

Southwest Side Industrial Buildings

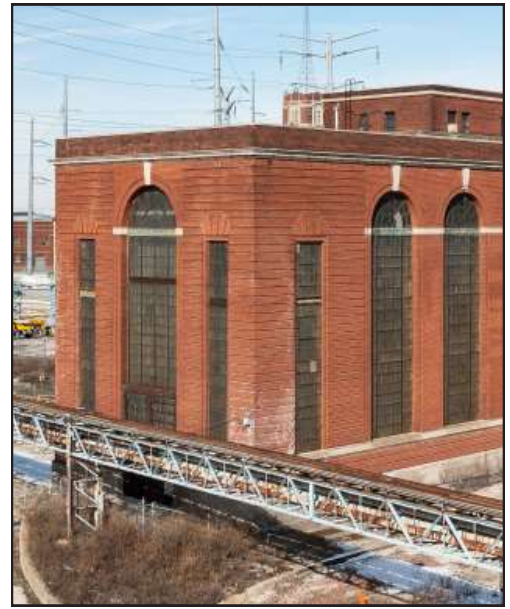
Continental Can, Damen Silos, Fisk Power Station



Continental Can © Serhii Chucky



Damen Silos © Eric Allix Rogers



Fisk Power Station © Serhii Chucky

Continental Can

OVERVIEW: Continental Can

In 2022, plans were announced to demolish one of the most prominent buildings in the Central Manufacturing District's Original East District (CMD East)—the Continental Can Building at 3815 S. Ashland Avenue—for the construction of a new cold storage facility. The historic structure, notable for its Gothic terra cotta detailing and eye-catching tower, was designed by the district's then-in-house architect, Samuel Scott Joy, and completed in 1920.

For over half a century, it housed manufacturing operations for the Continental Can Company, a longstanding and important business that was a major force in the world of packaging throughout the 20th century. The building was also a major visual anchor of the CMD East's Ashland corridor since its completion. Its tower, once one of many in the CMD East designed by Samuel Scott Joy, is now the last remaining of its kind in the district.

The demolition of this lovely Gothic terra cotta building and tower would be a terrible loss for the CMD East and, more broadly, the Southwest Side's industrial heritage. Preservation Chicago

Continental Can Company Building

Address: **3815 S. Ashland Avenue**

Architect: **Samuel Scott Joy**

Date: **1920**

Style: **Gothic Revival**

Neighborhood: **McKinley Park**

Damen Grain Silos

Address: **2860 S. Damen Avenue**

Architects: **John Metcalf (civil engineer)**

Date: **1906**

Style: **Chicago Industrial**

Neighborhood: **McKinley Park**

Fisk Power Station

Address: **1111 W. Cermak Road**

Architects: **Shepley, Rutan and Coolidge**

Date: **1903**

Style: **Gothic Revival**

Neighborhood: **McKinley Park**



Continental Can Building, 1920, Samuel Scott Joy, 3815 S. Ashland Avenue. Photo credit: Serhii Chrukky

encourages the developer to pursue an adaptive reuse of the Continental Can Building, especially the Ashland Avenue tower and facade.

Spanning both the Bridgeport and McKinley Park neighborhoods on the city's Southwest Side, the Central Manufacturing District's Original East District (CMD East), is today recognized as an especially important site in the history of Chicago: the first planned industrial park in the United States.

The Central Manufacturing District's Original East District was designed over the course of decades by numerous acclaimed Chicago architects, advertisement offered manufacturers the opportunity to own a custom-built warehouse with front-door access to rail lines and waterways, as well as city services and banking. It was a pioneering undertaking and what is left of the district stands today as a symbol of the great might of industrial Chicago.

The decades since the dissolution of the Central Manufacturing District have seen the disintegration of the district's many historic industrial buildings. While many remain, some of the district's grandest structures of the have been demolished due to neglect or redevelopment, prompting Preservation Chicago to name the CMD East District as one of Chicago's 7 Most Endangered in 2021.

HISTORY: Continental Can

The CMD East was founded in 1902 by Frederick H. Prince, owner of the Chicago Junction Railway (CJR), and A.G. Leonard, president of the nearby Union Stock Yards Company. Built on farmland, the district was seen by Prince as a way to protect and increase his share of freight traffic while also creating a brand-new development that could

Chicago 7: Southwest Side Industrial Buildings



Continental Can Building, 1920, Samuel Scott Joy, 3815 S. Ashland Avenue. Photo credit: Serhii Chrukky

offer amenities never before enjoyed by Chicago's industrial powers. If a manufacturer chose to relocate their facilities to the CMD East, they would have operated out of a newly-built warehouse, constructed to their custom specifications by an in-house architect.

Over the decades, important Chicago architects like Alfred S. Alschuler, Samuel Scott Joy, and Abraham Epstein all designed structures for the CMD East, creating a pocket of industrial architecture defined by cohesive visual beauty. The CMD East also made other amenities available to its tenants including postal delivery, street cleaning, telegraphic connections, private water lines, fire safety, private centralized banking, and even a social club.

The district attracted numerous high-profile businesses over the decades, including the William Wrigley Company, the Walgreen Company, Standard Sanitary, Spiegel, Westinghouse Electric, Sears Roebuck, Goldblatt's, Procter & Gamble, Sylvania, the Glidden Company, the Oppenheimer Casing Company, Jewel Food Stores, and the Larkin Soap Company. While many of these businesses came and went as the district grew throughout the 20th century, one manufacturer stayed in their custom-built design for over a half-century beginning in 1920: Continental Can Company.

Continental Can Company was founded in 1904 by Edwin Norton and T.G. Cranwell. By the 1910s, the company had already

found great success as a leading producer of metal cans with headquarters in both Chicago and Syracuse, New York. However, as the company's operations expanded, they opted to open a new site in the CMD East. By this time, the prestige and appeal of the CMD East had been well-established, meaning that Continental Can Company's new tenancy there symbolized a declaration of their legitimacy and manufacturing power.

Their new warehouse was designed by the CMD East's then-district architect, Samuel Scott Joy. Joy, it could be argued, was the architect most responsible for defining the overall look of the CMD East, as well as the adjacent CMD Pershing Road. His designs were often large-scale brick warehouses with Gothic terra cotta trim. Joy's buildings in the CMD East employed an imposing sense of scale and grandeur, often featured a single defining feature: a tower several floors taller than the warehouse from which it rose. Joy was responsible for several of these warehouses and towers in the CMD East, including the American Ever-Ready Works Building (demolished in 2015), the John Magnus Building (demolished), and the P.A. Starck Piano Company Building (demolished). Today, the Continental Can Building is the only remaining Joy-designed tower in the CMD East.

The Continental Can Building is an exemplar of Joy's typical warehouse design. It is fitted with Gothic terra cotta detailing, most notably in the window tracery found along the tower's uppermost floor. Its main entrance is also of note, using heavy terra cotta details to create a surround that suggests a church or university rather than a warehouse. Comparisons of the building today to 1920 renderings of the structure indicate that the building was



Continental Can Building, 1920, Samuel Scott Joy, 3815 S. Ashland Avenue. Photo credit: Serhii Chrucky

constructed as planned and has retained an incredible amount of its original architectural integrity.

Continental Can Company remained at this site until the late 1970s. During this time, Continental Can Company became the largest producer of metal cans in the United States. They were a resilient manufacturer, expanding their business throughout the Great Depression, with a robust workforce that numbered 12,000 during the economic crisis. They were also a pioneer of new types of canning products, such as cap-sealed beer cans which the company claimed in 1935 would keep out “flavor-robbing light,” while still opening like a regular bottle top. Not only a producer of cans, Continental Can Company also manufactured paper and fiber containers, bottle caps, and can-sealing machinery that could then be leased to other businesses.

By the early 1970s, Continental Can Company’s annual sales had risen to \$2 billion and, in 1976, it was absorbed into the Continental Group, a packaging conglomerate, with other remaining operations were acquired by the Chicago-based U.S. Can Company in the 1980s.

THREAT: Continental Can

When Preservation Chicago listed the CMD East as one of its Chicago 7 Most Endangered in 2021, we specifically noted that the Continental Can Building had been owned since 2003 by Avgeris and Associates, a Chicagoland real estate developer. Avgeris & Associates were also the former owners of the 32-acre site at the corner of W. 35th Street and S. Ashland Avenue which once contained the large-scale Wrigley Company factory building as well the

Chicago 7: Southwest Side Industrial Buildings

Larkin Building, both of which were eventually demolished for an Amazon distribution center and parking lots. We expressed concern that, under the same ownership, the Continental Can Building would soon face a similar threat of demolition.

In 2022, cold storage developers Karis Cold announced plans to demolish the entirety of the Continental Can Building, replacing it with a nearly-100,000 square foot cold storage warehouse. The Ashland-facing façade of the new development would be completely windowless, although the developers have expressed an interest in commissioning local artists to install a sculpture and mural along this corridor as a beautification tactic, as well as plant trees in front of this new structure. Karis Cold said preservation was considered as an option, but demolition was ultimately selected due to graffiti, deferred maintenance, and lot size.

If the Continental Can Building is razed as planned, the Ashland corridor of the CMD East will be further diminished, leaving only three structures remaining as part of the Ashland Avenue streetwall which was once a grand stretch with some of the most exceptional industrial architecture in Chicago. Furthermore, the tower of the Continental Can Building is the last Joy-designed tower standing in the CMD East and, if demolished, will represent the permanent loss of this particular architectural typology within the district.

RECOMMENDATIONS: Continental Can

To solve the immediately pressing issue of the potential demolition of the Continental Can Building, Preservation Chicago asks that Karis Cold pursue an adaptive reuse approach to the creation of a new cold storage facility on this site. While we understand that the needs of modern cold storage facilities are vastly different than when the buildings of the CMD East were first constructed, we are confident that more can be done to save as much of the Continental Can Building as possible. At the very least, the Continental Can Building's Ashland elevation and tower must be preserved and incorporated into this new development as a way to retain the remaining industrial streetwall of this historic district.

Community concerns over emissions in this neighborhood must also be addressed. Longstanding air quality issues stemming from the nearby MAT Asphalt Plant and the new Amazon distribution center at 35th and Ashland have already affected the surrounding communities. Detailed consideration must be given to whether or not this development will be detrimental to the health of residents in the area and, if so, what steps will be taken to mitigate or eliminate these effects.

The CMD East, however, will continue to be eroded by demolitions if it does not receive comprehensive Chicago Landmark designation which would protect the district's most significant structures. Without Landmark status, we will likely to continue seeing persistent threats against more warehouses throughout the district in the near future. While Landmark status for the Continental Can Building would certainly protect it from immediate danger, it is imperative that this status is extended to much of the CMD East so as to avoid similar demolition risks in the coming years.

Damen Grain Silos

OVERVIEW: Damen Grain Silos

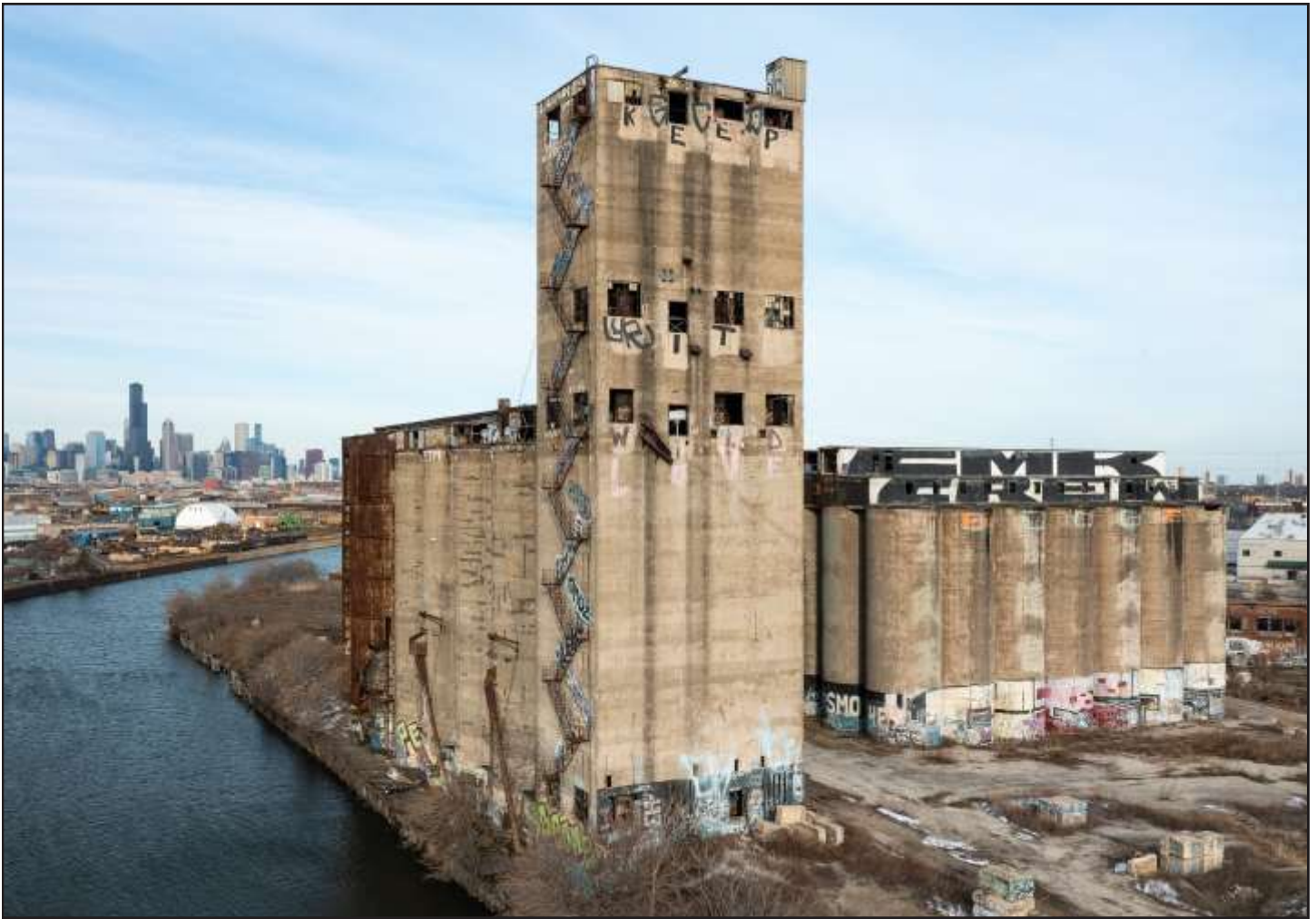
The Damen Grain Silos situated along the South Branch of the Chicago River have been an iconic part of Chicago industrial and agricultural history for over a century. Grain was one of the major industries upon which Chicago was built and the Damen Silos played a significant role in its success for over 70 years.

The Damen Silos were built in 1906 by Topeka & Santa Fe Railroad at the northeast corner of West 29th Street, on a 23.4-acre site along the Chicago River. The concrete grain silos replaced an earlier iteration, 30-foot towers constructed in the first half of the 19th century that were lost to fire. John Metcalf, an experienced civil engineer, designed a complex of 35 storage silos with vents and windows, a powerhouse, and an elevator. Additionally, the complex included driers, bleachers, oat clippers, cleaners, scourers, dust packers, and boilers fed by water from the Chicago River. It had a storage capacity of one million bushels of grain.

After processing millions of bushels of grain, the silos were closed in 1977. Following a long period of vacancy, the



Continental Can Building, 1920, Samuel Scott Joy, 3815 S. Ashland Avenue. Photo credit: Serhii Chucky



Damen Grain Silos, 1906, John Metcalf (civil engineer), 2860 S. Damen Avenue. Photo credit: Serhii Chrucky

concrete structures enjoyed a second life in recent years as a film site and destination for unofficial urban tourism. A recent decision by the State of Illinois to sell the Damen Silos and 23.4-acre riverfront site to a buyer with plans for demolition makes them highly threatened. The buyer's asphalt plant in the heart of the Pershing Road Central Manufacturing District has become an acute environmental challenge confronting the McKinley Park community. Despite the highly noxious odors generated from asphalt production, the MAT Asphalt plant began operations in 2018 without any public meetings or public notice from elected officials or regulatory agencies and has been operating on an expired permit since 2019.

Chicagoans should not lose one of the last monumental landmarks to its agricultural industrial past. We recommend the consideration of the historic Damen Grain Silos as part of a larger public amenity and reuse vision, which could include much-needed riverfront environmental restoration and recreational opportunities for nearby communities living on the Southwest Side, as well as Chicagoans across the city, and tourists.

HISTORY: Damen Grain Silos

The silos provide a direct connection to Chicago's historic grain industry and should be both recognized and protected. Grain was one of the major industries upon which Chicago was built. By the 1850s, Chicago had emerged as the grain capital of the world. The explosive growth of the wheat and grain production was made possible by two revolutionary agricultural inventions of the 1830s; John Deere's steel plow and Cyrus Hall McCormick's Mechanical Reaper. Chicago was surrounded by a 'prairie sea' comprised of very rich and very tough sod. The steel plow allowed Midwestern farmers to easily till the tough prairie soil and the McCormick Reaper allowed them to efficiently reap all that they had sowed. By 1854, Chicago the Chicago River emerged as the busiest grain port in the world. Grain spurred the growth of the railroads and commodities futures trading, both of which are represented by Chicago Union Station and the Chicago Board of Trade building. In fact, the 31-foot-tall statue which stands atop the Art



Damen Grain Silos, 1906, John Metcalf (civil engineer), 2860 S. Damen Avenue. Photo credit: Eric Allix Rogers

Deco Chicago Board of Trade building is *Ceres*, the Roman goddess of grain with a sheaf of wheat in her left hand. As poet Carl Sandburg wrote in his legendary poem “Chicago”:

*Hog Butcher for the World,
Tool Maker, Stacker of Wheat,
Player with Railroads and the Nation’s Freight Handler;
Stormy, husky, brawling,
City of the Big Shoulders.*

On September 9, 1905, a towering blaze ignited inside the massive grain elevator owned by the Atchinson, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railroad (commonly called the Santa Fe Railroad). The grain complex, located on a slip in the South Branch of the Chicago River near W. 27th Street and S. Wood Street, was then one of the largest in the United States and could hold more than 1,000,000 bushels of wheat. The fire, which caused nearly a million dollars in damages, destroyed the 1887 complex and left the railroad in need of a new grain elevator and storage system.

Five months later in February 1906, the Santa Fe Railroad selected the John S. Metcalf Company to design the replacement grain elevator; the Macdonald Engineering Company was hired as the new elevator’s builder and engineers. Canadian-born engineer John Sanborn Metcalf was, at this time, a well-known name, regarded as one of the most accomplished designers of grain silos and elevators in the United States. His career began with hands-on experience in grain elevators: he worked on the construction of an Indianapolis grain elevator in the 1870s, leading to him becoming the site’s superintendent of operation until 1881. Shortly after, Metcalf became the superintendent of construction for an unknown but “prominent” grain firm until 1884.

Chicago 7: Southwest Side Industrial Buildings



Damen Grain Silos, 1906, John Metcalf (civil engineer), 2860 S. Damen Avenue. Photo credit: Serhii Chrucky

Following these early roles, Metcalf spent the next three years as the superintendent of operation for the Burlington and Mississippi Elevator in Burlington, Iowa, before settling in Chicago. It was here that he moved from elevator operations into full-fledged engineering and design, culminating in him developing a partnership with T.K. Webster and James Macdonald with the interest of designing and building grain elevators. This enterprise was hereby called Metcalf-Macdonald Co. and lasted for seven years from 1887 to 1894. By 1901, Metcalf was the sole owner and president of the John S. Metcalf Company.

Following Metcalf's designs and Macdonald's engineering know-how, the Santa Fe Railroad rebuilt the elevator, storage bins, and working house near the location of the original site. Metcalf and Macdonald centered concrete and steel in the site's construction: the silos' structural reinforcements, the framework of the working house, and the elevator legs and heads were all made of steel, ensuring both structural strength and fireproof conditions. Plans called for 35 concrete silos with a capacity of one to one a half million bushels along with a working house (capacity of 400,000 bushels), powerhouse, car shed, and drier. As a testament to Metcalf and Macdonald's engineering brilliance, the new elevator complex was opened on October 15, 1906—less than 7 months after Santa Fe commissioned the pair to design and build the site.

Metcalf's partnership with Macdonald is important to note due to both men's revolutionary work on the development of slipform construction. The process consists of the use of a frame—which also functions as a worker platform—into which concrete is continuously poured. This frame and platform are slowly raised by jacks or hydraulics while reinforcing bars are inserted into the fresh concrete meaning that an uninterrupted and monolithic structure could be erected quickly and with stronger structural integrity. Both Metcalf and Macdonald were



Damen Grain Silos, 1906, John Metcalf (civil engineer), 2860 S. Damen Avenue. Photo credit: Eric Allix Rogers

responsible for improvements to slipform mechanisms, going so far as to secure patents for their designs which made gradual improvements to the platform systems that increased the process's efficacy.

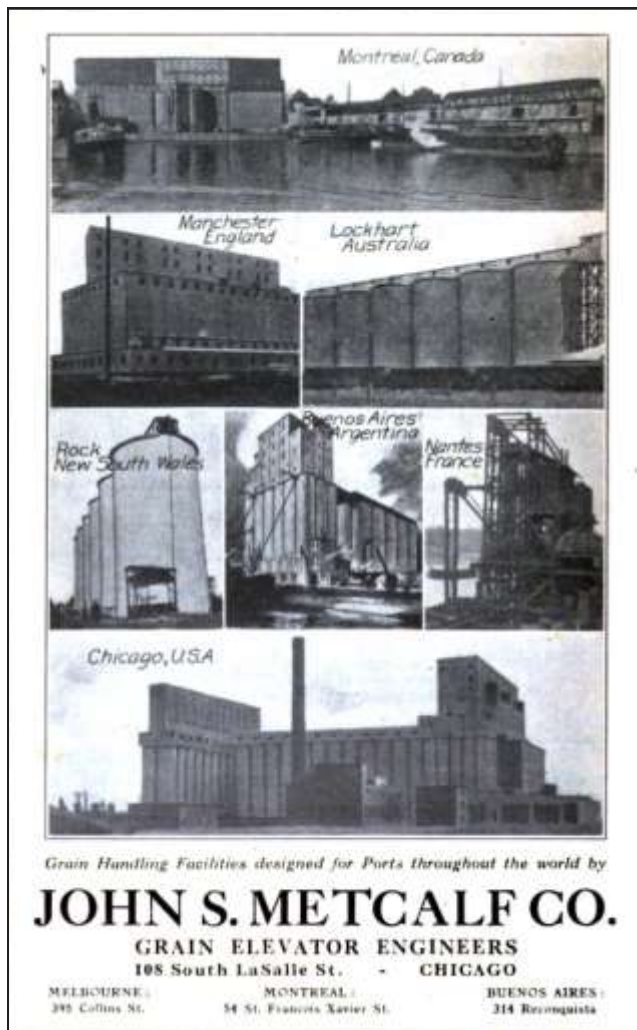
Slipform construction was found to be most effectively accomplished in large-scale structures, meaning that grain elevator construction became the epicenter of experimentation with the new building method. While the earliest cited example of a successful grain silo built via the slipform method is the Peavey Grain Elevator built in 1899 by Charles F. Haglin, subsequent structural failures of the storage showed that the process required refining. Metcalf, meanwhile, is credited with the second documented concrete grain storage design: four circular bins built for the George T. Evans Milling Company in Indianapolis in 1900. By the time of the Santa Fe elevator and silos' construction, Metcalf and Macdonald had thoroughly refined slipform construction and applied these techniques to the erection of this site.

Metcalf passed away in 1912. At the time of his passing, the John S. Metcalf Co. had been credited with the design of grain elevators in Chicago, St. Louis, Kansas City, Galveston, and Portland, Maine, among many other American cities. In the years following his death, the company continued to have an international presence thanks to Metcalf's establishment of a foreign Montreal office before his passing, leading to the construction of grain elevators in cities across the world including Manchester, Buenos Aires, Montreal, Nantes, and Lockhart, Australia.

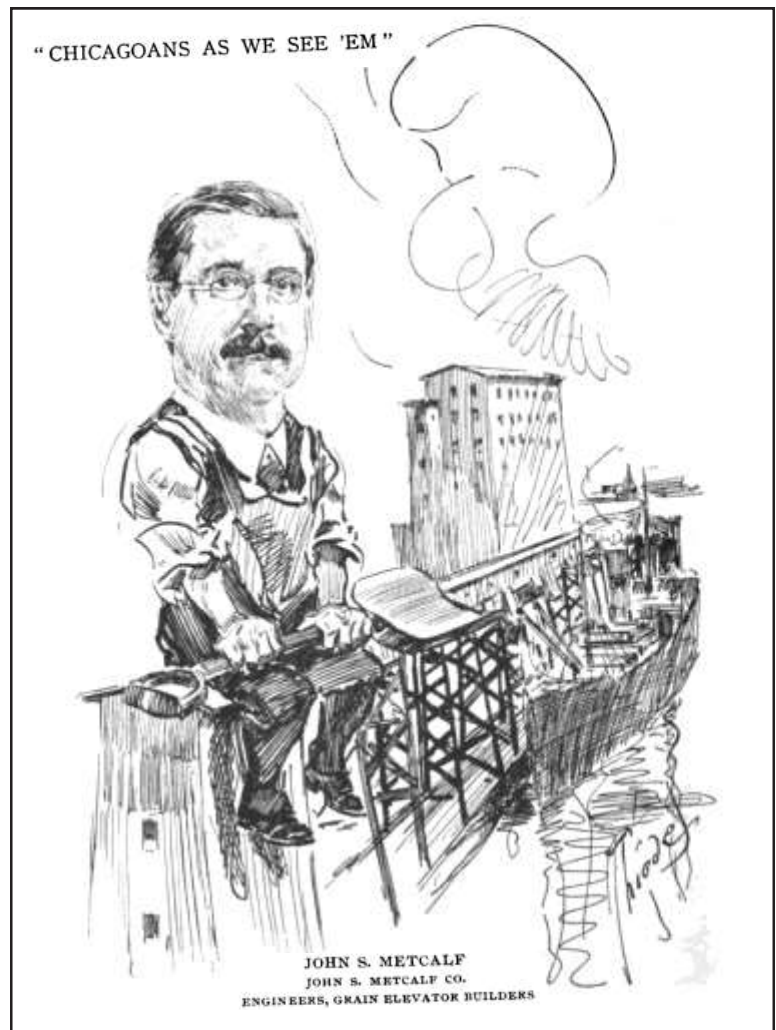
In 1928, the state of Illinois purchased the site. A December 1932 fire which began in the wood-and-steel workhouse spread to the main elevator structure, killing two. The grain silos, however, were spared from the conflagration and the elevator was replaced by a new concrete structure a year later in 1933. Eventually, the silos and their adjacent elevator structure were shuttered in 1977.

In use during the heyday of Chicago's grain industry in the early 20th century, the silos remained lucrative despite

Chicago 7: Southwest Side Industrial Buildings



*John S. Metcalf Co. Grain Elevator Engineers Advertisement
Image credit: World Ports, 1920*



*John S. Metcalf Caricature. Image credit: Chicagoans As We See 'Em
Cartoons and Caricatures, Newspaper Cartoonists' Association, 1904*

occasional grain dust explosions. After rebuilding and expansion of capacity, the Santa Fe Silos were sold briefly to the Kellogg-Stratton Grain company before ownership was transferred to the State of Illinois in 1928. Grain storage at the site ended following a 1977 explosion.

More recently, the Illinois Department of Transportation used the site for mixing construction materials for state roads. In 2005, IDOT transferred the property to the Central Management Services for disposal. An earlier purchase deal reportedly fell through due to the cost of demolition, asbestos removal, and construction of a sea wall.

THREAT: Damen Grain Silos

In August 2022, the State of Illinois issued an invitation-for-bid of sale which ended in October 2022. Four bids were reportedly received and the State of Illinois made the decision to sell the property to the highest bidder. Despite the protests and objections of local residents, as well as environmental and preservation organizations, the sale to Michael Tadin Jr. for \$6.52 million was finalized in December 2022. Tadin is the owner of MAT Asphalt Company located in nearby McKinley Park which has recently come under scrutiny over environmental concerns. Reportedly, Tadin has envisioned demolition of the silos and environmental remediation in 2023, but has not revealed his intentions for the site.



View of chimney and elevator from Damen Avenue Bridge - Santa Fe Railroad, Grain Elevator, South side of sanitary & ship canal, Chicago, Cook County, IL, Photo credit: Library of Congress, Historic American Engineering Record, HAER ILL, 16-CHIG, 155--4

RECOMMENDATIONS: Damen Grain Silos

As acknowledged by Tadin, the concrete structures are an iconic part of Chicago history. With a backdrop of downtown's skyscrapers, the 15-story silos on the Chicago River have been an unofficial visual landmark for decades. They are instantly recognizable after multiple uses in films and television shows, including *Transformer: Age of Extinction*. Additionally, the silos have become an unofficial destination for “urban tourism,” drawing urban explorers and street artists.

The sale by the State of Illinois has been criticized as a flawed procedure, resulting in an irreplaceable riverfront setting being disposed of without a determination of its future use or input from surrounding neighborhoods. Neighboring communities such as Pilsen and McKinley Park that have already been subjected to industrial pollution now face uncertain adverse consequences from the planned demolition and unknown future uses. Given the owner's apparent disregard for community priorities and the opinions of McKinley Park neighbors, there is significant concern for the future of the large riverfront site.

Unlike abundant recreational opportunities available along the North Branch of the Chicago River, the anticipated industrial use of this site would likely prevent new recreational amenities for Southwest Side residents along this location of the South Branch of the Chicago River. The South Branch and its surrounding neighborhoods



Fisk Power Station, 1903, Shepley, Rutan and Coolidge, 1111 W. Cermak Road with additions by others. Photo credit: Eric Allix Rogers

desperately need more green space and river access which the 23-acre site could provide in the form of a recreational park. This riverfront park could include ample greenspace, riverfront trail, nature preserve, water taxi landing, and recreational water sport uses potentially to include kayaking and rowing. The historic grain silos could be an anchor of this riverfront park with a wide variety of innovative uses that have been successfully implemented at adaptively reused former silos both nationally and internationally. It would serve as an unique oasis and recreational destination for the greater public and the citizens of Chicago.

Chicagoans should not lose one of the last monumental landmarks to its agricultural industrial past. We recommend the consideration of the historic Damen Grain Silos as part of a larger public amenity and reuse vision, which could include much-needed riverfront environmental restoration and recreational opportunities for nearby communities living on the Southwest Side, as well as Chicagoans across the city, and tourists.

Fisk Power Station

OVERVIEW: Fisk Power Station

Also located on the South Branch of the Chicago River, the enormous Fisk Power Station dates from 1903. Designed by architects Shepley, Rutan and Coolidge, it achieved the previously impossible task of employing technology to create the world's largest coal-fired electrical generators, based around the steam engine turbine. These systems redeveloped and refined the mammoth production of electricity for a rapidly growing city at a magnitude never before seen. Fisk became the model that was copied and replicated around the world.

Decommissioned in 2012, the Fisk Power Station stands as an important reminder of Chicago's industrial heritage and is an important architectural asset that should be preserved and reused. A repurposed and re-envisioned Fisk



Fisk Power Station, 1903, Shepley, Rutan and Coolidge, 1111 W. Cermak Road with additions by others. Photo credit: Serhii Chrucky

Power Station could resemble the Tate Modern— a shuttered London power plant completely re-envisioned as a world-class art museum which has become one of the United Kingdom’s largest tourist attractions. Fisk would become a huge asset as a cultural and community center to Pilsen, Chinatown, Near-Southwest side and Central Area residents.

With the recent tragic demolitions of Crawford Power Station and State Line Power Station, Fisk remains the last large-scale survivor of Chicago’s power generation history reflecting the growth of the city into an industrial powerhouse. Additionally, the historic buildings only cover a small portion of the approximately 50-acre riverfront site, which would allow ample area for green space and new community-oriented development. It is currently owned by the same real estate development company responsible for the demolition of Crawford Station.

HISTORY: Fisk Power Station

The Fisk Power Station was designed by architects Shepley, Rutan and Coolidge, the successor firm to H.H. Richardson and the architects of many celebrated buildings including the Chicago Cultural Center, The Art Institute of Chicago, and the Harris Bank Building among others. Built by Commonwealth Edison and industrialist Samuel Insull, president of the corporation, Fisk pushed the limits of what was possible during the early growth years of electricity.

Previously, the industry had relied on conventional reciprocating steam engines, which had reached their peak in development for power generation, providing a few hundred horsepower. However, in Switzerland, three new 3,000-kilowatt capacity steam turbine engines were being built, prompting Insull to travel to Europe to investigate the feasibility of installing a similar turbine in the Edison system in Chicago. Commonwealth Edison vice president, Louis Ferguson, and Fisk Power Station designer, Frederick Sargent, later retraced Insull’s findings in

Chicago 7: Southwest Side Industrial Buildings



Fisk Power Station, 1903, Shepley, Rutan and Coolidge, 1111 W. Cermak Road with additions by others. Photo credit: Serhii Chrucky

Europe and developed a 5,000 kilowatt system for Fisk. Per Insull's demands, General Electric was charged with developing and completing the task of building the turbines, amid much criticism as to whether or not this could be done. Originally constructed to hold fourteen 5,000-kilowatt units, for an overall capacity of 70,000-kilowatts, turbo generating technology advanced so much that the first four units were soon replaced with 12,000-kilowatt units.

The Fisk Power Station, among many firsts, was also the home of the world's largest transformer at the time. Built by Westinghouse, it was installed in 1958, weighing 37,500 pounds. Fisk was also responsible for providing direct current (DC) to the Chicago Transit Authority's substations and rapid transit service.

Fisk features a variety of fine quality ornate and utilitarian structures: literally, a small city of buildings constructed to provide electricity to the City of Chicago and the region for more than 110 years. Many of its buildings employ the use of red-brick and stonework masonry as well as renaissance-revival detailing, an eclectic mix of historic styles. Later additions to the Fisk Power Station complex were designed by Daniel H. Burnham & Company and also the architectural firm of Shaw, Naess & Murphy. Several structures were identified as orange-rated in the Chicago Historic Resources Survey.

THREAT: Fisk Power Station

The Fisk Power Station has been closed since 2012. It is currently owned by the same development company responsible for the demolition of Crawford Station. While public meetings have been convened, and potential preservation of the buildings applauded by the community, talks have ceased and further discussions have not been public.



Fisk Power Station, 1903, Shepley, Rutan and Coolidge, 1111 W. Cermak Road with additions by others. Photo credit: Serhii Chrukky

RECOMMENDATIONS: Fisk Power Station

Preservation Chicago urges a reuse of the historic structures at Fisk that would incorporate some of the existing equipment to tell a story of Chicago's place on the world stage in the history of electricity and the production process. Many historic power plant buildings around the world have been reused to dramatic effect, including perhaps most famously the Tate Modern Museum in London. The Fisk Power Station, situated on the South Branch of the Chicago River, could also provide public access to the waterway, as well as recreation and park facilities. We believe that Fisk Station could be an interactive, multipurpose destination for the entire region, attracting Chicagoans, as well as tourists from around the world.

The Fisk Power Plant presents a enormous series of opportunities to re-envision the south brank of the Chicago River. Such a development which would include the preservation of many of the historic buildings on the river could become a destination, much like the vision that Millennium Park was to downtown Chicago. We urge the City of Chicago to consider a Landmark Designation of the most important buildings and aspects of Fisk with the intention of creating an amazing recreational and educational resource along the Chicago River.

Acknowledgements

This 2023 **Chicago 7 Most Endangered** book would not have been possible without the tireless support of many talented individuals. Preservation Chicago wishes to extend a special thanks to those whose extraordinary efforts made this publication and related advocacy possible. Additionally, Preservation Chicago wishes to thank our donors, large and small, whose generosity and support allows us to continue to pursue our mission.



Oldest known terra cotta in Chicago. Isaac Scott terra cotta, signed and dated Scott 1877, located on the exterior of the 1401 N. Dearborn Street, 1877, architects Asa Lyon and Isaac Scott. Terra cotta manufactured by Chicago Terra Cotta Company. Photo credit: Bill Tyre

Preservation Chicago Board Members

- ◆ Brad Suster, Board President
- ◆ Jacob Kaplan, Board Vice-President
- ◆ Stuart Berman, Board Treasurer
- ◆ Debbie Dodge, Board Secretary
- ◆ Cathie Bond
- ◆ Diane Gonzalez
- ◆ Joyce Jackson
- ◆ Andrea Reed
- ◆ Jack Spicer

◆ Charlie Vinz

◆ Joanne Yasus

Preservation Chicago Staff

- ◆ Ward Miller, Executive Director
- ◆ Adam Natenshon, Director of Operations
- ◆ Max Chavez, Director of Research & Special Projects
- ◆ Mary Lu Seidel, Director of Community Engagement
- ◆ Cathie Bond, Director of Events

- ◆ Authors/Researchers: Ward Miller, Max Chavez, Adam Natenshon, Mary Lu Seidel, Cathie Bond, Joanne Yasus, Jacob Kaplan, and Brian Kaempfen
- ◆ Photographers: Serhii Chrucky, Eric Allix Rogers, Deborah Mercer, Ward Miller, Max Chavez, Jack Rocha, Bill Tyre, Ryerson and Burnham Archive at Art Institute of Chicago, University of Illinois at Chicago, Library of Congress, Frankie Knuckles Foundation, Cinema Treasures, Hugh Celandier
- ◆ Logo: Will Flynn, Chicago Fire 150th Anniversary Painting: Haden Miller
- ◆ Event Host: Chicago Architecture Center, Eleanor Esser Gorski, Michael Wood, Ian Spula, Hallie Rosen, Madison Smith, Amanda Ziegler, and Alexander Roggow

Ward Miller, Richard H. Driehaus Executive
Director of Preservation Chicago, 773-398-6432
WMiller@PreservationChicago.org



www.PreservationChicago.org
Williams Building, 205 W. Monroe, Suite 400
Chicago, Illinois 60606, 312-443-1000