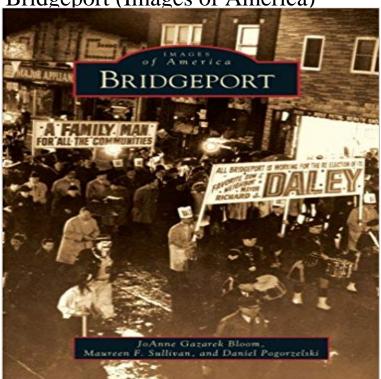
Bridgeport (Images of America)



Explore Bridgeport, the most political neighborhood in the most political of citieshome to five Chicago mayors and parades of politicians honoring its power at national conventions. Once a Native American village traversed by Jacques Marquette and Louis Jolliet, as Chicago grew the area was called Hardscrabble, Cabbage Gardens, and Bridgeport. Immigrants built it: the Irish dredged a canal and mined a quarry that led to slaughterhouses, cooperages, rolling mills, and breweries that were worked by Germans, Bohemians, Swedes, and Poles. Held dear as the Heart of Lithuania, muckrakers described parts of it as a heartbreaking jungle. More immigrants Italians, Mexicans, came: Croatians, Chinese. Against the backdrop of prairies, labor strife, gangways, and Podsajdwokiem, this sometimes uneasy mix lived, worked, and voted together. Bridgeport still has streets that defy the citys orderly grid, settlement houses, language stews, and, for each nationality, churches and taverns. Today, it may welcome artists and expensive housing, but on summer nights stoop sitting and rooting for the White Sox remain social obligations.

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