The Spot, a pizzaria near Northwestern University, where the first legal drink was served in Evanston in 1972.

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Letter from the Executive Director

As I write this letter, we are well into planning for Fall and Winter and already looking back on Summer 2017. How fortunate we were this summer to have amazing interns, and how fortunate we are all year to have terrific volunteers. So much of what we do here at the History Center is dependent on our volunteers. This summer we were fortunate to have three amazing collections interns - Becky Ramsey, Elizabeth Hawley and Nicole Connell - who worked to assess, secure and re-house much of our three-dimensional collection on the 3rd floor of the Dawes House. They did a fantastic job! Like many non-profit (and I imagine many for-profit) staffs, there simply aren’t enough hours in the day to be proactive with our collections. Interns and volunteers help us to move the History Center forward.

As you know, we take our responsibility of caring for the Dawes House most seriously. This care entails everything from small projects, such as retreading the research room stairs, to large projects such as the restoration and repair of the Dawes House masonry, and everything in-between. We need your help to continue to care for the Dawes House in the most appropriate manner. If you have not yet made a contribution to our Capital Campaign, please consider a significant contribution now. Your gift is truly a gift for the future. Visit our website http://evanstonhistorycenter.org/the-ehc-cap-campaign-why-give or call 847-475-3410 and speak directly with me.

We hope to see you often this season, which promises to be full of interesting, new and unique EHC on the Go programming, Under the Buffalo lectures, updated exhibits, pop-up history events and of course our Holiday Open House on December 3rd.

Best,
Eden Juron Pearlman, Executive Director
The community of Evanston and the American temperance and prohibition movements have a long and intertwined history.

In 1853, a group of men looking for the perfect site for a new Methodist-affiliated institution of “sanctified learning” were persuaded that marshy lands north of the city of Chicago, in a township called Ridgeville, were exactly right for their purposes. The board of the newly chartered Northwestern University purchased land from Dr. John Foster for the university campus, and board members...
also bought up surrounding land to be platted for a new town. Their plan was to promote the new university and the town together, and to sell the plots to raise funds to finance the university. Their promotion centered around the establishment of both the university and the town far from the influences of the city of Chicago. They assured parents that students would be “at a distance from temptation and brought up under the most wholesome influences.”

The original university charter was granted in 1851. The town was platted in 1854, and in 1857 the township was renamed Evanston, after one of the university’s founders, Dr. John Evans. In 1855, the University began welcoming its first students. That same year, with the coming of the railroad from Chicago, the university petitioned the state to amend its charter to establish what came to be called the “4-mile limit.” The amendment read, in part, that “no spirituous, vinous, or other fermented liquors shall be sold under license, or otherwise, within four miles of the location of said University . . . under penalty of twenty-five dollars for each offense.” When the town of Evanston was officially incorporated in 1863, the board of trustees’ first official act was an ordinance which enforced the 4-mile limit.

Most of the early residents of Evanston were either affiliated with the University or were attracted to the town because of the educational opportunities and sober environment. Residents of the town favored the 4-mile limit, but from the earliest days there was pressure from tavern owners whose businesses were located outside the town but inside the 4-mile radius, either north of town in Grosse Pointe (now the western part of Wilmette), west in Niles Center (now downtown Skokie) or south toward Chicago on what came to be Devon Avenue. Throughout the 1860s the town struggled to enforce the limit, and after confronting many challenges to the law, finally persuaded an opponent to join them in a case to test its legality in the Illinois Supreme Court. In a story which became something of a legend in early Evanston history, Harvey B. Hurd, a prominent local lawyer, had to present both the town’s case and the opposition’s case, as the opposition’s lawyer was said to be too drunk to represent his client.

After the Great Chicago Fire in 1871, Evanston’s population grew dramatically. By 1880, the city had 4,400 residents. Although most of the new residents supported the strict control of alcohol in Evanston, their reasons were based on the residential climate this control created, not the moral cause of temperance. The
city kept up its struggle to enforce the limit, battling “blind pigs” (which were legitimate businesses where one could also purchase a drink on the side) and liquor wagons that rolled through town selling drinks to people in the downtown area and near construction sites. Evanston voted to become a village in 1872, mainly to ensure the continued enforcement of the 4-mile limit.

Around this time, the first official temperance organization in Evanston was founded. Most of the early temperance activity of the town was conducted through the local churches and the university. The “Temperance Alliance” was founded by Luther L. Greenleaf and was meant to protect the city from “the sickening atmosphere of the saloon”. Other organizations were created as need and sentiment developed. The Citizens League, the Prohibition Club, the 4-Mile League and the Village Improvement Society, as well as a local lodge of Good Templars and the Law and Order Society, were active in the 19th century working to enforce the 4-mile limit and maintain the city’s wholesome and now decidedly suburban atmosphere.

Although other organizations supported the control of alcohol in Evanston, the organization most identified with this cause was the Woman’s Christian Temperance Union. A group of local women had come together in March of 1874 to form the Woman’s Temperance Alliance in response to the Women’s Temperance Crusades of the previous winter. This organization joined the National Woman’s Christian Temperance Union, becoming a local union, in 1875. Much of the local temperance activity from this time on can be traced to the activity of this group. Frances Willard notes that “their objects were the prosecution of violators of the university charter law, the circulation of the pledge, and the visiting of all places within the four-mile limit where liquors were secretly sold.”

Most important in this stage of Evanston’s temperance history was Frances Willard’s growing personal connection to the cause. In the spring of 1874, Willard was Dean of Women and Professor of Aesthetics at Northwestern University. She and her family had come to Evanston in 1858 because her father had been convinced of the moral and educational advantages of Evanston. She had attended Northwestern Female College, and went on to develop a reputation as a leading educator of women. While serving as Dean at Northwestern University she encountered
difficulties with the university president over her independent running of the Woman's College. These difficulties came to a head in the spring of 1874 and Willard resigned in June.

Willard had followed the Woman's Temperance Crusades in the winter of 1874. She traveled to the east coast, met with temperance leaders, and participated in a Crusade that summer. In November 1874, she attended the founding convention of the National Woman's Christian Temperance Union and was elected corresponding secretary. From that moment, Evanston's history was linked with the national temperance movement through Willard and the WCTU. When Willard was elected president of the WCTU in 1879, this link became even stronger as Willard and Evanston became known the world round for temperance and the many other causes for which she and the WCTU fought.

Evanston entered the 1890s with another change in its municipal status — it officially became a city in 1892 with the annexation of large portions of land to the south and west. During this time, there was also a continuing fight over whether Evanston should become part of Chicago. Much of the debate centered around whether Evanston could remain independent and of a “higher order” if it joined with its less temperate neighbor to the south.

In 1890 Evanston had a population of 13,059. By 1910 the population had grown to 25,000. Evanston now had many of the problems that cities had — crime, labor unrest, industry, and race relations. It also still had the problem of how to enforce the 4-mile limit. Many of the citizens groups had remained active in working to enforce the limit, but the problem was more than diligent volunteers could handle. In 1915 a city attorney was elected to strictly enforce the limit. He began using detectives to covertly uncover “blind pigs,” and he published the names of the owners as well as the patrons of these illegal establishments in the local newspaper. He sought the help of the Sheriff of Cook County and the Illinois State’s Attorney, and in 1918 reported that he had prosecuted 450 cases and levied $2,600 in fines.

After Frances Willard’s death in 1898, and the relocation of WCTU National Headquarters to Evanston in 1900, the WCTU continued to serve as the official temperance organization in Evanston. As the battle for the 18th (Prohibition) Amendment to the U.S. Constitution heated up in the 1910s, with the WCTU playing a key role, Evanston followed the campaign and debate over national prohibition closely. When it was finally enacted on January 16, 1919, the city celebrated with a meeting at the Presbyterian Church where Prohibition leaders gave speeches and made presentations. Prominent in this celebration was WCTU president Anna Gordon, who was thanked for her role in bringing about national prohibition. It was noted with some pride that the only visible change in Evanston, with the beginning of national prohibition the following year, was the flying of a Prohibition flag over Rest Cottage — the nation had finally caught
up with Evanston regarding liquor control.

Evanston was relatively quiet during the Prohibition years. There were some accounts of the personal stocks of the wealthy citizens being stolen for resale, and stories of bootleggers leaving unsolicited deliveries on the steps of Evanston homes, but by and large life in Evanston remained unchanged. As it became clear in 1933 that the 18th amendment would be repealed, Evanstonians became worried that their long temperance history was threatened. The city council passed an emergency liquor ordinance in November 1933 to prevent any change in Evanston’s status. Prohibition was repealed by ratification of the 21st amendment in December 1933. The Illinois legislature repealed state prohibition in January 1934, nullifying any previous local ordinances, including the 4-mile limit and the city’s November ordinance, and set a deadline of April for each municipality to hold a referendum on liquor control.

Evanstonians hurriedly formed the “Home Protective League” and the “All Evanston Committee,” which included almost all the social and civic organizations of the town, to organize a petition drive to place a referendum on the April ballot, and campaigned for its adoption. The local paper summed up the community sentiment: “People who live in Evanston live here ... because they want the peace, the leisure, and the generosity that are outstanding characteristics of (the town). . . . Saloons would tend to destroy the residential character of the community . . . Evanston is more than a place on the map. It is a state of mind and heart.” In April 1934, Evanstonians voted to continue the strict control of alcohol by a 3 to 1 margin.

After repeal, the city settled in with its liquor policy and enjoyed some years of quiet. The limits were firmly in place until the early 1970s when the feelings of residents, local government officials and the business community began to change. Largely due to the need to “stimulate the development of our central business district,” that year the city council began to re-evaluate the liquor ordinance to see if limited licensing in limited areas would be acceptable to the community. Popular support of local businesses for limited licensing and the need for economic growth were the main reasons given for the change, but in general it was the changing attitude of residents that most influenced aldermen.

Throughout 1971, the issue was hotly debated at city council meetings. As one might imagine, the leaders of the Woman’s Christian Temperance Union were outspoken opponents of the change, but there were many other residents who also opposed the change. Many feared that problems relating to alcohol would increase, especially problems relating to underage university students, but also that there would be significant changes in the community’s quality of life.

In January of 1972 the city council voted to allow a limited number of licenses for the sale of alcohol. Licenses would be held only by restaurants, hotels and clubs (no bars or liquor stores), and they would be non-transferable if the business was sold. Licenses were further limited to businesses in the “core” business district downtown, and all signs and other advertisement relating to alcohol sales were prohibited. The first legal drink was served in Evanston at The Spot (a pizzeria located near Northwestern) on June 9, 1972.

Endnotes:
2 Perkins, Evanstoniana, 35.
3 Willard, Classic Town, 168-169. Willard does not always give dates, but it appears that soon after Greenleaf moved to Evanston in 1868 he formed the Alliance.
4 Willard, Classic Town, 169.
5 Evanston News-Index, Jan 16 and Jan 20, 1919.
6 Evanston News-Index, March 3, 1934.
A few years ago, EHC staff were deep in the planning phase for Evanston’s 2013 sesquicentennial. A host of projects were undertaken, including the re-issuing of Margery Blair Perkins’ classic, *Evanstoniana: An Informal History of Evanston and Its Architecture*. Based on Perkins’ many years of research, the book was edited by Barbara J. Buchbinder-Green and published by the Chicago Review Press in 1984.

EHC turned to the original press to see if it might be possible to issue a new edition. The press was unable to take the project on. EHC then decided to issue the new edition itself. This process proved to involve a steep learning curve, which included learning the ins-and-outs of the processes of self-publishing, such as book layout and design, and the steps involved in using a print-on-demand publisher.

In June 2013, EHC proudly unveiled the finished product: a new, updated edition of Perkins’ text, which has since been available in both print and e-book format. The Perkins family proved invaluable in supporting the new edition, and EHC then began to look for other books that might deserve a second printing.

Today EHC proudly announces that The Evanston History Center Press is off and running; it now boasts a small, but growing, catalogue.

**Highlights from the EHC press:**

A new edition of *The Plan of Evanston*, a compilation of designs and planning ideas for the city. It was the result of a commission headed by architects Daniel H. Burnham II, Dwight H. Perkins, Thomas E. Tallmadge, and Hubert Burnham. The book includes recommendations for Evanston’s streets, parks, and even trees. It was originally published by the Evanston Small Parks and Playgrounds Association in 1917.

A new, critical edition of Charles Gates Dawes’ *A Journal of the Great War*, originally published in 1921. The 2016 edition was published to mark the sesquicentennial of Dawes’ birth and also to honor the centennials of World War I. The new edition includes new research drawn from the EHC archives and the Charles G. Dawes Archive at Northwestern University.

The establishment of The Evanston History Center Press came out of necessity; and now, staff members are looking forward to building the catalogue and providing more historic texts to modern readers. All proceeds from book sales support EHC’s efforts to preserve and share local history.
One of the most impressive architectural features of the Dawes House is the soaring oak stairway in the Great Hall. The carpeting on the stairs was installed as part of a comprehensive interior restoration project conducted in 1983. Almost thirty-five years later, only the edges of the treads were showing wear, despite the many thousands of visitors who have walked up and down these stairs.

The process of determining the best solution for the worn treads became a fascinating examination of cultures, craftsmanship and artistry. We consulted with long-time EHC partner Minasian Rug Company, who advised us to repair rather than replace the existing carpeting. Years ago, the restoration team had fortunately chosen a high-quality loomed wool carpeting from England. While this carpeting was initially more costly and more difficult to install than the typical mass produced machine-tufted and glued carpeting that was developed in the mid-20th century, it proved to be a cost-saving choice in the long run. Comprised of wool rather than synthetic materials, it is more durable. Only the edges of the stair treads have worn, while the rest of the carpet looks as good as the day it was installed. It is therefore possible to safely and securely repair the worn spots by reweaving the individual threads into the backing material while leaving the carpet in place.

A trip to the archives uncovered the original invoice for the carpet dated November 29, 1983. Axminster and Wilton carpets have been manufactured in England for nearly 300 years. The style was originally copied, so the story goes, by an English weaver in 1755 from a Turkish carpet. The Caucasus region between Europe and Asia that includes Turkey, Armenia and Persia, or Iran, created these beautiful and long-wearing rugs as part of their ancient culture.

The Minasian family emigrated from Armenia to Evanston in 1897, fleeing the Armenian genocide. Family members have been involved in the rug business in Evanston ever since. The craftsman on their staff who has been doing the intricate repairs is from Isfahan, a city that was once the capital of Persia and flourished for 700 years. His family is Bakhtari, a nomadic tribe that has produced, restored and repaired carpets for generations. With the skills he learned from his family, using a special hooked needle and with patience and craftsmanship, he executes the intricate process of matching the many colored threads into the correct pattern. It is truly an artform. For weeks he has come to the Dawes house to weave new threads into each of the twenty-four worn stair treads. The result is a soon to be fully restored carpet that will last for decades to come. On your next visit to the Evanston History Center, please take time to admire our “new” carpeting.

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**Stair Wear Repair**

By Kris Hartzell
Director of Facilities, Visitor Services and Collections
Legacy Walk

The first phase of The Legacy Walk, EHC’s new brick path leading from the front of the Dawes House to the east terrace, has been completed. The beautiful new walk was established in honor of the Guild of the Evanston Historical Society. Additional bricks are available for sale and inscription. Please contact Jill Kirk at jkirk@evanstonhistorycenter.org

Join Us

Evanston Rides the Rails!

Take a tour through Evanston’s rail-transit history on a chartered, vintage CTA train

Join us on Saturday, November 4th, beginning at 9 am.

We’ll start and end the trip at the Linden CTA station in Wilmette.

The price of the trip is $75 for EHC members and $85 for non-members.

For reservations, go to evanstonhistorycenter.org.

The **Evanston History Center** invites you to **take a narrated tour through the history of the railroads, street railways, electric lines and electric interurban that have served Evanston over the years**.

The tour will be conducted on a **chartered CTA train** of vintage 1970s equipment. We’ll ride the Purple Line to and from the Loop with a side trip on the Yellow Line.

While we’re riding, Graham Garfield and Bruce Moffat, experts from the Shore Line Interurban Historical Society, will narrate Evanston’s rail-transit history and relate it to sites on the trip. Shore Line is the authoritative source for Chicagoland rail-transit history, publishing the journal **First and Fastest** and other special studies.

Find us on:
Vietnam War Uniforms

The Evanston History Center is seeking donations of Vietnam War era uniforms only. If you have a Vietnam War era uniform please contact Costume Curator Janet Messmer at jmessmer@evanstonhistorycenter.org to make an appointment.
Upcoming Events

**Under the Buffalo, Fall 2017 “Variations on Style”**

This season is presented in conjunction with “The Finishing Touch: Evanston Accessorized!”—an exhibit of fashion accessories—on view at the Evanston History Center through December 2017

**“Handmade in Evanston:”**

**The Jewelry of Eve Alfillé: Eve J. Alfillé**

Thursday, October 26, 2017, 7pm (reception starts at 6:30pm)

Diamonds to beach rocks: the many visitors to Eve Alfillé’s gallery and studio in downtown Evanston often come in bearing special requests. A onetime sculptor, Alfillé is inspired by ideas and form, and for the last 30 years her jewels have taken on new shapes every spring and fall. Come behind the scenes as she takes you on a virtual tour of the studio then and now.

**“Jacqueline:”**

**A Portrayal of Jackie Kennedy: Leslie Goddard**

Thursday, November 16, 2017, 7pm (reception starts at 6:30pm)

Meet former First Lady Jacqueline Bouvier Kennedy in this fascinating first-person performance by actress and historian Leslie Goddard. It is 1964 and the former first lady, besieged by paparazzi, is struggling to cope. Attempting to determine her next step, she reviews her life, sharing stories about her marriage, her fight for privacy amidst intense media scrutiny, her work to restore the White House, and her attempts to showcase the arts. As she gradually opens up, you will meet the private woman behind the public myth.

A reception catered by Whole Foods Market kicks off each event at 6:30 PM.

Admission to each event: $10. Payable at the door. EHC Members: Free. Reservations recommended: email: jthompson@evanstonhistorycenter.org or go online: www.evanstonhistorycenter.org/all-events/

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**Last 2017 Walking Tour**

**Burnham in Evanston**

**October 21, 2017**

Explore the neighborhood where architect Daniel Burnham chose to live, work, and build. We will see his property, houses, and schools he designed, and hear about the man and his love of “bucolic Evanston.”

**Annual Holiday Open House and 12th Annual Food Drive**

**Sunday, December 3, 2017, 1-4 p.m.**

At the Evanston History Center in the Dawes House

Join us for an afternoon of holiday cheer at the Dawes House. Explore the majestic lakeside mansion decked out for the holidays, view EHC’s exhibits, and enjoy holiday treats, crafts for kids and live music in the Great Hall.

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**Who We Are**

The Evanston History Center is a private, non-profit educational and cultural institution established in 1898 to preserve and share Evanston history. The EHC collects, preserves and tells the story of Evanston’s past through tours of the Charles Gates Dawes House, interactive and engaging museum exhibits, a comprehensive research room and research collections, and wide-ranging educational programs.