



Frances Willard
HOUSE MUSEUM and ARCHIVES
at the Center for Women's History and Leadership

2022 Annual Report

Center for Women's History and Leadership

Mission: We inspire and equip all women to realize their leadership potential through education and empowerment.

The Center for Women's History and Leadership (CWHL) offers education, training, and resources to engage all leaders, especially women and girls, with the enduring ideas and issues of Frances Willard, the WCTU, and other women of the past, such as equality, self-determination, and personal well-being.

Programs

- The *Views* program series theme for 2021-22 was *Women, Faith and Activism*. We had two programs in the series in 2022 with a total of 95 attendees. The first was with Dr. Christopher Evans who presented a preview of his new biography of Frances Willard with a focus on her faith as motivating her activism. You can watch a recording of the program [here](#). The second was with Marcia Walker-McWilliams who spoke about her biography of Rev. Addie Wyatt, who was a Chicago labor leader, religious leader, and activist in the 20th century. You can watch a recording of the program [here](#).
- For Women's History Month we revisited the history of women's suffrage with author Page Harrington who presented her book about the legacies of the suffrage movement. 25 people attended. You can watch a recording of the program [here](#).
- The *Handicraft Hour* series continued in 2022. We held 3 *Handicraft Hour* programs with a total of 54 attendees.
- We began the program year in September 2022 with a new theme - *Knowledge is Power: Women and Education*. Our [blog posts](#), social media and other outreach told the story of Willard's work as an educator and the overarching need for women to have wider access to education in the 19th century.
- Our annual *Do Everything* event for 2022 was the presentation of a recorded talk with Dr. Christopher Evans about the new Willard biography. Janet Olson, archivist, hosted the talk, which you can watch [here](#).
- In October, we held the book launch for the new biography of Frances Willard with Dr. Christopher Evans in conversation with archivist Janet Olson at Bookends and Beginnings bookstore in Evanston. 20 people attended. You can watch a recording of the program [here](#).
- In November we held our first *Collection Close-Up* with Fiona Maxwell sharing the story of Willard's childhood writing and her novel *Rupert Melville*. *Collection Close-ups* give participants a quick look at something from our collection. 15 people attended. You can watch a recording of the presentation [here](#).

Outreach and Community Partnerships

- We worked with the spring semester Museums class at Loyola University Chicago (See more details under Archives)
- We shared one online exhibit in 2022 - [WCTU Fountains](#) (curated by intern Elizabeth Heissner).
- We shared a bicycle tour of Frances Willard's Evanston created by Loyola Public History students on the Clio App.
- Staff made multiple presentations in 2022 to: Oberlin (Ohio) History Center; Women and Museum Collections Conference (online) at Leiden University in the Netherlands; AAUW; Mather Retirement Home; Cobblestone Museum in upstate New York; Frankfort Public Library; Lake County Women's Consortium; and the Swedish Temperance Historical Society.
- Our email newsletter was sent out twice per month (1,825 subscribers).

- Social media updates on Facebook (1052 followers), Twitter (384 followers) and Instagram (280 followers) were regularly posted. Kristin Jacobsen and Fiona Maxwell coordinated social media outreach.
- [YouTube](#) channel was updated with videos added throughout the year (49 subscribers)
- 10 [Blogposts](#) were written in 2022.
- [Website](#) averaged 2,397 page views per month in 2022 – with a total of 28,769 page views.

Staff, Interns and Volunteers

- We retained our amazing part-time staff throughout the year. See the list below.
- The Archives hosted two interns in the Archives working for course credit: Elizabeth Heissner and Kelsey Gibson. Our summer interns, Karl Bullock and Adam Raczkowski, worked on the Black Women in the WCTU project, with funding through the Chicago Humanities Initiative at Northwestern University (Karl) and the GGI Program at the University of Chicago (Adam).
- Archives volunteers Hannah Weinberg, Liz Morris, Anne Zald, and Chloe Rybacki provided valuable assistance.

Leadership and Fundraising

- A new strategic plan was created and adopted by the CWHL board to guide our work in the coming years.
- A Women’s History Month (March) appeal was created with the theme *Exploring Women’s History*.
- The Annual Appeal was created to go out via mail, email and newsletter.

Frances Willard House Museum

- The Willard House was open for tours from March through October. We continued using the 2021 system of reservations, online payments, and small tour sizes. Masks were required on tours.
- 242 visitors toured the Willard House in 2022, a substantial increase from 2021 (52 visitors) when it was closed for part of the year.
- We had many group tours, ranging from the AAUW and the Northwestern University Guild - to a group of girls from a Chicago middle school leadership training program who chose the Willard House for their field trip.
- Special tours were held in August for Women’s Equality Day, September for *Do Everything* and Willard’s Birthday, and in December for the Christmas holidays.
- Our docent staff includes: Karis Blaker, Elizabeth Hagemann, Elizabeth Heissner, and Kristin Jacobsen.

Gardens (from head gardener Glen Madeja)

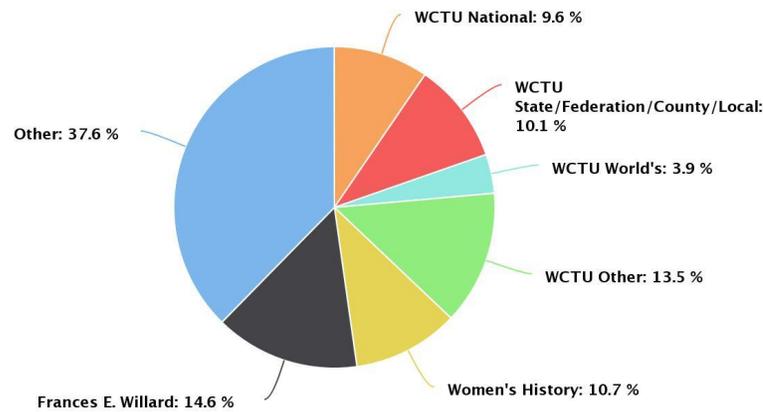
- 2022 marked a turning point for the gardens. All areas requiring attention have been cleared and initially planted. In addition, the “showcase” beds around the Willard House have been filled with heirloom varieties, with the exception of a small portion of plants for which no period cultivars are available.
- This coming year will involve a bit of plant dividing and rearranging, for both plant health and aesthetics. We hope to submit an application for an Evanston Preservation & Design Award this year.

WCTU Archives

- Research Services
 - On-site researchers have not yet returned to pre-pandemic numbers. Some who wished to visit were deterred by high travel costs; some by limited funding; some by continued Covid worries
 - Onsite researchers: 13 (average 3 days each = 39 staff days)
 - Offsite inquiries: 146 (292 hours of work responding, researching, following up)
 - Supported Spring 2022 Loyola Public History students’ archival research, on-site, by zoom, and by email
 - Monitored and assessed on- and off-site research services (see one sample chart below, showing researchers’ areas of interest)
- **“Black Women of the WCTU, A Research Database”**
 - Work begun in 2021 continued throughout 2022
 - Loyola grad students researched and drafted exhibits documenting Black women’s activism in the WCTU in four states: Illinois, North Carolina, Georgia, and Washington DC.
 - Summer interns and volunteers completed research on Illinois

- Intern/volunteer Adam Raczkowski served as Project Manager, designing forms and pilot projects, working with summer volunteers, creating visualizations, and drafting a comprehensive [Progress Report](#)
- The project was mentioned in numerous social media posts
- Completed the \$1500 grant-funded project (from the Illinois State Historical Records Advisory Board) to reorganize and [publish](#) a guide to the Archives' subject files (Project Manager: Assistant Archivist)
- Archivist gave three presentations via zoom (see Programs, above)
- Assistant Archivist wrote one blog post, co-managed CWHL social media publishing, and hosted the March Handicraft Hour (Banners)
- Created [Research Guide for 2023 National History Day](#)
- Archives Month October 2022: guest-edited newsletter, participated in Ask An Archivist Day, social media.

Areas of Interest



Center for Women's History and Leadership Board

- | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------|
| Susan Comstock, President | Vickie Burke |
| Doug Honnold, Vice President | Suzanne Farrand |
| Kathy Bell, Secretary | Kris Hartzell |
| Lois Anderson, Treasurer | Sarah Ward |

Frances Willard House Museum and Archives Council

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|------------------------|-----------------|
| Suzanne Farrand, Chair | Cate LiaBraaten |
| Juliet Bond | Ella Wagner |
| Alice Burton | |
| Elizabeth Fraterrigo | |

Center for Women's History and Leadership Staff

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|---|---|
| Lori Osborne, Executive Director and
Museum Director | Fiona Maxwell, Museum Operations
Manager |
| Janet Olson, Archivist | Kristin Jacobsen, Assistant Archivist |

Frances Willard House Museum and WCTU Archives
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