fine inlaid floors throughout the neighborhood.



From 1923 to 1994 the Stenge Family resided within this house. Bertha Sheramsky Stenge (1891-1957) (see photo at left) became intrigued by a quilting contest in 1927 sponsored by the Chicago Evening American newspaper. She entered a quilt and won an Honorable Mention. From that point forward, Bertha Stenge become known as “Chicago’s Quilting Queen”

and made over 45 quilts, which are in the collection of the Chicago Historical Society, The Art Institute of Chicago and the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C. Stenge’s 1933 quilt was exhibited at the Century of Progress World’s Fair in Chicago, which celebrated the 100th anniversary of the City’s incorporation. Her daughter Prudence Stenge-Fuchsmann had entered the Chicago American contest as the youngest entrant at nine-years-old and will be present in the front parlor, bay window of this house where her mother enjoyed sewing these notable works of art. She will be greeting visitors for a limited time and will display the quilt she made for the Chicago Evening American contest.



⑨ 2502 N. Bernard Street

This large frame Four-Square house with Prairie Style influences was constructed in March 1907. The original owner Isaac Smith built the house at a cost of \$4,500.00. The Smith Family occupied the home into the 1950’s, and then the rooms were rented to borders, until the current family purchased the structure in 1967 and returned it back to a single family home.

The house anchors the northwest corner of Bernard and Altgeld (originally Smalley Court and Dunning Street) with a beautifully proportioned facade and the original clapboard siding is completely intact. Like many of these early houses the roof was sheathed in wood shingles, which has since been covered. The large porch facing Bernard is supported by brick columns with horizontal banding that may have been supplied by the brick company owned and operated by the Kimbell family (note the similarities between these bricks and details, compared with the original Kimbell homes on nearby Kimball Avenue). The long-thin spindles extending down from the handrails and below the porch to the soil surfaces form a visual screen, which was a detail used in some of the Prairie-Style houses and reflect Japanese influences of that style. The rounded bay window of the living room facing Altgeld, balances the fine composition of the imposing two facades. Note the original front entry door and flanking art glass windows. The entry foyer contains features that are all historically authentic.



⑩ 2452 N. Bernard Street



This large craftsman style cottage-house dates to 1906. The front facade is composed of timber detailing at the gables in the Tudor Style, along with stucco surfaces and wood moldings more associated with the Craftsman and Prairie Styles incorporated into houses during the early Twentieth Century. This style of housing was very popular at the turn of the century. However, it is one of the few examples found in this neighborhood. The front of the structure is dominated by a large open porch covered in stucco with wood trim. The side elevation contains two wide bays for additional light. The interior of the house remains true to the original floor plan and the current owners are in the process of restoring the building.

⑪ 2502 N. Central Park (not open today)

This 1897 Victorian house was built when the area was mostly undeveloped. Local legend contends it was owned by “Senator Buchanan” at the turn of the Twentieth Century. The “old timers of the neighborhood” also noted that the great orator and three-time presidential candidate William Jennings Bryan once gave a speech from this porch. Known as the “Singing Orator” for the beautiful rhythm of his phrasing and delivery of his speeches, Bryan was one of the most famous men of the day. It is assumed that when he addressed the residents from the front porch he may have been staying in this prominent house as a guest.

The vast wood-framed house is sheathed in the original clapboard siding and features a series of high gables, gently sloping downward on the south side to capture the wide bedrooms of the second floor. The Altgeld Street elevation indicates the true depth and height of the structure, which is reflective of the large framed Victorian houses of the East. The interior of the structure has been subdivided into two apartments, one on each floor. The first floor rooms remain intact with a large front parlor, center parlor (now the dining room, measuring almost 25’ in width), a vast kitchen, thought to be the original Dining Room and three other rooms, now used as bedrooms. The second floor contains six bedrooms. The basement was finished and may have contained the original kitchen, along with servants quarters. A turn-of-the-century marble-lined “cage or needle shower”, exists fully intact in the basement. This early type of shower was used for medicinal purposes, surrounding the bather with a series of four horizontal pipes that supplied water through small pinholes.



12 3623 W. Altgeld (Formerly Dunning St.)

This farmhouse built in 1895 by William Evans is one of the oldest structures in the area. It remained in the family of August C.F. Plumer through 1912 and the current family has owned and maintained the residence since 1956.

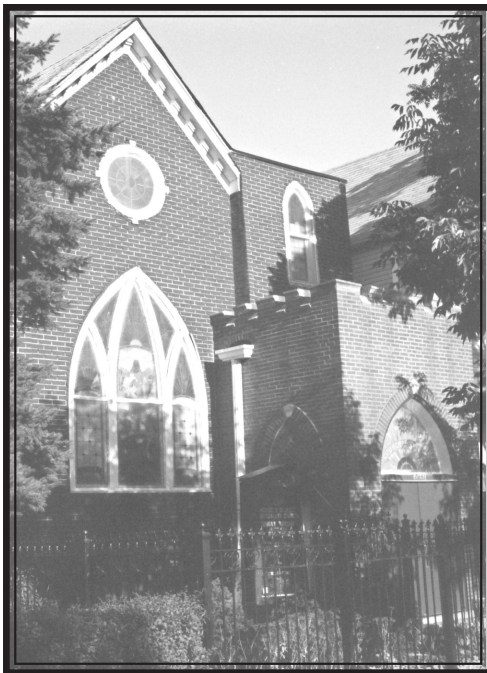
The house is a unique shingle-style construction with clapboards lining the first level and shingles above. The large three-sided bay windows are Italianate in style and flank the central doorway framed by a small ornamental porch with the original wood posts. The simple shape of the house reflects a popular cottage-style used along the East Coast during the Nineteenth Century. The second floor contains two windows centered atop each bay window. These windows extend downward to the simple wide-plank floors in the upstairs bedrooms. A small “eyebrow” window at the attic level is of special note along with the small original wood brackets positioned under the eaves. Some of the original wooden fretwork has been lost over time.



The home is entered through a tall and narrow front hallway which leads directly to a stairway to the four second floor bedrooms. On each side of the hallway and stair are two front parlors with high ceilings and original wood and plaster moldings. Two rooms are situated behind the two parlors, including a dining room with a bay window and a kitchen in which a small shed roof becomes a sink alcove with windows on three sides. Note the original simple trim and casing throughout the house, along with many historic fixtures and features. The owner has a collection of historic Victorian furniture and both Danish and Swedish hand-crafted items, reflecting the family's Scandinavian heritage.

13 2651 N. Central Park (Church of the Spirit)

The Church of the Spirit, founded in 1897 by Rev. Frank Joseph, was known as the Bund Der Wahrheit Number 18 (Band of Truth No. 18). In 1915, the society purchased the present church building and the named it “Chapel of the Spirit”. In 1928, the Church was officially registered as “Church of the Spirit of Logan Square” and in 1944 the name was changed to “Church of the Spirit”. This multi-generational, multi-ethnic Spiritualist congregation is the oldest in Chicago and Illinois, and Rev. Marrice Coverson is the first female African American pastor of the Church.



Modern Spiritualism began in 1848 when the Fox Family of Rochester, New York developed a code with the spirit of Charles Rosna. The religion developed under the guidance of Pioneers who believed that communication with the dead is a proven fact. Many of these pioneers were also ardent abolitionists and progressive supporters of Women's and Native American rights. The core beliefs of Spiritualism are based upon nine points of the Declaration of Principal as adopted by the National Spiritual Association of Churches.

The Church building constructed in the 1890's is a very simple wood-framed structure in the Carpenter Gothic Style. The main facade is symmetrical with a central high gable flanked by two end wooden towers and sheathed in clapboard, which was covered with asphalt shingles in the 1940's. The crenulated brick entry and base of the building were added to the front facade in the 1940's. Prominent architectural features include original art-glass windows that are beautifully simple in composition. The art glass window over the doorway with the name of the church emblazoned upon a ribbon-banner was relocated from the original doorway over the Church entry and features a sun flower design near the top of the window, which is a symbol of the Spiritualist Church.

Collage of old photos

Kimball Avenue was named after Martin Kimbell, although the spelling was changed at a later date. Smalley Court (now Bernard Street), named after Martin Kimbell's wife Sarah Smalley, was once known as the "Street of Doctors and Lawyers." Both streets are noteworthy in the history of Logan Square and contain some of the first houses in the community.



1900 - looking south on Bernard Street (Smalley Court) from Wrightwood.



The last horse-wagon trash collector at Altgeld and Central Park.



Today looking north along Bernard Street - similar to photo above. Three of the oldest houses on the street dating to 1898-1899 include Raymond Kimbell's house at 2522 and another presumed Kimbell house at 2524.

1928 photo of Col. Toby Weinshenker in his R.O.T.C. uniform. He still lives on Kimball.

Original Kimbell farm house on painting day.



Gardens

A - 2556 N. Kimball Avenue

This lush, organized garden frames the house with magnolia trees, annuals and evergreens. Notice partially hidden sitting areas on the south side of the house and off the second floor.

B - 3255 W. Altgeld (Logan Square Library Garden)

Is this the last year for the Reading Garden? A new library will be built elsewhere. Sit awhile in the shade of the gazebo while you can. Water and rest rooms available indoors.

C - 2439 N. Spaulding Avenue

A collection of native shade-loving plants has replaced parkway grass in the front of the home. The back yard features whimsical folk art pieces amid vegetables and flowers.

D - 2432 N. Spaulding Avenue

See how replacing a fence with a common perennial border expands the look and feel of a small back yard garden. One way to see how the grass is greener on the other side!

E - 2510 N. Bernard Street

Walk from the open and sunny front yard to the cool and shady back yard to see an elegant outdoor dining area. The garage wall is decorated with antique window frames.

F - 2525 N. Bernard Street

Enter through a wooden gate into a tropical world of a waterfall, stream and koi pond, surrounded by container plants. See how a small back yard can be transformed into a secret getaway.

G - 2554 N. Bernard Street

Look for the architectural artifacts among the profusion of plants in this naturalistic garden. The owners like to “escape from the city” on the vine-enclosed back yard deck.

H - 2536 N. Bernard Street

This “Three Season” front yard garden is now showing a choice mix of hardy perennials designed to play into Fall. Earlier shows featured dramatic displays of crocus, tulips and roses.

I - 2501 N. Bernard Street

Every element of this garden habitat is meant to attract, sustain and protect birds according to National Wildlife Federation guidelines. Learn to make a small fountain as seen in the back yard.

J - 2508 N. Bernard Street

The back garden is an outdoor room designed for family fun with no lawn mowing! The handsome brick patio adjoins the yard to the north.

K - 2505 N. Drake

See a two-tier waterfall with tropical plants and an “El Coqui” frog recording from the rain forest of Puerto Rico. These frogs are native only to Puerto Rico and are the national symbol of the island.

L - 3504 W. Wrightwood Avenue

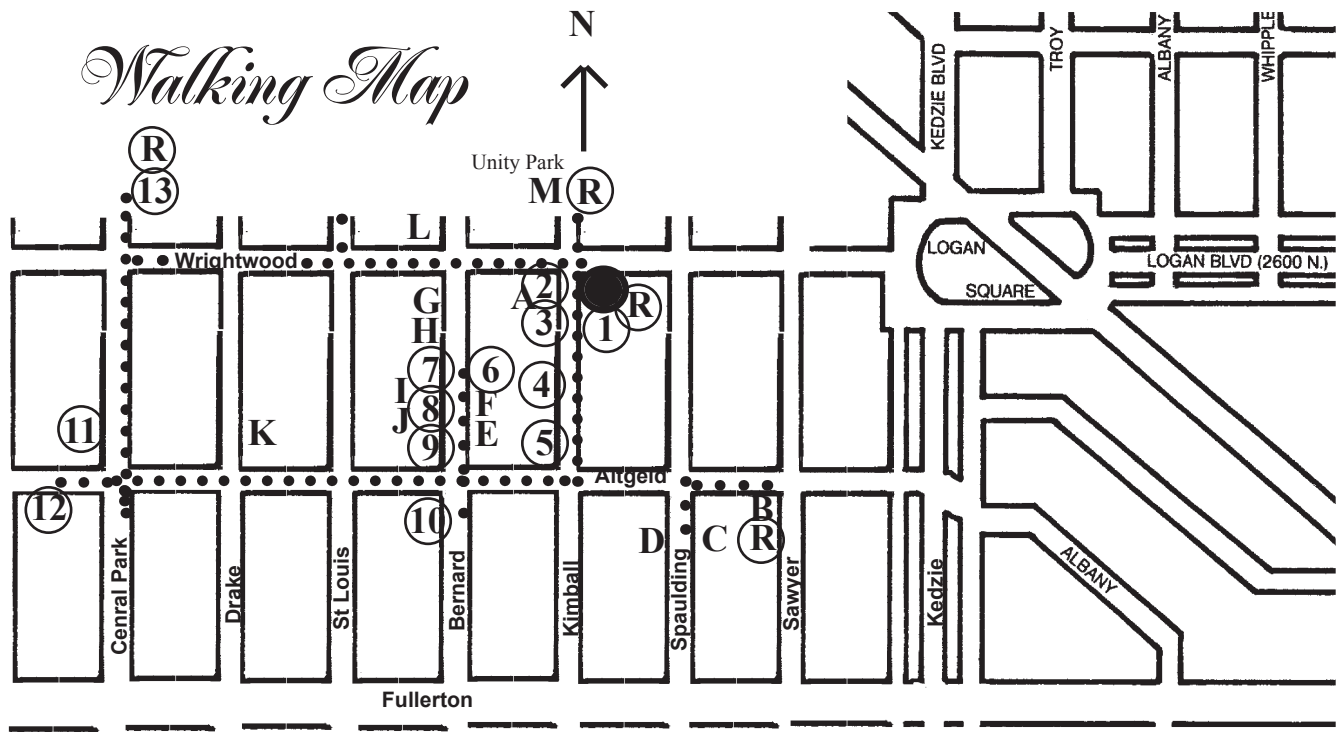
The brick front stairs of this home gather a dense collection of plants in containers amid shrubs, vines and trees which flower at various times of the year.

M - 2700 N. Kimball Avenue (Unity Park)

Take a stroll through the newly expanded green space of this popular park. The design of the park was creatively influenced by the Advisory Council as a grassy, landscaped area. Blooming perennials pack the perimeter of the new lawn where two giant elms have been preserved. Gardens and trees near the play area are maintained by volunteers.

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No smoking or pets in gardens. Stay on walkways or designated lawn areas. Do not touch flowers, foliage or garden property. Please do not ask to use private bathrooms. Children must be closely supervised.

Walking Map



HOUSES & CHURCHES

- ① 3325 W. Wrightwood (Grace Church) (R)
- ② 2556 N. Kimball (1st floor)
- ③ 2556 N. Kimball (3rd floor)
- ④ 2524 N. Kimball (not open today)
- ⑤ 2500 N. Kimball
- ⑥ 2549 N. Bernard
- ⑦ 2510 N. Bernard
- ⑧ 2508 N. Bernard
- ⑨ 2502 N. Bernard
- ⑩ 2452 N. Bernard
- ⑪ 2502 N. Central Park (not open today)
- ⑫ 3623 W. Altgeld
- ⑬ 2651 N. Central Park (Church of the Spirit) (R)

GARDENS

- A 2556 N. Kimball
- B 3255 W. Altgeld (Library) (R)
- C 2439 N. Spaulding
- D 2432 N. Spaulding
- E 2501 N. Bernard
- F 2525 N. Bernard
- G 2554 N. Bernard
- H 2536 N. Bernard
- I 2510 N. Bernard
- J 2508 N. Bernard
- K 2505 N. Drake
- L 3504 W. Wrightwood
- M 2700 N. Kimball (Unity Park) (R)

Historic cars, bicycles and a horse and carriage will be displayed on Bernard Street (Smalley Court) during the day.