Fiscal Year Activity Report - 2016-17

Tours and Rentals
- 1,472 people visited the Dawes House for individual tours and 786 people for group tours.
- 2,030 people visited the Dawes House for Open House Chicago weekend. This successful collaboration with Chicago Architecture Foundation will be repeated in October 2017.
- 121 people attended 8 walking tours, 62 people attended 2 bus tours of Evanston, including our first Prairie School in Evanston bus tour.
- 7 volunteers served as docents giving tours of the Dawes House.
- 5 elementary schools brought school group tours and one high school.
- 33 groups representing 2,012 individuals rented the Dawes House for special events including weddings, receptions, concerts, fundraisers, picnics, memorial services, and birthday parties, more than double the number of events than the previous year. Three film shoots including a network TV show and two cable shows were shot at the house, as well as still photos for two music groups.

Research and Archives Projects
- There were 127 phone, email and mail requests for information.
- 533 people visited the EHC archives for research projects, nearly a 50% increase from last year.
- We had 3 volunteers and 1 intern working in the archives on various projects.
- Collections work in the archives included accessioning, processing and storing new and existing collections. We added 18 new collections to the archival collection. We also continued adding collections to our online collection database.
- We partnered with Northwestern University Library and the Chabraja Center to digitize historic Evanston newspapers. This project will continue in 2017.
- The Evanston Women’s History Project and the National Collaborative for Women’s History Sites continued to have their headquarters at EHC.

Collection Projects
- We received 36 new donations to the collections: 16 artifact donations, 13 archival and 7 costume.
- Collections work included accessioning, processing and storing new pieces.
- EHC Costume Collection 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.
- There were 7 phone, email or postal requests for information regarding the Costume Collection.
- The Costume Collection staff and volunteers engaged in mounting a major exhibit of accessories for men, women and children titled: “The Finishing Touch: Evanston
There was 1 long term volunteer who continued to work directly with the Costume Collection and 1 archival intern who worked on researching materials for the current costume exhibit.

There were three collections and registrar interns.

**Dawes House Restoration**
- Planning for Phase 3 of the conservation management program is now complete. A master landscape plan is nearing completion.
- East terrace urns were planted thanks to a board member dedicated donation.
- A daffodil garden was planted in memory of past guild president Barbara “Bonnie” Leffingwell Coe.

**EHC Programs, Events, and Exhibits**
- A total of 500+ people attended 6 Under the Buffalo presentations on topics ranging from the history of the Chicago Defender newspaper to photographs on the Underground Railroad.
- In honor of Women’s History Month in March 2017, EHC and the Evanston Women’s History Project co-hosted a presentation by historian Louise W. Knight, “Untold Stories: Enslaved People in the Home of the Grimke Family.”
- EHC hosted the national traveling exhibit: “From Darkness to Light: Photographs Along the Underground Railroad.” In partnership with the Evanston Art Center, the exhibit was on view for 6 weeks at both the Dawes House. Resources for educators were posted on the EHC website.
- Eavnston on the Go, EHC’s new travel program, had its maiden voyage to the Sheldon Peck Homestead in Lombard, IL, a National Park Service verified site of the Underground Railroad.
- EHC partnered with Shorefront Legacy Center, hosting its “Evanston Legacies” exhibit as a companion exhibit to the Underground Railroad photos exhibit.
- Two new publications were issued in August 2016, in honor of the Year of Dawes: Charles Gates Dawes, A Life, a biography of Dawes published by Northwestern University Press in partnership with EHC, and a new issue of Dawes’ 1921 A Journal of the Great War, published by EHC.
- The centennial of the U.S. entry into WWI was marked by EHC through several resources on the website which included profiles of the Evanston residents who died in the war. An exhibit on Evanston in World War One was also created, and the 2017 House Walk theme was WWI.
- 60 people attended the 2016 Annual Meeting. The meeting was in honor of the Guild of the Evanston Historical Society, and also officially launched The Legacy Walk, a new brick walk leading from the front of the Dawes House to the east terrace, and is part of the capital campaign.
- 2016 Ice Cream Social - approximately 600 people attended. Andy’s Frozen Custard generously donated treats for our guests.
- Melody in August, EHC’s annual summer fundraising gala, was held August 17, 2016. The Dawes House provided a magical setting for more than 150 guests, who danced of the music of Arlen Musical Productions and enjoyed signature cocktails and sumptuous food.
- Approximately 650 people attended the 2016 Annual Holiday Open House.
- The 11th Annual Food Drive was held in December 2016. One hundred pounds of food were collected and donated to an Evanston food pantry.
- 2017 42nd Annual Mother’s Day House Walk - 824 tickets were sold, and 90 people volunteered, making this year’s House Walk our most successful to date.
Outreach

- The partnership with Evanston Public Library (EPL) and EHC continued. A book discussion of *The Other Wes Moore*, was held for the EPL’s “Evanston Reads” program. EHC also partnered with EPL to host two events in conjunction with the accessories exhibit. A film screening of *The September Issue*, followed by a DIY “make your own accessory” workshop, were held in April 2017.

- EHC partnered with the local Evanston bookstore, Bookends and Beginnings, to provide books for sales and signing at events. This is a new partnership and has been quite successful. Bookends staffed signings for Ethan Michaeli’s talk, Natalie Moore’s talk, and Jeanine Michna-Bales’ talk and they provided the books for the authors to sign.

- EHC partnered with the Evanston Art Center and the Lombard Historical Society to host photographer Jeanine Michna-Bales visit to the Chicago area. EHC coordinated three talks at each of the partner sites and pooled resources to fund Michna-Bales’ trip to Evanston.

- Six separate custom designed mailings sent out to 700+ members and organizations. Seven separate custom designed graphics and marketing materials created for special programs (special tours, et.) and sent through social media and email.

- Marketing efforts for all events resulted in EHC’s events being promoted in *Chicago Tribune, Chicago Reader, Evanston Review*, WBEZ, *Chicago Sun-Times*, and numerous other places. EHC also marketed events through targeted posts on Facebook and Twitter posts.

- EHC’s website, Twitter feed, and Facebook (FB) page were regularly updated. EHC currently has 1,073 page likes on FB, up from 934 in August 2016. EHC currently has 822 followers on Twitter, with 96 new followers added over the past year. EHC also hosts an Instagram page, 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 American Association for State and Local History, the Chicago Architecture Foundation, the Evanston Rotary, the Men’s Club of the Mather.