

Visitor's Guide to Historic Garfield Park

Welcome to Historic Garfield Park. You may know that Garfield Park is the oldest city park in Indianapolis and that it is 126 fantastic acres packed with fun and activity for your family. But did you know that Garfield Park is listed on the National Registry of Historic Places? This distinction is judged by how great the Park's impact has been on the city of Indianapolis, since its founding! Way back in 1876 when it was Southern Park. There are several sites within the Park that have been singled out to be featured in our Tour of Historic Garfield.

There are a variety of ways for you to have fun with these historic tour materials and we invite you to try them all and then tell us what you think.

1. **Friends of Garfield Park, Inc. website** hosts a narrated version of the Garfield Park Historic Tour. The website contains a list of the historic sites located within the Park, along with a brief description of each item, some photographs, and audio clips so that you can listen to a brief overview in reference to each historic site.

[Click here to enjoy the elements of the website-hosted narrated tour.](#)

2. **Visit the Park in person.** To help find your way to all the elements, take along a print-version of this **Visitor's Guide** as well as a copy of the **Park Map**. The map will direct your steps, and the guide will provide a brief description of each of the 7 historic sites, and images to help you identify each featured site. Most of the historic sites are viewable from the 1.5 mile, paved path that winds through the Park.

[Download and/or print the PDF version of this Visitor's Guide to Historic Garfield](#)

[Download and/or print the PDF version of the Park Map](#)

Listening Tip for Group Tours

Look for these artistic site markers near five of the featured historic sites.

Find the related audio tour elements hosted on our website. After you click to play the narration, simply activate the speaker feature on your mobile device and place the device inside the gramophone on the site marker.

This will provide a sound amplification like the old music players and enable your entire party to enjoy the narrated portion of the tour, all at the same time.



3. **A Teacher's Guide to Walk, Talk and Teach at Garfield Park** is a great supplemental tool if you are planning a field trip to Garfield Park. We have provided a range of student & teacher resources to help make these historic connections practical and engaging.

Visit the [Teacher's page](#) to download and/or print any/all of the Teacher/Leader documents and student worksheets on demand. Email us at info@GarfieldParkIndy.org if you'd like assistance in planning your field trip to Garfield

Thank you for your interest in Historic Garfield Park. If you have a personal story or connection to Garfield Park we'd love to hear about it. You can share your personal stories or comments about the tour any time by making the connection right here at: GarfieldParkIndy.org/Share

We hope you'll visit soon and often. We look forward to hearing from you.

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The MacAllister Center for the Performing Arts

The Amphitheatre was first opened in the early 1920's as a theatre for repertory actors presenting a new play each week. Families came from near and far to sit out in the open-air and enjoy the sights and sounds on a warm summer night. The theater received a major face-lift in 1997 and a new name, The MacAllister Center for the Performing Arts, in honor of P.E. MacAllister a gracious Difference-maker and longtime friend of the Park. Neighbors, families, and visitors still love the summer fun with outdoor theater!

[Go Here to Listen to the Narrated Tour](#)



The General Henry Ware Lawton Monument

Henry came from humble beginnings. Early on he adopted an honest and tenacious work ethic. In 1861 President Lincoln called for volunteers, Henry enlisted. He was 18. Henry Lawton was destined to become a soldier, a leader of men. And he was, for nearly four decades. He led from the front line. Always. And he never asked his men to do anything that he had not, or would not do himself. General Henry Lawton was a Medal of Honor recipient. He was a principled, fierce warrior. He was a loving husband and father. A beloved uncle. A Difference-maker.

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The Conservatory

In 1908 Indianapolis hired a gifted visionary, George Edward Kessler, a German-born landscape architect with considerable engineering and city planning ability as well. Because he loved his work, he loved Garfield Park. It became his jewel. Kessler had great respect for the rich horticultural heritage of Garfield Park. Today the Conservatory hosts a display of tropical plants from around the world. Making it an exciting place to explore, for young and old alike. Let us make your day!




[Go Here to Listen to the Narrated Tour](#)



The Sunken Garden

It was George Kessler who envisioned the Sunken Garden with beautiful walkways and fountains. He imagined the summer plantings to be "entirely formal in character," and to include less-formal displays to enhance the elegant Sunken Garden. In 1916, F.W. Darlington of Chicago was hired to design and build the fountains in the Garden.

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	<p>Pagoda Shelter. Welcome to our Pagoda Shelter—truly a place where memories are made—and the stories of each generation, gifts to the next. The Pagoda was a magical place back in the day. It was built in 1903 by a clever and skilled architect, Daniel Dupree, who had a grandson he often took to the Park. For over 100 years this shelter has been <i>the place</i> for dances, first dates, engagements, family picnics, weddings...the list goes on and on. <i>If this stage could talk!</i></p>	<p>Go Here to Listen to the Narrated Tour</p>
	<p>Trolley Streetcar Waiting Station. In the early 1900's, Garfield Park was on the route for a city-wide trolley streetcar system that ran along both Shelby Street and Southern Avenue. There is a shelter still in the Park today that served as the Waiting Station for early trolleys that would make a short loop into the park to pick up and drop off passengers wanting to spend a day in the Park. The shelter has recently undergone a major rehabilitation project thanks to the generosity of several community partners.</p>	<p>Go Here to Listen to the Narrated Tour</p>
	<p>Grove of Remembrance The Grove of Remembrance was dedicated in 1920 after WWI had ended. Trees were planted to memorialize the over 290 soldiers who died fighting in World War I. A tree for each soldier was planted including an etched marker, for name, unit, and date of death. You may hear and read of Alice Moore French and the American War Mothers who, together, helped bring the Grove to Garfield Park. The dedication parade and ceremony was a day tucked away in the hearts and minds of all who were there. Difference-makers...behind every name.</p>	<p>Go Here to Listen to the Narrated Tour</p>

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[Please consider making a Gift to Garfield](#)

The Friends of Garfield Park is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization, so your contributions are tax-deductible. Visit GarfieldParkIndy.org to learn more and to opt into our email list to get the latest news and event information.