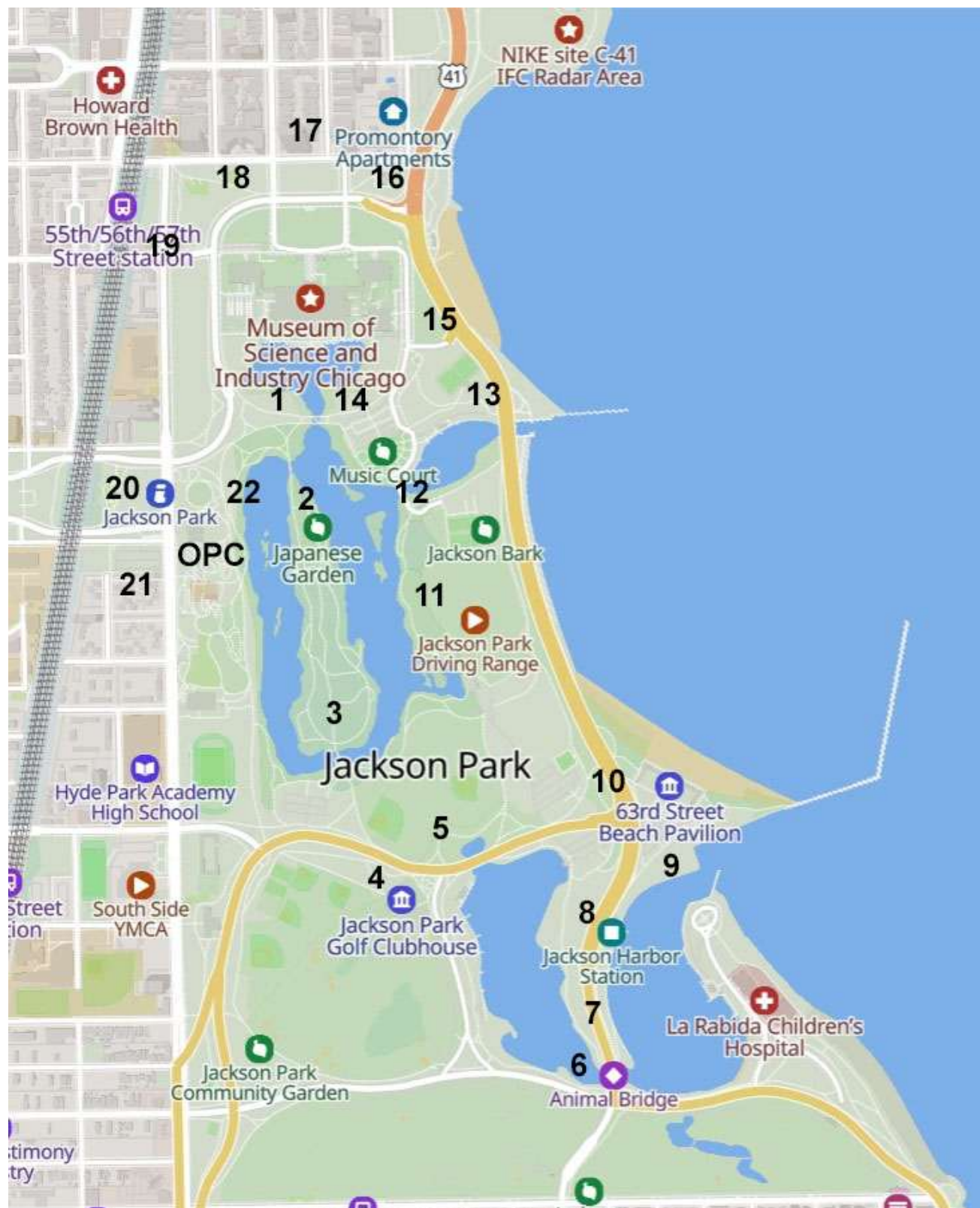


Exploring Jackson Park's History (More info and links to articles:

<https://patriciamorse.substack.com/p/jackson-park-home-to-the-obama-center>



1. The Museum of Science and Industry

The limestone Griffin Museum of Science and Industry provides a glimpse of what the main exhibition buildings were like during the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition. In the late 1920s, a campaign to preserve it, voted in a bond issue that was required to reproduce the original exterior.

2. Japanese Garden/Osaka Garden

Yoko Ono's statue Skylanding marks the location of the Japanese Pavilion during the fair. [The garden was added after the Century of Progress Fair of 1934-1935.](#) During World War II, the pavilion was burned and the garden abandoned. [After World War II, the Japanese-American community of Hyde Park and the Hyde Park/Kenwood Community Conference fought to resurrect it.](#) In the 1990s, Chicago's sister city, Osaka, adopted the garden.

3. Wooded Island

Frederick Law Olmsted saved a sand ridge left from Ice Age Lake Chicago and turned it into a restful natural island in the middle of the very artificial 1893 fair. As a result, the microbiome in the sandy soil dates back thousands of years. Some of the bur oaks are several hundred years old.

4. Jackson Park Golf Course and Clubhouse

Jackson Park Golf Course, created in 1899, is the oldest public golf course west of the Allegheny Mountains.

5. Golden Lady

[The Golden Lady, more formally known as the Statue of the Republic,](#) was erected in 1918 for the 25th anniversary of the 1893 fair and 100th anniversary of Illinois becoming a state. The original once presided over the Court of Honor during the 1893 Fair. The replica is made of bronze not staff, one-third the size of the original, and faces east instead of west, located where the Administration Building was.

6. The Animal Bridge

In 1904, Peter Weber, a colleague of Olmsted, won the design contest for a bridge over the channel connecting the inner and outer harbor. In 2003, the original innovative structure was replaced. The original "animals" were reused.

7. Burnham Pavilion

This pavilion was designed in 1912 by Daniel Burnham's architecture firm. It provided much needed facilities (bathrooms!), a beautiful view of the lake, and a monumental stone staircase.

8. Jackson Park Life Saving Station

The Jackson Harbor Life Saving Station was built in 1902. The station was decommissioned in 1963 and has housed several lovely restaurants.

9. La Rabida Peninsula

One of the few relics of the 1893 World's Fair in the park is the stone wall at the entrance to Jackson Park Harbor. The peninsula was saved because it's on bedrock and housed the 1893 replica of the Convent of La Rabida. Spain donated it to the city for a children's sanitarium. When the old building burned in 1924, the new La Rabida hospital was built to its south. South of the hospital is an exposed Silurian coral reef.

10. 63rd Street Bathing Pavilion

Built in 1919, the beach house is the oldest beach house in Chicago parks. It was restored in 1999. In 2005, it became a Chicago landmark. It's also the home of a dunes natural area.

11. Bobolink Meadow and the Nike Missile Base

The natural area was accidentally created when the U.S. military Nike Missile Base left Jackson Park left. The Radar Towers were on the Point, the missiles were here, underground.

12. Music Court Bridge

When the Olmsted Sons redesigned the park after the World's Fair, they wanted a band shell surrounded by arcs of stone for chairs called the Music Court. To provide access across the inlet from the lake, they designed the arched stone bridge, a location used in the Blues Brothers movie.

13. Frederick Douglass Plaque

The plaque was created when a high school class realized that Frederick Douglass had spent the summer at the 1893 World's Fair, working with Ida B. Wells to protest the growth of Jim Crow in the 1890s. His base of operations was the Haiti Building among the international pavilions.

14. Darrow Bridge

The oldest man-made structure in the park, created by Daniel Burnham before the Fair, was preserved in every redesign of the park because it is an essential feature for navigating through the park. Clarence Darrow, who lived on 60th Street, used to walk over into the quiet park and practice his famous orations from the bridge. His ashes are scattered there. It's controlled by the DOT.

15. The Norway Building Plaque

The 1893 World's Fair was intensely important to many people for many reasons. For some countries, it was an announcement of national pride. The plaque celebrates the Norway Building, which was being returned to Norway from Wisconsin.

16. The Iowa Building

The current pavilion, newly restored, dates from the 1930s, but it carries the memory of [Daniel Burnham's vision for the park during the 1880s and the memory of the fair.](#)

17. Windermere Hotel

The fair transformed the area into a hotel district, which relied on the many features of Jackson Park to attract visitors. The residential hotels attracted many interesting, creative people.

18. The Earl B. Dickerson Playground

Though a small playground, it's named for a towering figure in the development of Hyde Park as an integrated community and in the history of the Civil Rights movement nationally.

19. Hyde Park's Murals

The Obama Presidential Center celebrates the power of art. This has a neighborhood history. William Walker began the use of murals to celebrate Black life and argue for change. One of William Walker's murals survives at the 56th Street underpass—a hope for the future near Bret Harte School where his children went. The number is at 57th Street where there are more murals from the movement—and to indicate the epicenter of the Hyde Park Art Colony that developed after the fair. Affordable spaces and a belief in the power of creativity fostered a diverse, integrated community that lasted for fifty years until it was destroyed by urban renewal.

20. Bench Dedicated to Two Local Women Who Fought for the Right to Vote

The recently restored bench celebrates two beloved women who fought for the right to vote and then for the rights to improve their community. The bench is just west of the playground.

21. Location of the 1896 Democratic National Convention

The Obama Presidential Center opening wasn't the first gathering of Democratic Party supporters at 61st and Stony Island. The Coliseum once stood across the street and hosted the 1896 William Jennings Bryant convention.

22. Plaque Commemorating the First Automobile Race in America

On Thanksgiving Day 1895, the *Chicago Times-Herald* sponsored the first motorized race in America. Six cars, four gasoline powered and two electric, “raced” 54 miles to Evanston and back. J. Frank Duryea won the race in 7 hours and 53 minutes. The weather was bitter cold and snowy, so most of the other cars were defeated by the conditions, but the race was a success because it proved cars could travel the distance and handle the weather even if their drivers couldn't.