

grounds of the Palace of Versailles. To many, this joyous celebration of water is a fitting symbol for the beginning of the road that leads the traveler from Lake Michigan to the Mississippi River and, ultimately, the Pacific Ocean. (AIA 49)

**3 Jackson Drive Viaduct, between Columbus Drive and Michigan Avenue.** This block of Jackson is a bridge above the Illinois



Central railroad tracks. In 1919, this rail line was moved below grade and electrified. Going back to the 1850s, the lake's shore line was located next to Michigan Avenue. The rail line ran on a breakwater off shore. The debris from the Chicago Fire of 1871 was used as fill, creating the section of land between Michigan Avenue and the Illinois Central. Subsequent landfills created the park to the east of the railroad. Looking north from the center of the bridge, we can see that the Art Institute spans the railroad as well.

This right-of-way is used by the South Shore and South Bend Railroad, which provides daily passenger service between Chicago and South Bend, Indiana. This is the last electric inter-

urban railroad still operating in the United States.

The viaduct is a good place to view these three sites: (4) Fine Arts Building, (7) Railway Exchange/Santa Fe Building, and (8) Metropolitan Tower.

**4 Fine Arts/Studebaker Building.** Best viewed from the west end of the Jackson Drive



Viaduct, east of Michigan Avenue, the Fine Arts building is in the block of Michigan Avenue south of Van Buren Street. It is easily recognizable by the Artist's Snack Shop located on street level. The building was designed by Solomon Beman, the same architect who built the Pullman factory and headquarters. When built in 1885, this was the showroom and assembly plant for the Studebaker Carriage Company. The arched entries on the north and south were originally passageways for a semi-circular drive where customers could park their carriages while they shopped for a new model in the showrooms located on floors two, three, and four. The carriages were assembled on floors five, six, and seven.

Studebaker was the largest and most successful carriage company in the country. The year this building opened, they produced 75,000

horse-drawn wagons. They later became the only carriage maker to successfully transition to manufacturing automobiles. They outgrew this building and moved to Wabash Avenue, and in 1898 architect Beman set to work on an "adaptive re-use." The original seventh floor and roof was removed, three new stories were added, and the interior was re-worked into studio space for artists, architects, and musicians. From then on, the building has been known as the Fine Arts. (AIA 44) (CFB 22-23)

**5 Michigan Avenue/Jackson Boulevard Intersection—Original Starting Point of US 66.** Welcome to the corner that was the beginning of US

66 from 1926 until 1937! Jackson Boulevard handled two-way traffic until 1953, when it became one-way eastbound west of Michigan (East of Michigan, it has remained a two-way street). After this change, westbound 66 traffic coming from Lake Shore Drive would turn north on Michigan Avenue, then continue west on Adams Street.

Since Jackson is now eastbound, there is a sign on the southwest corner [by (8) Metropolitan Tower] indicating that drivers heading east have arrived at the "END" of Historic 66.



6

**Fountain of the Great Lakes.**

Tucked away in the plaza on the northeast corner of Michigan Avenue and Jackson Boulevard is this marvelous fountain. When the fountain was originally installed in 1914, it was located against the south wall of the Art Institute. Since 1965 it has been against the wall of the addition



to the Institute, the Morton Wing, and facing west. The sculptor of the fountain is Laredo Taft. The five female figures represent the Great Lakes: Superior pours water into Huron, Michigan to her right, Erie to her left, Ontario kneeling.

Chicago's position at the southern shore of Lake Michigan was the primary reason for its early growth. When the Illinois & Michigan Canal opened in 1848, it became possible to travel by water from New York City to the Mississippi river system via the Hudson River, the Erie Canal, Lakes Erie, Huron and Michigan, the Chicago River, the I & M Canal, and the Illinois River. Chicago, in the center of the water highway, became the main transfer point for goods and passengers, leading to a commercial partnership between the Windy City and the Big Apple that would dominate the U.S. economy for over a century. The Fountain of the Great Lakes is a

fitting reminder of the importance of the waterways in the era before the railroad.(AIA 41)

7

**Railway Exchange/Santa Fe Building.**

At the northwest corner of Michigan Avenue and Jackson Boulevard is the Railway Exchange Building, with its gleaming white terra cotta walls and the "Santa Fe" sign on the roof.

It is fitting indeed for the building that housed the Chicago offices of the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railroad to be located at the original beginning of 66. The Santa Fe line stretched from Chicago to Los Angeles and parallels the highway through New Mexico,



8

**Metropolitan Tower.**

Southwest corner of Michigan Avenue and Jackson Boulevard. Built in 1924, this was the first Chicago building to exceed thirty stories in height. It was home to an investment banking firm, S.W. Straus and Company. At the top of its tower is a pyramid-shaped roof topped with a glass beehive. At night, the beehive is lit a deep cobalt blue. When first installed, the beehive also contained a directional beacon. The pyramid symbolized longevity and permanence; the beehive stood for industry and thrift; and the directional beacon was a metaphor for the bank's global reach. Straus was hoping to use these symbols to instill trust in their customers, to reassure them that their investments would be handled actively and carefully by an institution that could be trusted over the long term. Ironically, the firm failed during the Great Depression and closed less than ten years after lighting that beautiful blue beehive!

Once Straus failed, the building was purchased by the CNA insurance group, then for a time it was the headquarters for Encyclopedia Britannica. As of spring 2006 it is becoming a