

## BACKGROUND & HISTORY

### A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE HOME

Many interesting events in the history of the Home might be told. Many outstanding names of sacrificing pioneers and promoters of the institution could be mentioned. Some have previously been published, so suffice it this time to relate only a few major facts, as reminders for those who already are familiar with the work from the beginning. We trust that this brief history may be informative for our friends, who would like to acquaint themselves with the activities of the Home.

In 1894 the Swedish Societies' Central Association was organized in Chicago for the purpose of acting as dispensers of charity among needy countrymen. Continually they found new channels for their activities of mercy. From the apparent need of caring for the aged and feeble, the idea originated of an independent nonsectarian Home for such persons among the Swedish people of Cook County.

Nov. 20, 1898, a committee was appointed to select the best location for a Home. April 16, 1899, this committee reported that Park Ridge Hotel had been bought for \$4,500. After alteration and improvements, this Home filled its mission until 1907, when the need of a larger building became evident and that the Association should center all its activities toward that end. At that time, on Jan. 6, 1908, the name of the organization was changed to the Swedish Societies' Old People's Home Association. Special efforts were made for raising a building fund during this year. In Feb., 1909, the Park Ridge property was sold for \$8,500, and a month later the first tract of land was bought in Evanston, the 190 x 428 feet on the corner of Pioneer Road and Grant Street, Evanston.

The project of a new building was started immediately. On June 12, 1909, the cornerstone was laid, and Sept. 26, 1909, the new Home, containing 50 rooms was dedicated. The cost of the building, including the ground, amounted to approximately \$34,000.

Realizing the need of a larger building a financial drive was started in April, 1922. The campaign netted about \$74,000. With this sum and through a loan the Association commenced building operations in the spring, 1923. On Decoration Day, 1923, the cornerstone was laid, and Oct. 21, 1923, the Home costing about \$170,000, was dedicated in the presence of the Archbishop of Sweden, Nathan Soderblom. The Home, besides office, reception room, chapel, dining room, kitchen, etc., contains 118 rooms, which have been completely furnished mostly by Societies and individual friends. This original Home is called "Pioneer Place."

In the mid-sixties Lake Crest Villa on Central Street, Evanston, was acquired as an extension to our facilities. This is a beautiful, colonial structure accommodating 27 residents.

In October, 1975, our newest and finest facility opened its doors to provide the ultimate in retirement living. Thirty-one spacious units are located on the first two floors. Lovely public rooms are available for the residents' enjoyment. An up-to-date health care center for 51 patients is located on the third floor of this attractive building. The "Robert E. Landstrom Manor" is a welcome addition to the benevolent program of the Swedish Retirement Association.

During the later part of 1977 and early part of 1978, the north end of the west wing of Pioneer Place was completely renovated. Two single rooms on both floors were rebuilt into one large modern spacious unit. The reconstruction provided five units on each floor equipped with a new fire sprinkler system and central air conditioned. All units were occupied within two months after completion.

During 1980 a new elevator was installed in the east wing of Pioneer Place. The east wing at the present is under complete reconstruction which will be similar to the northwest wing.

Progress never stops at the Home which is a reminder to all our faithful workers and supporters that their time, talents and sacrifices are not in vain.

## IN BRIEF SIGNIFICANT MILESTONES

- Originally formed August 17, 1894, The Swedish Societies' Old Peoples Home Association, the original name.
- A nineteen room structure was built in Park Ridge, Illinois in 1899. The name of the organization was changed in 1908.
- In 1909, the Park Ridge property was sold and a new building was constructed in Evanston. This was the east wing of Pioneer Place.
- The central and west wings were added in 1923.



- In 1926, their Royal Highnesses Crown Prince Carl Gustaf VI Adolf and Crown Princess Louise of Sweden appeared before 50,000 people gathered on the grounds.
- In 1962, the name of the community was changed to Swedish retirement Association.
- Landstrom Manor opened in 1975
- A second royal visit was made by King Carl XVI Gustaf in 1978
- Pioneer Place was renovated from 1977-1984
- Pioneer Place was designated Assisted Living in 1998
- In 2004, the name was changed to Three Crowns Park
- A name that still holds strong to our rich heritage
- McDaniel Courts opened in 2007.

