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Cheney Mansion History

In 2007, Cheney Mansion was renovated in cooperation with the Infant Welfare Society Designer Showcase. A 1970 Survey of Historic Buildings in Oak Park describes Cheney Mansion as a “simplified rectilinear design of first rank in architectural quality, significance, and originality.” The architect, Charles E. White, Jr., a graduate of MIT, came to Oak Park after marrying local resident Alice Roberts. For two years, beginning in 1903, White worked in Frank Lloyd Wright’s studio, and was strongly influenced by Wright’s credo that a building should express the spirit of its natural surroundings. White also designed a number of Oak Park residences and the Oak Park Post Office. Jens Jensen, a well-known landscape architect, worked with White on several projects.

One of White’s most important works, the 12,000-square-foot Cheney Mansion, designed in 1913 boasts many handsome reception rooms, six bedrooms, seven bathrooms, and separate servants’ quarters. The two acres of beautifully-landscaped grounds also include a coach house and a greenhouse. Located in the Historic District of Oak Park, the home was built for the Sharpe family. In 1922, it was purchased by Andrew and Mary Dole. Their niece, Elizabeth Cheney, inherited the mansion in the late 1940s. Though she deeded it to the Park District of Oak Park in 1975, no funding was designated for its support.

A Perfect Setting

The Mansion, with its spacious rooms and landscaped grounds, is available for your most special occasions: weddings, private parties, recitals, memorial services, luncheons and tours. It provides the perfect setting for corporate seminars, meetings and receptions. For more information, please visit our website: www.cheneymansion.com.

Friends of Cheney

Get involved! Interested in sharing your time and talent with a supportive group of Cheney Mansion enthusiasts? Call the mansion at (708)383-2612 for further information.

The Park District of Oak Park’s Cheney Mansion provides a unique venue for recreation programs, special activities and community events for the enjoyment of Oak Park residents and is a distinctive locale for private meetings and celebrations.

Special Events

Holiday Open House

**M, Dec 7 through Th, Dec 10
11am-7pm**

The mansion will be beautifully decorated for the holidays! Light refreshments will be served. Please bring a food item to donate to the OPRF Food Pantry. No admission fee!

Walk-In Wednesdays

W, Jan 13 - Mar 4, 11am-4pm

Explore the mansion on a self-guided tour. Light refreshments.

Native Orchid Seminar

Sa, Jan 30, 10:30-11:30am

As a preview to the upcoming Orchid Show & Sale, speaker Kathleen Garness shares her knowledge of one of the most adaptable, evolved and widespread plant families on the planet. Spanning the globe from southern Tasmania to inside the Arctic Circle, they are found in rainforests, dry savannahs, prairies, woodlands, wetlands and tundra. Did you know there are currently 38 (out of the original 50) species of orchids native to Chicagoland? Citizens and scientists are working together, within a consortium called Chicago Wilderness, to help identify, evaluate, monitor and manage high quality natural areas where orchids live. Discover the beauty and diversity of Chicago’s orchid and learn how to help save them. Light refreshments.

\$5 per person

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Orchid Show & Sale

**Sa, Feb 6 & Su, Feb 7
11am-4pm**

Come be entranced by the graceful, exotic orchids for sale in the elegant first-floor rooms of this 1913 historic mansion. Care advice and help in selecting that perfect, spirit-lifting orchid will be offered. Many orchid varieties have extremely long-lasting blooms, and require minimal care. A great way to catch a respite from the cold and bleakness of winter, the sale also offers specialty orchid pots from Purple Clay. No admission fee.

Family Sock Hop

Sa, Feb 27, 7-9:30pm

Check your shoes at the door...come Twist ‘n Shout! Experience the 50’s and 60’s! We’re talkin’ Elvis, the Beatles, and a sundae at the Cheney Ice Cream Shoppe. Bring your cameras to take photos of this memorable, fun evening out with the kids.

\$15 per person, all ages
20 minimum/50 maximum
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Cheney Cooks!

Check www.cheneymansion.com for an updated class listing

Expand your culinary expertise! Professional chefs teach a combination of hands-on and demonstration classes in the mansion’s catering kitchen. Classes are offered at both an adult and youth level.



Did You Know?
The grounds at Cheney Mansion are public. Stop by and enjoy them today!