

A LANDSCAPE FOR HEALING AND LEISURE



Lake Wheeler was particularly lively on sunny days. Veterans and visitors alike rented rowboats and strolled along the shore.



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Explore the landscape.

Visit Wood National Cemetery to the northwest, the resting place for over 37,000 Veterans.

The Picturesque landscape of the Soldiers Home provided Veterans a recuperative setting to heal body, mind, and spirit. It also gave Milwaukee residents a pastoral retreat away from the city. Fountains, lakes, grottoes, and gardens enhanced the rolling topography and encouraged exploration. A glass conservatory housed vibrant plant displays, while ornate pavilions gave wanderers a resting place and the Home band a stage for Sunday afternoon concerts.

Over 300,000 guests visited the grounds in 1898 after streetcar lines connected the Home to downtown Milwaukee. Fourth of July festivities drew especially large crowds. During the celebration, Home members entertained visitors with lawn games and serenades of patriotic medleys. After sunset, avenues were lined with lanterns and fireworks were launched from the Lake Wheeler peninsula. Even Old Main was “ablaze with lights,” according to local newspapers.



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