

Wesley Willows Timeline

1957 – Roy and Minnie Johns donate 16 acres of the 160-acre Johns Family farm to build a church and a home for the elderly.

1962 – Northern Illinois Conference of the Methodist Church donates \$100,000 to build a retirement community. Wesley Willows is named for the founder of the Methodist Church and for the serenity and beauty of the Willow tree.

1960, July 25 – Wesley Willows Board of Trustees organized with John R. Van Sickle elected President. After 10 years of service, a multi-purpose room is named in his honor.

1962 – A second gift of land from Minnie Johns increases the campus to 24 acres.

1963 – Rev. Ed Hunt begins his 21-year success story as the first Administrator.

1966, June 16 – a Methodist Minister's widow is the first resident to move in. Wesley Willows was the first senior home of its kind in Illinois west of the Fox River.

1969, June 3 – Wesley Willows accepts administration of 49-bed North Rockford Convalescent Home.

1969 – Wesley Willows Auxiliary uses Johns' farmhouse for Wesley Willows Antique Shop.

1970, September 20 – Groundbreaking ceremony for 76-room addition to Wesley Willows.

1971, November 7 – Consecration service for the expanded Chapel and 76 room residential wing.

1972 – 1st Annual Benefit for the Good Samaritan Fund

1973 – Henry C. Arndt dedicates his time to Wesley Willows as Building Coordinator for the new Willows Health Center and the North Rockford Convalescent Home addition.

1975, November 17 – The Board of Trustees voted to name the Library for Wayne H. Diehl, Chairman of the Finance Committee for the past 13 years.

1975. September – 350 residents and 270 employees.

1976, February 10 – Twenty-one acres of land is purchased to expand Wesley Willows to 45 acres.

Summer, 1978 – Construction of the first cottage begins on Albright Lane.

1981, October – \$1,500,000 Capital Campaign begins for Personal Care Center.

1984, February 15 – Rev. Edwin S. Hunt retires and Robert E. Ash begins 15 prosperous years as President & CEO at Wesley Willows.

1986 – The newly opened \$2.2 million personal care center is named for Ed Hunt. Wesley Willows celebrates 20 years.

1990 – Founders Club is established.

1991 – Johns Chapel refurbished including stained glass windows.

1991 – Wesley Willows celebrates “25 Years of Caring.”

1994 – Wesley Willows receives two accreditations – CCAC & EAGLE

1996 – Kirk Alzheimer’s Activity Center is dedicated at Wesley Willows 30th Anniversary Celebration. “Come Make Yourself At Home” is the theme.

1997 – Annual Benefit Concert for the Good Samaritan Fund celebrates 25 years.

1997 – www.wesleywillows.org is launched.

1999, July 1 – Bob Ash retires and Bill Pratt becomes the CEO leading Wesley Willows into a new era of growth.

1999, September – Bus and Garage Campaign builds garage and completes purchase of 14 passenger wheelchair accessible bus.

2000 – 112 acres of farmland on the west side of Rockton Avenue are acquired from the Johns family.

2000 – First cottage resident Alice Gould (1978) celebrates her 102nd Birthday in her Albright Lane cottage.

2001 – The Groundbreaking for the new 112-acre development is celebrated at Wesley Willows’ 35th Anniversary Party.

2002, May 29 – Wesley Willows celebrates National Senior Health & Fitness Day with the dedication of a new Fitness Center.

2002 – Wesley Willows Auxiliary donates handicapped accessible van.

2003, January – The first two residents move into their Willow Ridge West homes.

2003 – Our restated Mission is: We promote active, secure lifestyles for seniors through ongoing, personalized care.

2004 – Wesley Willows Annual Benefit for the Good Samaritan Fund moves to the Starlight Theater.

2005 – November, Strategically, Willows on Main is sold

- ◆ Dedication of Rhody Stern Memorial Rose Garden & Gazebo

2006, May – Refurbished Willows Health and Rehab Center opened.

- ◆ Medicare & Kirk's Place begin services

- ◆ 77 acres of land adjoining Willow Ridge is acquired through a gift/purchase bringing total campus to 234 acres.

2006, September 16 – 40th Anniversary Celebration and Groundbreaking for the New Town Center.

2008, September – Re-alignment of Board of Trustees

2008, December 1 – Mr. & Mrs. Doug Adams and Pearl Beert are the first residents to move into Willows Suites

2008, December 4 – The Town Center opens

2009, December – Wesley Willows received CARF-CCAC and EAGLE five year reaccreditation.

2010, October 20 – Groundbreaking for Willows Suites Phase II