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Preservation Month 2022: People Saving Places

This Preservation Month we are celebrating the 100th anniversary of the WCTU Administration Building! Located directly behind the Frances Willard House Museum, it opened on May 20, 1922. It currently houses the WCTU Archives and is on the National Register of Historic Places. Read Museum Director Lori Osborne's new blog post to learn more about the building's history and significance.



The 2022 Preservation Month theme, "People Saving Places," honors the people who pour their time, energy, and resources into protecting the historic sites that help us understand the past and present. The Willard House was designated a National Historic Landmark in 1965 by the National Park Service, and it is one of the places recognized this month by the Evanston Preservation Commission.



Willard House historic marker.

Built in 1865, the house is a remarkable example of a Gothic Revival cottage – a common style in "vernacular" architecture of its time, but rare to find intact today. You can read about the exterior and interior restoration projects we've completed here.



One of the rooms that was restored during our 2016 interior renovation project.

Together, the Willard House and the Administration Building tell important stories about women's history at the local, national, and global levels. Please consider becoming a "place-saver" and supporting our efforts to share the stories of these unique sites of advocacy and community building.

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Reserve a June Tour!



Thank you to everyone who came on a Preservation Month tour this May! We are now accepting reservations for June tours, which will be held on Sundays, June 5, 12, 19, and 26 and Thursdays, June 9, 16, 23, and 30 at 1pm, 2pm, and 3pm.

Admission is \$15 per person and free for students at all levels. Reservations and masks are required. Reservations for Sunday tours must be made at least 48 hours in advance. To RSVP, email info@franceswillardhouse.org or call (847) 328-7500.

Bring the Willard House Outdoors!

Now that warmer weather has arrived, we have several free DIY outdoor activities that can serve as a stand-alone or complimentary experience to a museum visit.



Celebrate the final days of Bicycle Month with Frances and Gladys! Frances Willard was an early adopter of bicycle riding and one of its strongest proponents. You can pick up our Evanston women's history bicycle tour maps anytime outside the front door of the Museum, or take our new virtual bicycle and walking tour about Frances Willard's life in Evanston.

Frances and Gladys: A Bicycle Tour is hosted by Clio: Your Guide to History. You can access Clio by downloading the app on your mobile phone or by using the Clio website, where you can print a pdf of the tour. You can find it by searching for Evanston tours, or you can access it directly here. The tour was created by a graduate student team in the fall 2021 Public History class at Loyola University Chicago. We thank them for their hard work!



Frances Willard's bicycle, Gladys III, on display in the Museum.

You can also explore the gardens at the Willard House, which have been carefully restored to reflect the Willard family's nineteenth-century garden. After six years of work using only organic products and environmentally sensitive methods, our historic re-creation efforts are nearly complete. Please consider making a donation (indicate that your gift is for the garden) to support the continued restoration and maintenance of this piece of living and growing history.



New Blog Post: Frances Willard Wang



Liu-Wang Liming, 1937.

In a new blog post, archivist Janet Olson highlights feminist, social reformer, writer, and WCTU leader Liu-Wang Liming (1898-1970). Born and raised in rural China, Liming took the name "Frances Willard Wang" when she came to the United States to attend Northwestern University. She lived at the Willard House for most of her time in Evanston. After graduation she returned to China as a full-time organizer for the World's Woman's Christian Temperance Union. Aspiring to become the "Frances Willard of China," she built and mobilized a network of ten thousand women. Check out our blog for more information about her remarkable life and work, as well as original photographs and documents from our archives.

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