
West Loop B&B Publishing House: A first look

By: JEAN IVERSEN June 02, 2017

An 11-room boutique bed and breakfast specializing in bookings for corporate and wedding groups opens today in the West Loop.

West Loop neighbors know the building as the former Holography Museum, but owners Shawn Uldridge and Kimberly Lowery, who purchased the property in 2012, name their business **Publishing House B&B**, after the building's original owner, Free Methodist Publishing House, which built the structure at the corner of Washington and May in 1909. "We wanted to pay homage to the history of the building," said Uldridge.

A wine bar and restaurant, the 70-seat Press Room, is set to open in July on the subterranean level. Owner George Saldez, formerly of Levy Restaurants' River Roast, is modeling the restaurant after the "intimate cafes he loved in Spain and Italy while living in Italy for two years," Uldridge said. Solo Salon, a hair salon with another West Loop location, will occupy the building's ground floor. It's slated to open in September.

Crain's earlier **reported** that Uldridge, who previously ran a Melbourne, Australia-based equities trading firm, paid \$2.35 million for the 18,000-square-foot building at 1134 W. Washington St., one block from Harpo Studios, Cook County property records showed.

Each of the en suite guest rooms at Publishing House are named with Chicago literary references, such as Cisneros, Bellow, and Everleigh, a nod to Karen Abbott's book, "Sin in the Second City." Room rates are \$200 to \$325. A communal area features cathedral ceilings, a grand piano, a dining room and a double-sided fireplace. There is also a media room and a library (natch).

Nushu Architects of Chicago completed the design. Chicago-based Vero Design and Build served as general contractor for the renovation of the four-story loft building. The local firm Siren Betty collaborated on the interior design with Lowery, who previously managed a vintage furniture store in Melbourne, Australia. The decor is a mix of raw and restored vintage finds and contemporary textures and colors, such as the restored buffet treated with teal automotive paint in the dining room and reupholstered vintage couches. Original wood panels and joists were salvaged and refinished for the walls, stairways and dining table.

"If we waited another year, we wouldn't be here" said Uldridge of his purchase. "We didn't expect so much development. That's been a pleasant surprise. We were looking in the Milwaukee Corridor all the way down to Logan Square, as well. But this is the ideal location."

The booming West Loop will soon be home to several new hotels including the 103-room Nobu Hotel, slated to open late this year, an Ace Hotel at 311 N. Morgan St., a 165-room hotel at Green and Lake streets by Chicago developer Jeff Shapack and a **hotel from Equinox**, the fitness chain.

Read more: [Karen Herold's designs on Nobu Hotel](#)
