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Lake Forest: A Community's Search for Perfection in the Progressive Era

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Oral Presentation O7.2

**LAKE FOREST: A COMMUNITY'S SEARCH FOR PERFECTION
IN THE PROGRESSIVE ERA**

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Lake Forest, Illinois in the Progressive Era was a highly exclusive safe haven for the elite of Chicago. But Lake Forest was more than a high priced suburb for successful businessmen and the children of entrepreneurs; it was a community where wealthy individuals would attempt to create the perfect environment. The residents of Lake Forest wanted a place apart not only from undesirables but also from the issues that plagued the city of Chicago, such as poor sanitation, crime, and other social ills. This presentation will explore how the residents attempted to create a perfect community, from the architecture they chose for their estates to the social world they created. In addition, this presentation will also examine the connections between Lake Foresters' desire to create a utopian environment and the progressives' need for control in a chaotic world, along with the unfaltering progressive belief in the perfectibility of society.