



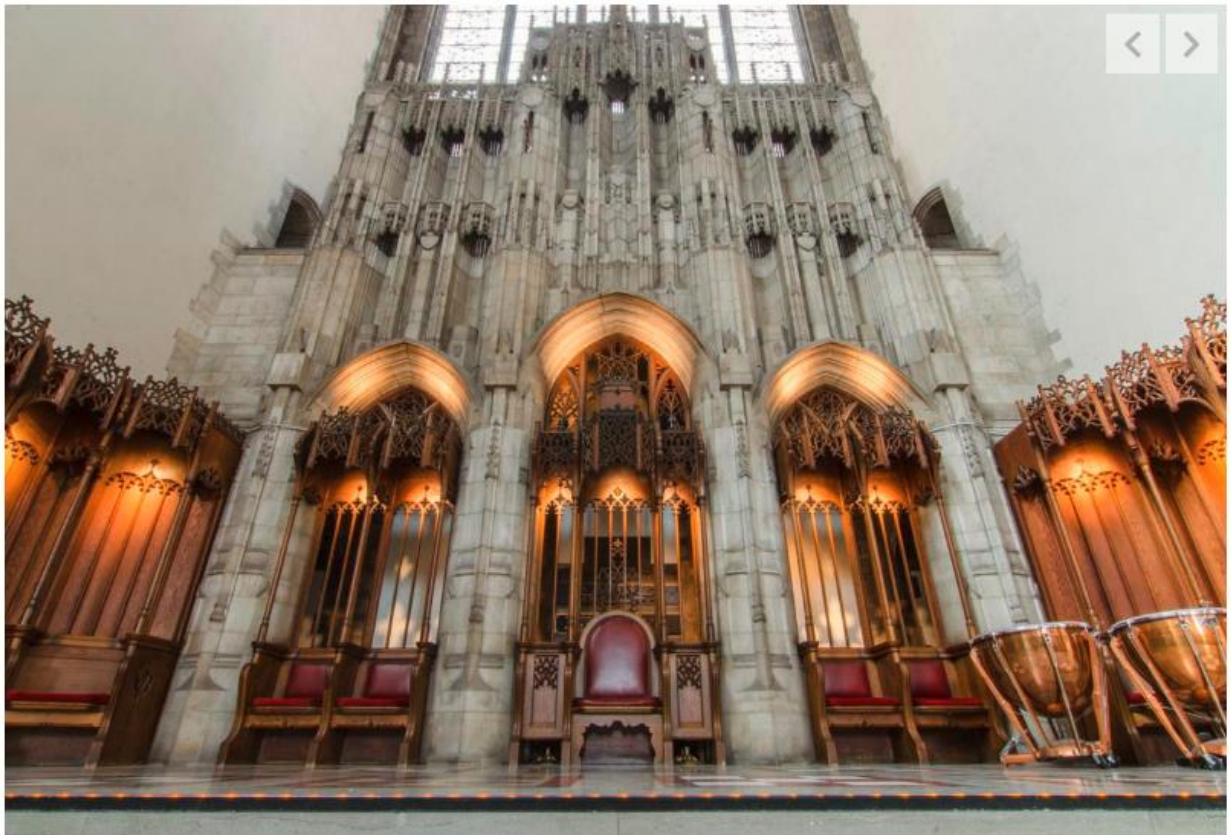
BREAKING Former Region resident describes new home in Florida 'like a war zone' after Hurricane Michael

URGENT

CHICAGO OPEN HOUSE

Go inside 250 architecturally significant buildings throughout Chicago for its 8th annual Open House tour

Jane Ammeson Times Correspondent Oct 11, 2018 Updated Oct 11, 2018



The Rockefeller Chapel at the University of Chicago is open to the public Oct. 13 and 14 for the eighth annual Chicago Open House, featuring 250 architecturally significant sites in neighborhoods throughout the city.

Provided

If you go

What: Open House Chicago; explore more than 250 cool places all over Chicago, from iconic downtown skyscrapers to hidden gems in the city's diverse neighborhoods and suburbs.

When: Saturday and Sunday, Oct. 13-14

Where: All over Chicago

Cost: Free

FYI: Visit the website to choose your itinerary. openhousechicago.org



Open House Chicago, now in its eighth year, is for anyone who has ever walked past a building, questioning what it was like inside, wanted to investigate a neighborhood and understand its history, and visit spaces and places in the city never before explored.

“OHC is a showcase to understand the basic fabric of Chicago’s neighborhoods and what makes the city unique,” says Eric Rogers, manager, Open House Chicago and Community Outreach for the Chicago Architecture Center.

“In choosing more than 250 sites, we looked for those that are important to the city and wanted to have several in each of the neighborhoods. We wanted diversity with what each has to offer.”

Making it even more fun, OHC, which runs this Saturday and Sunday, Oct. 13 and 14, is free and requires no registration or tickets.

Three new neighborhoods were added this year including Beverly where visitors can explore Givins Castle, Chicago’s only castle, a crenelated home built in 1887 at a cost of \$80,000 and now the Beverly Unitarian Church. Also in Beverly, take a taste at Wild Blossom, Chicago’s first meadery and winery and the sole producer of honey wine on the Northern Illinois Wine Trail.

Then tour Optimo, the city's only custom men's hatmaker. Here you can see hat-making in action. The company, known for its straw Panama hats, trilbys, homburgs, and fedoras that come in a variety of styles (who knew?) such as the classic, teardrop and fastback, even designs a limited edition hat modeled after Frank Lloyd Wright's signature headwear.

"It's a very unique working museum of hats and hat making," says Rogers, noting that the old firehouse on 95th Street where the company is headquartered was renovated by Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, consolidating Optimo's operations into one 7,500-square-foot space.

In nearby Morgan Park, another newly added neighborhood to this year's OHC line-up, the doors of the Ingersoll-Blackwelder Queen Anne-style mansion, once home to both real estate magnate John Ingersoll and then Isaac Blackwelder, president of what was at the time the independent Village of Morgan Park. More notably, at least to some, Gertrude Blackwelder, his wife, was not only a founder of the Morgan Park Women's Club but also was the first woman to vote in Cook County.

The home is filled with antique treasures and built-ins, many salvaged by another owner, artist Jack Simmerling who retrieved them from now destroyed but once imperial mansions on Prairie Avenue, and in Englewood and other tony Chicago neighborhoods.

The extravagant insides of the neo-Gothic facade Morgan Park Academy's Alumni Hall also are available to peruse. Now a K-12 independent, co-educational school, Morgan Park was founded shortly after the Civil War and has served as a military academy and preparatory school for the University of Chicago. Unlike the schools most of us attended, its interior boasts dramatic spaces such as an upper-school library featuring a vaulted ceiling, double staircase, grand fireplace and wraparound mezzanine. Other accents are wrought-iron chandeliers and ornate woodwork.

Also participating in OHC is the Gold Coast neighborhood with its rich plethora of homes designed by well-known architects Louis Sullivan, Frank Lloyd Wright and Dankmar Adler. Here are such sacred places as St. Chrysostom's Episcopal Church, St. James Chapel and Holy Name Cathedral. There also are cultural centers as the International Museum of Surgical Science, the Newberry Library, the Palette & Chisel Academy of Fine Arts and the Richard H. Driehaus Museum and such cutting-edge hotels, style-wise, as the Millennium Knickerbocker and Fieldhouse Jones.

Neighborhood offerings include Garfield Park, Washington Park, West Ridge, West Town, Ukrainian Village, South Loop/Prairie Avenue/South Shore, Downtown, Uptown and Hyde Park.

OHC offers such programs as live painting restoration, a LEED tour of Rotary International, free stand-up comedy at Lincoln Lodge, artist installation outside Edgewater Beach Apartments, live piano at Ingersoll-Blackwelder House and family-friendly activities at the Chicago Architecture Center. All are designed to give visitors a wide range of experiences at different OHC sites.

“We have a full list of those participating, programs and events,” Rogers says. “And to make it easy to decide what to do, our website is very sophisticated with tools that filter by sites and neighborhoods to make it simple to plan where you want to go.”