



MID MOD QUINCY

DRIVING TOUR

a self-guided
exploration
featuring
30 premier
examples
of mid-century
modern
architecture
+ art moderne
structures

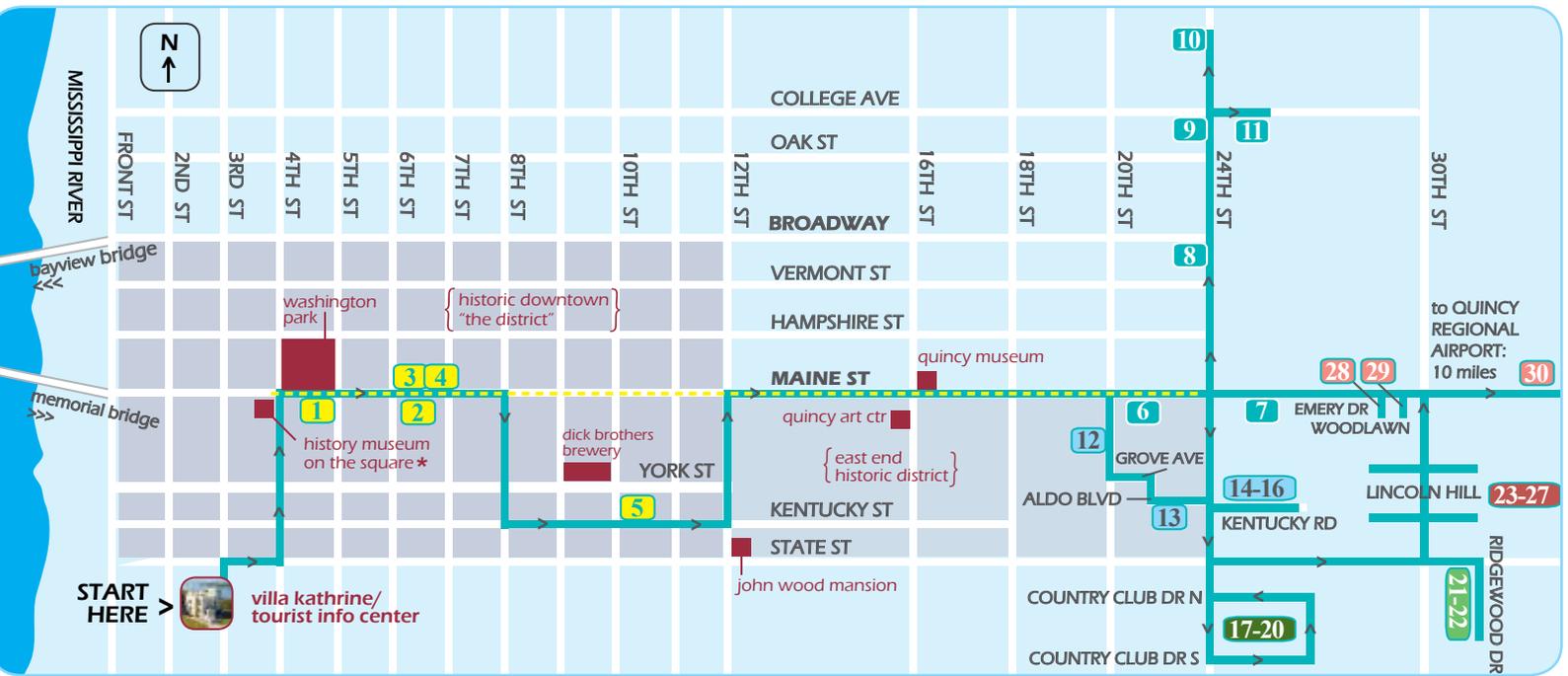
BONUS SPOTLIGHT visionary architect: john benya
+ signature mid-mod art card

MIDMOD

QUINCY

Welcome to Quincy's fabulous mid-20th century design portfolio! Clean lines, bold bursts of color, and streamlined detail : where form meets function. A more affordable alternative to the pre-war elaborate Victorian, Midcentury Modern architecture refers to the 1945 to mid-1970s era. Efficiently constructed homes appealed to middle-class families who also desired to live in a work of art and reconvene with nature, opting for single-level open concept footprints.

Explore iconic commercial and religious structures which serve as the cornerstones of our community's mid-mod landscape, along with stunning residential properties meticulously maintained throughout the city. Included are several 1930s Art Moderne homes as well- simply too impressive not to be admired. We've narrowed the route to 30 structures, but there are scores more to spy along the way. *Enjoy the mini bio of Quincy's renowned architect, John Benya, plus our signature art card on back.*



MID MOD DRIVE

Begin at Villa Kathrine/Tourist Info Center > End at Airport

The residential homes along the tour are privately occupied. Thank you for being respectful of the owners.

- 1** Mercantile Bank | 440 Maine
- 2** Pedestrian alley on Maine
- 3** First Mid IL Bank | 636 Hampshire
- 4** St Boniface Church | 7th & Maine
- 5** 1005 Kentucky residence
- 6** Maine Street apartment complex | 22nd & Maine
- 7** St Peter's Catholic Church | 2600 Maine
- 8** Members First Credit Union | 24th & Broadway
- 9** 2336 Oak Street residence
- 10** Chaddock building | N 24th
- 11** Zwick Row | 2428-2444 College Ave

- 12** 230 S 20th residence
- 13** 2210 Aldo Boulevard residence
- 14-16** Kentucky Road Subdivision
- 17-20** Country Club Drive Subdivision
- 21-22** Ridge Wood Subdivision
- 23-27** Lincoln Hill Subdivision
- 28** 150 Emery Drive residence
- 29** 136 Woodlawn Road residence
- 30** Quincy Regional Airport Terminal | 1645 Hwy 104

NOTEWORTHY NUGGETS

*** History Museum on the Square**
Architectural archives of Benya blueprints, drawings & watercolor renderings available for research with advance appointment : 332 Maine | 217.222.1835 | info@hsqac.org

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Smile, You're on the Maine Street Mile
Quincy's most notable thoroughfare
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Our gift to you : Signature Mid Mod Art Card on back :
Share your MID MOD QUINCY travels with friends or keep for a souvenir!



#1

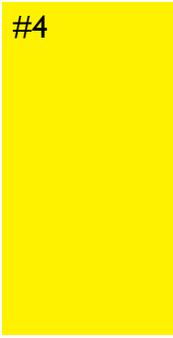
440 Maine | Mercantile Bank | 1958 original structure
Hafner & Hafner



#2

626 Maine | Parking Lot Mall | 1961

Dedicated to the memory of four men who lost their lives in a Chicago hotel fire traveling on official business in 1946. Edward Schneidman, parking lot system pioneer advocate and mayor of Quincy at the time, along with three city officials were among the casualties. Two-toned blue paint and a commemorative plaque now adorn the walkway which connects parking to The District businesses yet today.



#4

701 Maine | St Boniface Church 1962 | *John Benya*

Named by the IL Association of Architects as one of Illinois' 150 most important structures, this modernistic masterpiece is an iconic visual in Quincy's skyline and considered Benya's finest work. Terrazzo floors and stone walls envelope the interior. The 160-ft steeple is constructed of a steel shell with stainless steel interior, designed to house the historic three bells from the original church, as well as the heating & air conditioning.

Presently unoccupied, the building may be re-opened as a shrine to Augustine Tolton, ordained as the continent's first black priest on this site in 1886.



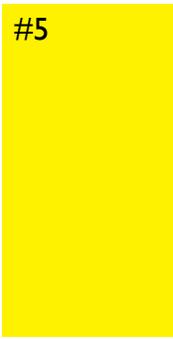
#3

636 Hampshire | First Mid Bank & Trust
1969-1973 | *John Benya*

Originally built for the Gem City Savings & Loan and constructed around an original 1939 building, this complex has a large cantilevered wing over the bank drive-thru and maintains a full city block. The plaza on the grounds offers a wonderful green space for events in The District.



p.1



#5

1005 Kentucky | private residence | 1967 | *Smith Brothers*

Situated amidst older homes, this mid-mod cutie was contracted for the Brown family on a lot which once contained five shotgun-style cottages, one behind the other. The current owners have lovingly restored the homestead and are the proprietors of For Home & Her, a retail store specializing in trend-right goods in The District.

p.2



#6

22nd & Maine | apartment complex | 1959



#9



2336 Oak St | private residence | 1939 | Art Moderne
Charles Behrensmeyer

The architect's most original statement, this structure was built wrapping a freeflowing geometry with a taut cement skin. Behrensmeyer boldly provided the transition to architecture of contemporary times, unleashing a folio of designs in a pure Moderne Style. The current owners have meticulously restored this icon as a private residence.



#7

2600 Maine | St. Peter's Catholic Church
1962 | *Bauhaus & Zwick*

Another point of pride for Robert Zwick, this modern brick complex was erected on 10 acres adjacent to historic Madison Park along Quincy's beloved Maine Street. A statue commemorating America's first black priest and former Quincyan, Augustine Tolton, is onsite.



#10

921 N 24th | Chaddock | 1954



#8



24th & Broadway | Members First Credit Union
1979 original structure | *John Benya*



#11

2428-2444 College Ave | Zwick Row Historic District 1939
Moderne Style | *Bauhaus & Zwick*

This set of five neat singles captures the Moderne Style in several moods and was one of the builder's projects of pride. Robert Zwick (1926-2015), architect/owner of Bauhaus & Zwick Construction, punctuated the Quincy housing scene with his enclave of smooth stucco wall surfaces, flat roofs, asymmetrical facades and sparse decoration.



#12



#16



2615 Kentucky Road | 1950 | Bert Luer

Designed by a Missouri architect known for his buildings in St. Louis, this sprawling home was plumbed for eight bathrooms and at one point had two full kitchens. The original mid-century modern cabinets still beautify the kitchen today.

230 S 20th | 1969 | Frank Horn

While not a pure “mid-century modern”, this late 60s low profile stone masterpiece designed by a prominent Quincy architect deserves to be appreciated. Secluded in the heart of the East End Historic District, Asian influences and serene gardens contribute to a Zen-like sanctuary.



#17



#13

2210 Aldo Blvd | 1939

Art Moderne/International style | *Charles Behrensmeyer*

Designed for steel wholesaler Clarence Gerdes, this home is built entirely of steel and concrete. Smooth white walls, horizontal lines and rounded corners typify the style. A soaring 2-story family room overlooks the back lawn.



2409 Country Club Drive South | 1954 | John Benya

One of Quincy’s most iconic mid-mod homes, “The Kuna House” included innovative features of glass support walls, heated cork, and indoor garden with koi pond. Here, as with Frank Lloyd Wright’s Usonian houses, Benya blurred the distinction between indoor and outdoor space. Built for \$35,000.



#14 / #15



#18

2601 & 2633 Kentucky Road | 1950 / 1951 | John Benya

2420 Country Club Drive North | 1956



#19

2500 Country Club Drive South | 1951



#23

2923 Lincoln Hill SW | 1953 | John Benya

John and Virginia Benya built their family home in the upscale neighborhood fashioned by Benya himself. He modeled the subdivision after those designed by Joseph Fichler in California and was the architect for many of the surrounding homes.

Benya's designs unfailingly connect the occupants of houses and buildings with nature. The landscape of this home reflects the waves of the ocean in the buff brick serpentine wall that encloses the property, and the stacked limestone exterior gives a naturally rugged appearance. The interior of the home is also comprised of characteristics common in Benya homes. Cypress wood accents the living room ceiling and windows, and clever built-in storage is throughout the home, even in the attached garage to serve double duty as a supplemental entertaining space.



#20

2527 Country Club Drive North | 1964



#21

622 Ridgewood Drive | 1955 | Stripp & Zang, developers

The Ridgewood Subdivision did not utilize any architects, rather the developers bought various plans from a book modeled after Benya's style. An expansive, light-infused interior with floor-to-ceiling windows and a 2-sided fireplace are prime features in this brick and frame classic.



#24

2807 Lincoln Hill NW | 1952 | Jack Haffner

The original footprint of this dark frame beauty has expanded to 3800 square feet with the addition of a lower split level living room, 2 baths, and a bedroom by the current owners. A deck completes the remodel surrounded by a massive forest backdrop of mature trees.



#22

621 Ridgewood Drive | 1955 | Stripp & Zang, developers



#25

3001 Lincoln Hill SE | 1956 | John Benya



#26



3001 Lincoln Hill NE | 1956 | John Benya

The only International Modernism home in Quincy, a rare gem featuring glass designed to replicate the Northern Lights as light reflects during rain (30th Street facade), renovated using glass from Colorado. The home is graced by many of the original owners' meticulously preserved furnishings yet today.



#27



3022 Lincoln Hill NE | 1952 | John Benya

This meticulously renovated home retains key mid-mod attributes with its peppy orange front door, beveled edge plank ceilings and walls, and clerestory windows running along the front facade. Clerestory design originated from the ancient temples of Egypt, allowing light but preserving wall space within. The largest residential single plate windows in Quincy flank the fireplace, seamlessly merging the back lawn with the open living and kitchen area.



#28

136 Emery Drive | 1959-60 | John Benya

Built with an expansive view of the private pool, the home was constructed of handmade coral bricks imported from old Mexico. The kitchen cabinets were fashioned from wild black cherry trees, felled in the 1940s when neighborhood streets were originally carved out. The footprint is thoughtfully divided into separate wings, and the basement included a pool locker room.



#29

150 Woodlawn Road | 1947 | Russ Allen, developer

A clean, rectangular example of the rare 2-story modern of the era; built by a prolific Quincy contractor, known for constructing quality homes c. 1940-1960.



#30



Quincy Regional Airport Terminal

1645 Hwy 104 | 1972 | John Benya

The futuristic airport terminal was a definite coup in Benya's portfolio, a circle of many circles—on a split three-level plan. The exterior walls are entirely of brown-toned, half-circle windows separated by upward-curving sections of a striking green masonry. At the dedication, Benya said he “wanted to give the people of Quincy a building concept that the world has never seen before... also a building that would feel new, pleasant forever.”



ABOUT BENYA a mini bio of renowned mid-century modern architect, John Benya | 1911-1989

Quincy thoroughfares and residential neighborhoods proudly and prolifically bear the signature style of John Benya. The young draftsman first arrived in the city when talented and established architect, Charles Behrensmeyer, needed help keeping astride with the post-World War II baby boom demand for new homes and schools. Technical designers were in short supply locally, prompting Behrensmeyer to contract new hires from St. Louis, one of them being John Benya.

Little is on public record of the man whose professional career spanned four decades. He attended Northwestern University outside of Chicago and served in the Navy during World War II. Following his marriage to Virginia in 1947, he began practicing in Quincy with his earliest designs dating to 1949.

Benya designed more than 500 buildings across the country, everything from factories to churches, public housing to banks. His works included several of Quincy's most prominent public spaces and remain some of the most admired buildings in western Illinois today.

St. Boniface Church is considered Benya's finest work, with its towering steeple and striking interior featuring terrazzo floors and stone walls. Friends refer to the masterpiece as his favorite and most spiritually inspired work. Named by the Illinois Association of Architects as one of Illinois' 150 most important structures, St. Boniface solidly stands as a testament to Benya's love for community and faith.

John was an amiable fellow, well-liked among his peers and easily recognizable about town in his swanky white Cadillac and a cigar between his fingers. Those who knew him well report his #1 preferred brand was Romeo Y Julieta Cigars in times of prosper and Dutch Masters in leaner days. He built his own home for his family of five in the Lincoln Hill subdivision {No. 23 on the tour} and developed many progressive homes in the Kentucky Road subdivision as well, outfitted with state-of-the-art appliances, lighting and intercom systems.



Quincy Regional Airport's fabulous modernistic terminal featuring bold circular patterns and blue-glass skylights was also a Benya baby. As the story goes, he conceived the design using a bar glass and a napkin over cocktails one evening. John took his glass and dumped the drink out, turned it upside down, and drew a set of seven circles in a grouping. Those seven circles became the foundation for the airport. Shortly after the airport was completed, he was quoted as saying "All of my designs are original, and I never do the same thing twice." {1970s watercolor rendering of the terminal shown above}

Benya designed many other structures in the Tri-State area, St. Louis and even the Bahamas, including the "Glass House of Springfield". Perhaps the city's only single-family residence in the International style, the 6000 sq-ft glass, brick and steel home is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.



The Garvey House
8 Fair Oaks Street
Springfield, IL
c. 1959

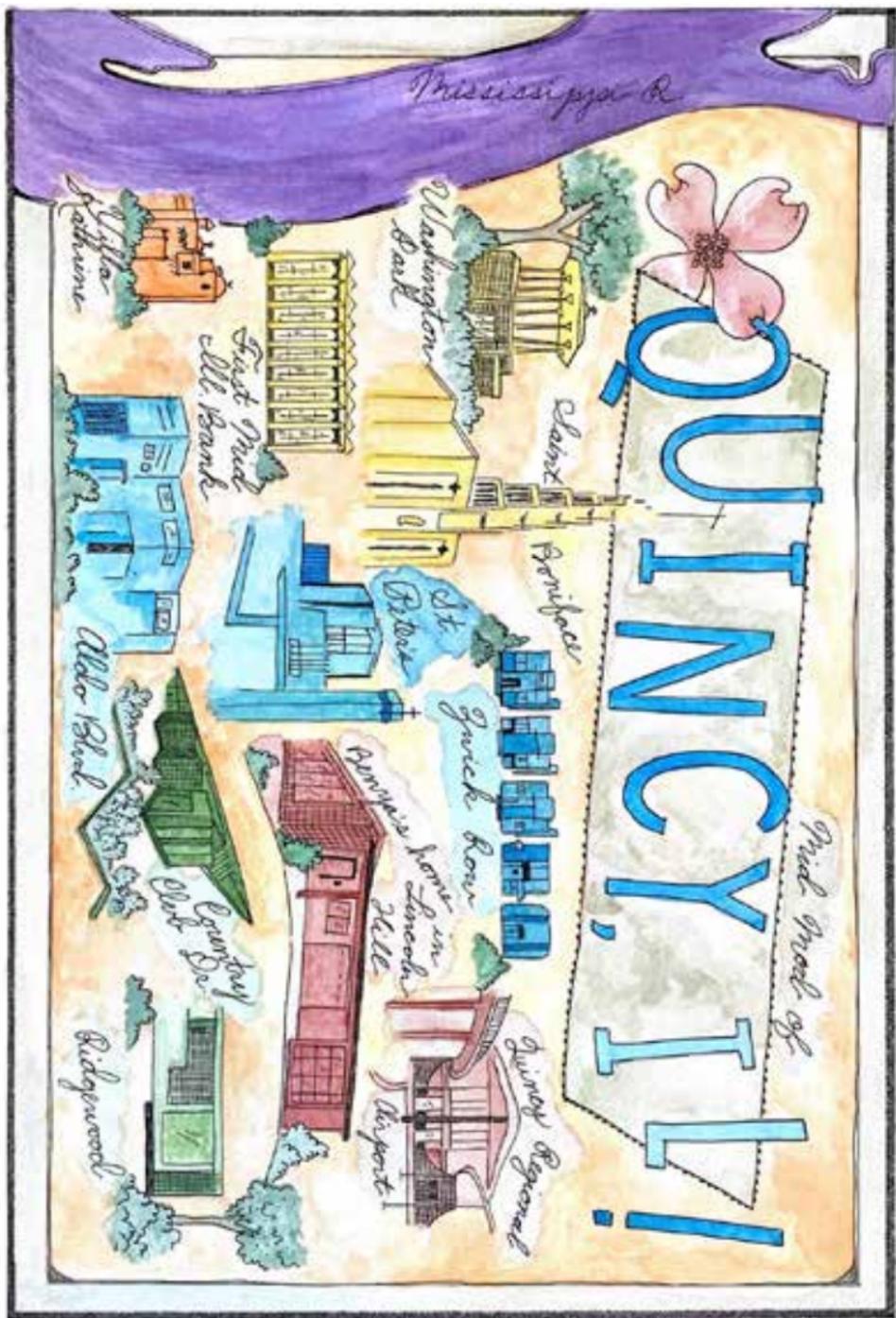


Intriguing and oftentimes playful symbolism is evident throughout Benya's work, as seen in the window design of Nauvoo-Colusa High School in Hancock County, c. 1961. The shape mirrors a wine glass, saluting Nauvoo's wine-making roots. {1015 E. County Rd 2450}



In honor of Quincy's beloved architectural leader and his signature mark on modernism, we proudly remember John Benya's visionary designs ushering the region's architectural landscape boldly into the mid-20th century with imagination and flare.

Gravesite located at the Illinois Veterans Home Sunset Cemetery {1707 N 12th, Division 13, Row 32}



Our MIDMOD gift for you!

A signature Mid Mod Art Card to mail to your friends or keep as a souvenir. This original pen and watercolor piece was created by a Quincy native with a deep appreciation of the beauty of design and the architectural heritage of her hometown.

The handwriting on the card is patterned after the “Palmer Method”, which the artist researched as the popular style of penmanship taught in the era. Structures highlighted on the card coordinate with the section colors on the tour.

We hope you’ve been inspired and refreshed by the art of design throughout the tour.

Swing by Quincy’s Tourist Info Center (532 Gardner Expy) when you’re done touring, or email info@seequincy.com with your name & address and we’ll mail your postcard.

Thanks for touring with us!
SeeQuincy.com

{ Mid Mod Art Card : artist, Elsie E. Tuttle }