



Century of Progress Historic District The 1933-34 World's Fair Homes

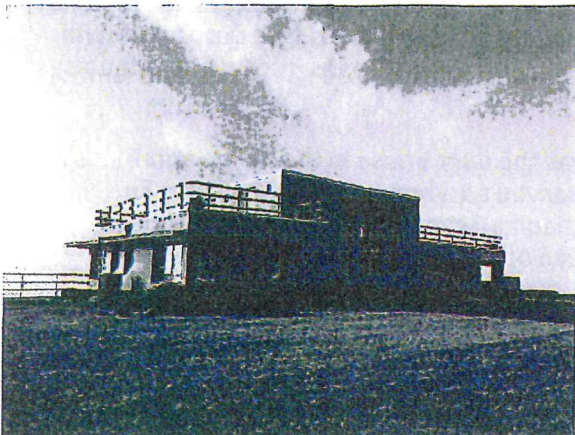
Decades of wind, sand, and surf have battered the five World's Fair houses located along Lake Front Drive, but their uniqueness has weathered the elements. The houses were built for the 1933-34 Century of Progress World's Fair to demonstrate modern architectural designs, experimental materials, and new technologies such as central air conditioning and electric appliances. The houses were located within the Home and Industrial Arts Group; which was the most popular venue at the fair.

After the fair the houses were barged and trucked to the Indiana Dunes by real estate developer Robert Bartlett. Bartlett used the high-profile houses to entice buyers to his new resort community of Beverly Shores. Today the houses are listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

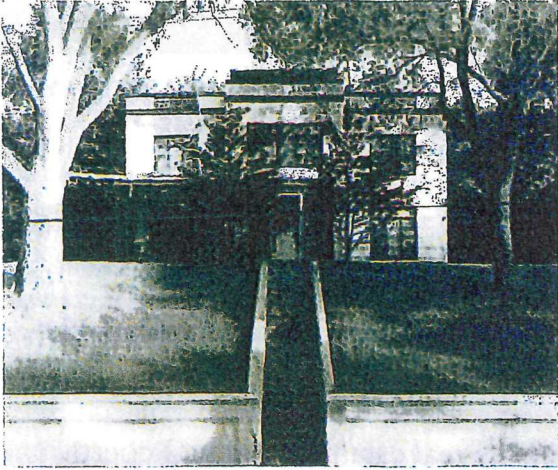
Indiana Landmarks, a statewide historic preservation organization, has leased the houses from Indiana Dunes National Park to provide for their long-term preservation. Landmarks has subleased them to private individuals who are rehabilitating them. Please respect their privacy by not going on the properties.



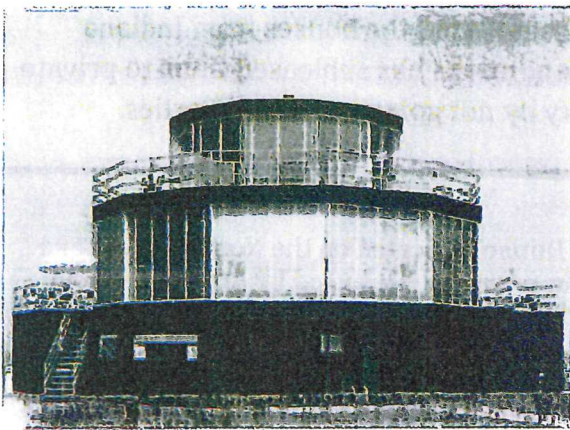
The **Wieboldt-Rostone House** is located on the North side of Lake Front Drive, East of Dunbar Avenue. Designed by Architect Walter Scholer of Lafayette, Indiana, this home was constructed of steel framing provided by the Indiana Bridge Company, and clad in an experimental material called Rostone. Rostone was composed of shale, limestone, and alkali. Its creators advertised that the material could be produced in a variety of colors and forms, including slabs and panels, to exact dimensions. The material was billed as never needing repairs, but had severely deteriorated by 1950. The restored house was covered with lightweight concrete panels of the same size, shape, color, and texture as the original Rostone. Visitors can still see remnants of the original Rostone surrounding the front door, in the entry, and around the living room fireplace.



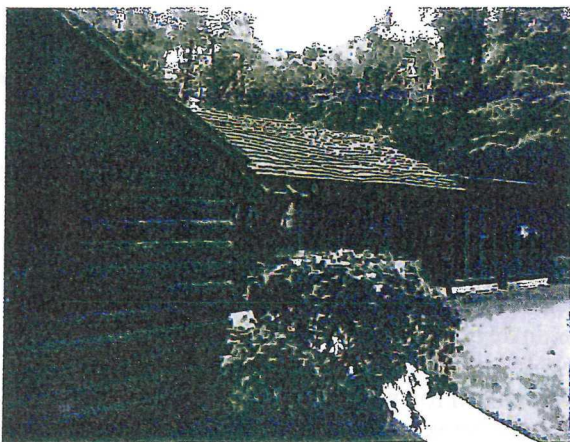
The **Florida Tropical House** lies East of the Wieboldt-Rostone House on Lake Front Drive. This house was the only one at the fair to be completely sponsored by a State, rather than a corporation or an association. Miami Architect Robert Law Weed was inspired by the tropical climate of Southern Florida in his design. Weed sought to blend the indoor and outdoor environments; bringing together a spacious two-story living room and large open terraces on the roof. The original specifications called for poured concrete walls to withstand the effects of hurricanes in Florida, however to enable demolition at the end of the Fair the house was framed in wood and finished with a lightweight concrete stucco. The bright pink house has become a well-known landmark for mariners.



On the South side of Lake Front Drive sits the **Armco-Ferro House**, designed by Cleveland Architect Robert Smith Jr. It is the only remaining example from the fair that met the Fair Committee's design criteria; a house that could be mass-produced and was affordable for the average American family. This seemingly frameless house boasts a revolutionary construction system; corrugated steel panels that are bolted together. This system resembles a typical cardboard box. It could be placed on its bottom, side, or top without damaging the structure. The corrugated panels are clad with porcelain-enameled steel panels produced by the Ferro Enamel Corporation. This construction system later provided the inspiration for the post World War II prefabricated housing developed by the Lustron Corporation. Several examples of Lustron houses can still be seen in Beverly Shores.



East of the Armco-Ferro House is the **House of Tomorrow**; creation of Chicago Architect George Fred Keck. The first floor was designed as the service area; originally containing the garage and an airplane hangar. World's Fair optimists assumed every future family would own an airplane. The second and third floors were the essence of the house; providing the main living spaces and a solarium. The three-story, steel-framed, building was originally clad in glass on the second and third floors. Keck defied mechanical engineers, who said that due to the expansive use of glass the house couldn't be heated, and installed a floor to ceiling "curtain wall system". Instead of heat loss during the Winter the level of solar heat gain actually reduced the need for mechanical heating. During the summer months at the fair the solar gain was too great for the home's revolutionary air-conditioning system to handle, and it failed. When Robert Bartlett moved the house to Beverly Shores he replaced the glass walls with operable windows to allow for proper air circulation.



One door East of the House of Tomorrow is the **Cypress Log Cabin**, designed by Architect Murray D. Heatherington and sponsored by the Southern Cypress Manufacturers' Association of Jacksonville, Florida. Unlike the other houses in the Home and Industrial Arts Group it was built as an exhibition building to demonstrate the unique qualities and many uses of Cypress. At the fair the cabin presented a mountain lodge atmosphere, with fences, arbors, and bridges decorated with cypress knees, carved to suggest animal heads, reptiles, and fantasy creatures.

The Cypress Log Cabin was the only house in the Home and Industrial Arts Group that actually served as a home during the fair. The ell, with bedroom, bath, and pantry, was occupied during both fair seasons by a representative of the Association and his wife.