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**Archives Update: Meet the Summer Team!** 🌟

This summer the WCTU Archives has been fortunate to benefit from the skills, energy, and experience of interns and volunteers who are helping our **Black Women of the WCTU** project move forward. Focusing on the Illinois WCTU, they have discovered names of individual Black members and locations of Black unions and have helped to refine our data gathering process. We invite you to hear from each member of the team who has made this summer's work possible (and fun!).



Left to Right: Chloe Rybacki, Adam Raczkowski, Karl Bullock. Not pictured: Liz Morris.

**Adam Raczkowski, University of Chicago Masters in the Social Sciences student, GRAD Global Impact Intern, and our Project Manager/Registrar:** "Our project runs along several paths simultaneously – identifying names, looking for additional resources, researching comparable digital humanities initiatives, and more. The task is daunting – or it would be if we didn't have such an amazing collaborative team. We have yet to come across a roadblock that we can't find our way through. This summer's focus on Illinois has been an interesting mix of historical research and detective work, since the reports are often unclear about demographics. To help us, we compiled U.S. Census data from 1870-1950 to map the racial makeup of Illinois counties over time to indicate where Black unions were most likely to be located. This has enabled us to add context to the evidence we find."

**Karl Bullock, Northwestern University PhD student in Rhetoric & Public Culture and Chicago Humanities Initiative Intern:** "I enjoy this project because we're doing recovery work by locating and distinguishing the work of Black women in an organization known for social reform. The work isn't easy, but there's a certain level of appreciation that is born out of removing the silencing of marginalized voices and centering their participation and actions for different resolutions they deemed were plaguing their society and community. Working in the Archives with newspapers, census records, newsletters, letters, log records, and more, there is always new information waiting to be uncovered that could open the door to understanding history with a responsible sensibility."

**Volunteer Liz Morris, former Strawberry House Museum Operations Manager (Philadelphia, PA):** "I have primarily focused on the early 1920s and have been delighted to find many names and am excited to continue to discover as many Black members of the WCTU as possible. One leader, Eva Dean of Champaign, IL, was a very active member who served as State Superintendent for Work Among Colored People. Her reports provide great clarity on the number of Black unions and the efforts to increase participation throughout the state. I previously worked with a women's committee whose origins date back to the 1920s, and it's amazing to see the similarities between them, especially how they worked to solve complex issues through organized committee work."

**Volunteer Chloe Rybacki, Niles North High School student, History Fair participant, and Skokie History Center volunteer:** "When one thinks of a typical teenager's summer, pouring over crumbling books indoors might not come to mind. However, I've thoroughly enjoyed volunteering here, and this experience has been well suited to my historical and archival interests. To the unilluminated eye, the Illinois WCTU state reports are simply a bound pile of numbers, figures, and dense meeting minutes. The trick is to find the patterns and mentions of people within. I love finding these overarching lines of hidden history that have been woven through years of reports. It has been rewarding to slowly discover these women's names and something of their lives, and I look forward to finding out even more."

Our summer has been marked by collegiality, commitment, fruitful conversations – and did we mention fun? Beyond adding 200+ names of individuals and 60+ locations of unions to our growing database, we have developed new ideas for next steps as the project expands beyond Illinois, and our crew has sharpened their research skills and gained experience contributing to a group project. We thank Northwestern University and the University of Chicago for funding our graduate student interns, and we thank our interns and volunteers for their above-and-beyond work!

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**Summer Tours**



It's not too late to schedule a July tour of the Frances Willard House Museum! The remaining tour dates this month are:

- Thursday, July 28
- Sunday, July 31

We are also accepting tour reservations for August. August tour dates are:

- Thursdays, August 4, 11, 18, and 25
- Sundays, August 7, 14 and 28

**The tours on August 25th and 28th will be themed around Women's Equality Day – the anniversary of the passage of the 19th amendment on August 26th. Join us on those dates to learn more about the fight for women's voting rights and the important role that Frances Willard and the WCTU played in the woman's suffrage movement.**

All tours take place at 1, 2 or 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](mailto:info@franceswillardhouse.org) or call (847) 328-7500.

**Pick a Topic, Any Topic!**

Our grant-supported online inventory of the WCTU Archives subject files is ready for use! Many thanks to the Illinois State Historical Records Advisory Board (ISHRAB) and the National Historical Publications & Records Commission (NHPRC) for funding the staff time and supplies that made this possible.

Assistant Archivist Kristin Jacobsen managed the project, which involved reorganizing, renaming, and inventorying our 800+ subject files and then making that inventory searchable online so that researchers can have a better idea of the extent of the topics addressed in our collections. While the contents of the folders have not been digitized, the searchable list provides the first step towards the discovery of new information. You can find the subject files inventory [here](#) and on the [Archival Collections](#) page on our website. To learn more about the contents of a folder, contact [assistantarchivist@franceswillardhouse.org](mailto:assistantarchivist@franceswillardhouse.org) or fill out a [research request form](#).

Main subject	Subheading 1	Subheading 2	SEE / SEE ALSO 1	SE
Awards	Frances E. Willard House Museum		Temperance -- Children and Youth	
Band of Hope			Exhibits -- Banners	
Banners			Japan boxes in Microfilm Annex	
Bell, Japanese				
Beverages -- Nonalcoholic				
Bible and Wine			Communion Wine	W
Bicycling			Willard Portraits, Binder #3	Bc
Boylston Home (Manchester NH)			Meny Home (Manchester NH)	Or
Cartoons			American Issue Publishing Co.	Rt
Catholic Church and Temperance				
Chastity			Social Purity	Sr
Chateaufort			Chautauque (vertical files box)	
Chicago	Prohibition and Temperance			
Christian Socialism and Labor			Labor	Kr
Christian Citizenship				

Sample section of the subject files inventory.

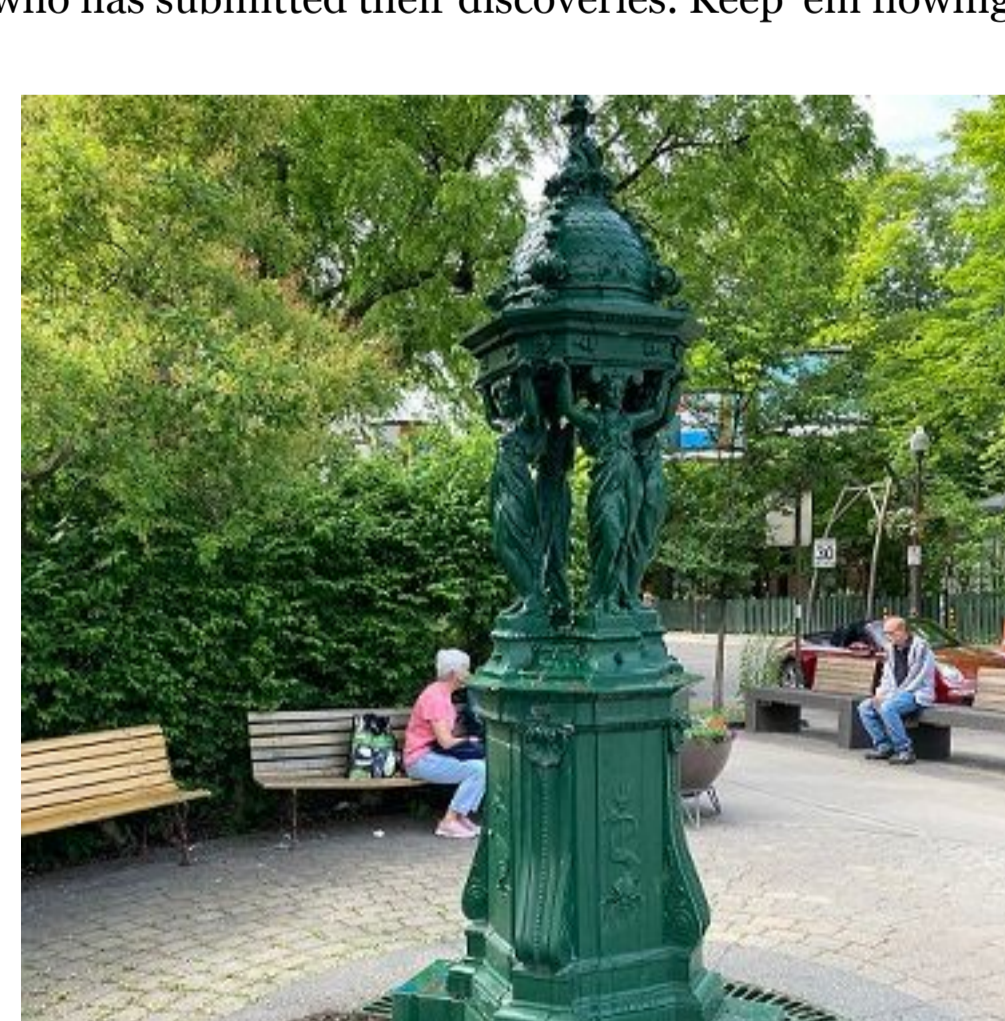
**Travel and Rest** 🌍

This summer the Frances Willard House Museum and WCTU Archives has been reflecting on how our collections document an international network of women. During June and July we've highlighted many examples of globetrotting social reformers. Recently we took a brief respite and shared how one of the world's busiest women made time to relax.

In the summer of 1894 Frances Willard took time off for a summer retreat in the Hudson River Valley. She nicknamed the house "Eagle's Nest," recalling a favorite spot from her Wisconsin childhood. As someone who's motto was "Do Everything," doing nothing was a real challenge, but she found a welcome rest there.



Meanwhile, some of our supporters have used their summer travels to expand our new [digital exhibit](#) tracking the hundreds of drinking fountains installed by local WCTUs from the 1880s to the 1930s. This is an ongoing project – if you discover a fountain that isn't featured yet, please contact [archives@franceswillardhouse.org](mailto:archives@franceswillardhouse.org). The latest find was a second fountain in Quebec City (rumor has it there are four!). Our archivists say "merci beaucoup" to everyone who has submitted their discoveries. Keep 'em flowing!



**Women's History Around Town: The Willard House *En Plein Air***



This July the City of Evanston and Evanston Made hosted their first-ever Plein Air Fest, a four-day long festival in which the community was invited to watch Plein Air painters capture the beauty of the city. Artist Karen Beauprie received an honorable mention for her painting of the Willard House. We congratulate Karen on her award and thank her for her enchanting interpretation of our site!

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