

COVER AND SPINE

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The bank behind the businesses that helped build Chicago



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PROLOGUE

Like many of the people who came together to make this book a reality, I spent most of my professional career at MB Financial Bank and the banks from which it sprung. I began in the Petersen Bank annex, and whenever the bank where I worked was acquired or acquired another bank, my career expanded too.

As people who “bleed MB red,” we wanted take a moment as the merger with Fifth Third gets underway to remember the history that brought us here and to honor and commemorate all the things that made MB so special, including:

THE PEOPLE. Our people always have been the lifeblood of MB. We are a very collaborative place to work. We recognize that the success of each of us depends on the success of all of us, and our Core Values reinforce our commitment to going beyond what is expected to make a significant difference. From the top executives on down, MB people have worked hard to help each other, and to build a family that in turn can help the people, companies, and communities we serve.

OUR CLIENTS. The banks that came together to form MB originally served mainly the businesses in their neighborhoods. They recognized that if businesses prospered, then the people who owned and worked in those businesses would prosper, and that in turn would lead to prosperity in the neighborhood and ultimately in the city. MB bankers have always worked alongside their clients, listening to what they need and

helping to provide them with the tools to make their companies succeed and grow.

OUR COMMUNITIES. In the beginning, a bank’s community is mainly its immediate neighborhood. But as banks grow, their communities also grow. Now MB’s community is the whole of Chicagoland, and beyond. As a bank and as individuals, we donate money and creativity and time to efforts as diverse as stocking food pantries or sponsoring an ice arena to provide space for the Blackhawks and the community or working to ensure that every student in the Chicago Public Schools can earn a living wage. We do it because we all live here, and what lifts up any of us lifts up us all. We do it because it is the right thing to do.

The merger of MB with Fifth Third was bittersweet, but not terribly surprising. Many banks, including MB, continue to grow by marrying their strengths with the strengths of other compatible banks. We believe that MB will continue to be an extraordinary presence in the lives of many people, both inside and outside the organization. We are proud of our past, and we are confident of the future.

This is the story of MB.

Karen Perlman

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Chief Brand Officer*

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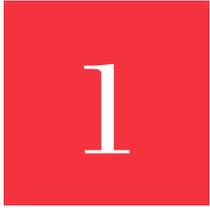
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SHAPING THE STORY

MB Financial Bank is proud to be a Chicago bank. The organization reflects the exceptional energy, drive, and growth of the city it always has called home. MB and its predecessors helped to fund and support the businesses that made the city a beacon for people from all over the globe who came looking for a chance at a better life, and who were willing to roll up their sleeves and get to work.

“Banking is a noble business. We are entrusted with some of the most important aspects of peoples’ lives, and across every life stage. It’s a responsibility we take on proudly. And at MB Financial, I believe it’s something we’ve done superbly.”

MITCH FEIGER

President and CEO, MB Financial, Inc.

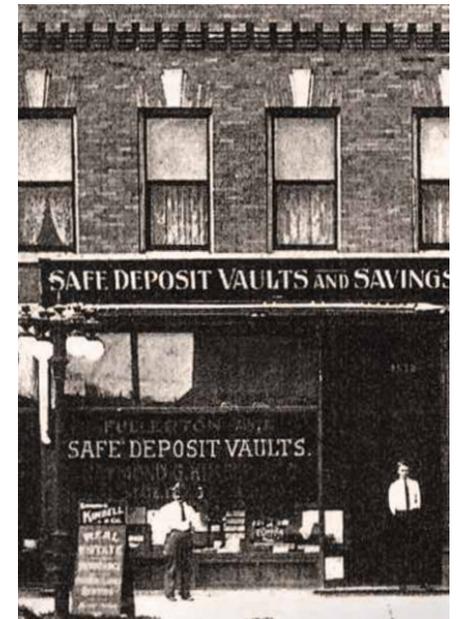
But something happened before Chicago was even a city that set the stage for the kind of bank that MB would become.

Prior to the establishment of the Federal Reserve in 1913, banks were under the control of the state. To no one’s surprise, each state approached the creation and regulation of the banking industry in a different manner.

In Illinois, the state constitution authorized state-chartered banks in 1818. Not until 1851 did the state pass a “free banking” law that allowed banks to get charters from the secretary of state—instead of the state legislature—just like any other business. This spawned a banking boom in Illinois and proved to be the catalyst that brought MB Financial into existence.

The catch? Each bank could have only one physical location. As a result, individual banks became strongly identified with their neighborhoods and critical to local commerce. These banks provided the capital local businesspeople needed to start or grow a wide variety of enterprises. This drove commerce, attracted talent, helped build communities and culture, and further strengthened the businesses.

The only ways banks could expand into other locations were by closing one location and moving or by acquiring another bank.





In addition to helping build neighborhoods, banks played a role in rebuilding Chicago after the Great Fire in 1871, a pivotal point in the history of the city, its businesses, and its banking.

Banks also encouraged the movement of people and businesses into the suburbs—the Chicagoland area as we know it today.

A BUILDING WITH A PURPOSE

Because of the prohibition of branch banking, a freestanding bank usually served its neighborhoods, providing capital for business development and expansion, as well as traditional banking services for the people who lived and worked there. Community residents often owned stock in the bank. Banks tended to lend primarily to local businesses, as a way of

cementing their position in the neighborhoods and growing their own assets.

The bank buildings themselves became a source of pride for banks and the neighborhoods they served. A building stood as a testament to the financial strength of the institution and to its prominence in the community. The buildings were designed as physical representations of the importance of the bank's work and the safety of the money inside. Especially during the early twentieth century, banks hired well-known architects to design their buildings, many of which have achieved landmark status today.

Two of these community banks—Mid-City National Bank and Manufacturers National Bank—were the founding banks of MB Financial Bank.

