

Evanston History Center Fiscal Year Activity Report 2018-2019

Tours and Rentals

- 1,299 people visited the Dawes House for individual tours and 369 people for group tours.
- 1,435 people visited the Dawes House for Open House Chicago weekend October 13-14.
- 63 people attended 5 walking tours.
- 8 new volunteer docents joined our interpretation team.
- 2 elementary schools brought school group tours.
- 12 groups representing 1,425 individuals rented the Dawes House for events such as weddings, receptions, concerts, fundraisers, picnics, memorial services, and birthday parties; including one television show "Empire", Rotary's Taste of Evanston, and two Out of SPACE performances.

Research and Archives Projects

- There were 60 phone, email and mail requests for information, a 12% increase.
- 339 people visited the EHC archives for research projects.
- We had 3 volunteers and 4 interns working in the archives on various projects.
- Collections work in the archives included accessioning, processing and storing new and existing collections. We added 15 new collections to the archival collection, ranging from single records to one large collection. We also continued adding collections to our online collection database.
- De-accession projects continue, with one intern working solely to inventory de-accessioned records to determine whether to donate records to an appropriate repository or sell to an auction house.
- De-accessioned records and collection items were sold at auction this year, contributing income toward maintenance of existing retained archival records and collections.
- Dewey School second grade students participated in a local history research project, researching their homes using primary sources.
- Evanston High School Senior Studies students researched their homes using primary sources.

Collection Projects

- We received 18 new donations to the collections: 5 artifact donations, 15 archival and 7 costume for a total of over 100 items.
- EHC Collections staff continued to engage in a major assessment of the holdings in the collection and continued the upgrading of records of existing collection items. This includes taking digital photographs of collection items.

Dawes House Restoration

- EHC received a major commitment from Tawani Foundation for the Capital Campaign including an outright grant of \$250,000 and a challenge grant of \$250,000. EHC has engaged in an aggressive campaign to meet Tawani's challenge grant, raising \$153,000 as of June 2019. EHC has raised \$3.3 million to date for the Capital Campaign, which funds restoration work on the Dawes House.
- The State of Illinois has included EHC in the new capital bill recently passed for infrastructure projects. The State will award EHC \$270,000 for work to restore the front outer wood doors and entrance.
- EHC completed two projects constituting a portion of Phase 3 of the restoration plan: structural reinforcement of the coach house floor and rebuilding of the Dawes House rear porch.
- Implementation of a third project will begin Summer 2019: restoration of the wood doors, limestone stairs, and sandstone walls and ornamentation at the front entrance.

EHC Programs, Events, and Exhibits

- The 44th Annual Mother's Day House Walk was one of our most successful yet. We welcomed back our newest major sponsor, Evanston Community Bank, A Wintrust Family bank. Other sponsors included Tawani Foundation and Pritzker Military Library and Museum, American Vintage Home, Paul Janucki Architects, and WindowWorks.
- A total of 500+ people attended 6 *Under the Buffalo* presentations on topics ranging from Leopold and Loeb to an archaeological excavation of the site of the 1893 Chicago World Fair. Whole Foods generously provided cheese trays for the receptions.
- More than 100 people attended an event in April 2019, commemorating the official end of WWI, co-hosted by EHC, Northwestern University libraries, and the Pritzker Military Library. Author Patricia O'Toole gave a talk about Woodrow Wilson and the Peace Talks in Paris, 1919. Copies of O'Toole's book, *The Moralists: Woodrow Wilson and the World He Made*, were on sale at the event (courtesy of *Bookends and Beginnings*).
- *Evanston on the Go*, EHC's travel program, welcomed 127 guests in October on a trip that explored the brown and pink el lines. Guests were transported in vintage CTA rail cars while historians from CTA narrated the 3-hour long excursion.
- 50 people attended the FY18 Annual Meeting.
- The annual Ice Cream Social was held July 28, with approximately 600 people attending. The Ridgeville Band and Kevin Kelly the Magician entertained guests, while the Dawes House was open free of charge for visitors. YoFresh Yogurt provided frozen treats.
- *Melody In August*, EHC's annual summer fundraising gala on August 25th, featured a 1968 theme.
- 500 people attended the annual Holiday Open House.
- The 13th Annual Food Drive was held in December 2018. Several 100 lbs of food were collected and donated to an Evanston food pantry.
- "Evanston 1968: Seasons of Change" exhibit opened in August 2018 and closed in May 2019.
- "Dry Evanston: The Untold Story" opens on June 12, 2019 and runs until January 2020.

Outreach

- Our partnership with *At Home in Chicago*, a group of Chicago area house museums, continued.
- EHC continued its partnership with the local Evanston bookstore, *Bookends and Beginnings*, to provide books for sales and signings at events.
- Several custom designed mailings sent out to 800+ members and organizations. Separate custom designed graphics and marketing materials created for special programs (special tours, etc) and sent through social media and email.
- Marketing efforts for all events resulted in events being promoted in *Chicago Tribune*, *Chicago Reader*, *Evanston Review*, *Chicago Sun-Times*, and numerous other places. EHC also marketed events through targeted posts on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.
- EHC's website, Twitter feed, Instagram, and Facebook page were regularly updated. Currently (May 2019) EHC has: 1,281 Facebook followers, 1,096 Twitter followers, and 345 Instagram followers. EHC also hosts a Youtube page, and a Flickr account for images.
- EHC e-newsletter was sent regularly and the format was updated. Fall and Spring issues of *Timelines* were sent to members.
- Staff gave talks at the Levy Center, Lincolnwood Hadassah, Daughters of the American Revolution, Presbyterian Home, Southeast Evanston Neighbors Association, Rotary, and Kiwanis Club.

The Evanston Women's History Project at the Evanston History Center

- Our annual Women's History Month program featured a showing of the new film about Lorraine Morton, *A Life Worthwhile* in partnership with Shorefront Legacy Center.
- For International Women's Day, EHC held a community coffee networking event for women leaders.
- The Vickie Burke Internship for Women's History was filled by a graduate student from Loyola University who continued research in preparation for the 2020 suffrage anniversary and our local exhibit, *Evanston Women and the Fight for the Vote*.

Staffing Changes

- Rachel Jennens joined the staff as Interim Costume Curator and Madeline Crispell joined the staff as Thomas W. Griffin Sunday Docent.