



The Story of Trinity Chapel Home

Whose Board of Directors
Established the
Trinity Chapel Home Fund in
The New York Community Trust
909 Third Avenue
New York, NY 10022

*On cover:
Trinity Chapel Home, 1912-1947.
Bussing Avenue, The Bronx.*

The Trinity Chapel Home Fund was established in 1960 by the Trinity Chapel Home Board to carry on the work that had been done since 1865 by Trinity Chapel Home.

General Robert E. Lee had just been appointed commander-in-chief of all Confederate armies.

General Sherman began his march northward through the Carolinas.

A great President with only a few weeks of life remaining said, "With malice toward none; with charity for all. . . ."

In New York City an elderly woman unnoticed by history became the first beneficiary of a charitable enterprise later to be known as Trinity Chapel Home.

The year was 1865. To minister to the expanding population of New York, the great Trinity Church, at the head of Wall Street, had earlier begun establishing chapel parishes in the developing areas to the north. One such chapel was on 24th Street. There, in a few rooms set aside in a private home, Trinity Chapel members Phoebe Gedney Mott and Hiram Nazro, with the Rev. William Vibbert, Vicar of Trinity, began providing for needy elderly ladies of the parish. When more space was needed, the good people of Trinity bought a house at 221 West 24th Street.

The purpose of Trinity Chapel Home was not set down formally until the articles of incorporation were drawn up in 1902:

The objectives of this Corporation are to maintain and care for poor and aged churchwomen, communicants of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the boroughs of Manhattan or the Bronx, City of New York, who have no relatives or friends to support them, the preference being given first to communicants of Trinity Chapel, and next to communicants of Trinity Parish, or of other parishes in the Borough of Manhattan or the Borough of the Bronx.

The 1902 bylaws of Trinity Chapel Home required that entrants pay a \$250 admission fee, but if the money could not be found "the Board may make such terms as it deems proper." Residents were asked to pay four dollars a week for board, if they could afford to do so.

In those early days, Trinity Chapel Home's endowment was small. In fact, throughout its life the Home depended heavily on gifts from members of the Trinity congregation and their friends.

By 1912 Trinity Chapel Home had outgrown its quarters on 24th Street. A larger house was bought in a rural area, on Bussing Avenue in the Bronx, near Woodlawn. It offered land, trees and a garden. The fifteen ladies who resided in the Home enjoyed a pleasant outlook from piazzas on two sides. The Board Secretary recorded: "During the summer months the truck garden provides the table with fresh vegetables, and with an ample supply of flowers which adds to the cheerfulness of the Home."

Elizabeth Nazro (sister of Hiram, one of the Home's founders) was at this time one of the most active members of the Board of Directors. Miss Nazro was Treasurer and a member of the Executive Committee for many years. She looked after the Home's invested funds carefully and effectively. Upon



*Trinity Chapel Home, 1947-1959.
7 East 67 Street, Manhattan.*

the death of Elizabeth Nazro, the minutes of the Board related:

The Board of Directors of Trinity Chapel Home has lost one of its most faithful and devoted members. She was perhaps a more frequent visitor to the Home than any other member of the Board. She knew personally all the residents and they turned to her frequently in their difficulties.

In memory of Elizabeth Nazro, the chapel of the Home was beautified with a new altar and reredos.

Virginia Scott Hoyt, another dedicated member of the Board in the 1920's, contributed generously to Trinity Chapel Home, as did Mrs. C. C. Jackson, Mrs. Glover C. Arnold, and Mrs. William Pollock. Mrs. Mary Penniman bequeathed \$20,000.

After Dr. Vibbert's death, the Rev. J. Wilson Sutton, D.D., became Vicar of Trinity Chapel and Board President of the Home. Dr. Sutton was a fine administrator who worked hard in the cause of the Home for the rest of his life. The 1933 Annual Report records:

Six new beds have been provided, and a new hot water stove has been placed in the basement, which with the installation of new pipes has made possible a plentiful supply of water at all hours of the day. New table linen, new bed linen and new dining room silver have been added.

Another personality who stands out clearly in records and recollections of Trinity Chapel Home in its later years is Miss Janet Tate. Miss Tate, who was a trained nurse by profession, was hampered by lameness. She found her niche as superintendent of Trinity Chapel Home.

In the words of a contemporary, Miss Tate "did a perfectly incredible job, ruined her health. She was a charming person with a delightful sense of humor. She truly loved all the residents."

During World War II, Miss Tate frequently visited a Red Cross center and brought back sewing and knitting with which the residents occupied themselves usefully.

With the assistance of Mrs. Constance Skillin, who was a devoted member of the board for many years, Miss Tate promoted a social life for the ladies. Each resident's birthday was celebrated with a party.

As time passed, the old wooden building on Bussing Avenue became run down. In 1947 it was sold, and Trinity Chapel Home moved to a house at 7 East 67th Street in Manhattan. This property was acquired for a modest price from Albert Gallatin, a former member of Trinity Chapel.

The cost of maintaining the Home grew and grew. Generous patrons departed this life. Changes in the law raised fire protection problems. It became more and more difficult to keep people on the staff.

Sadly but unavoidably, the Board decided to take no more new residents. In June, 1959, the remaining ladies were moved to suitable homes and Trinity Chapel Home became a memory.

The Home's Board of Directors arranged, through the New York State Supreme Court, to liquidate the Home's assets and designate them the Trinity Chapel Home Fund. Its purpose was to make grants for the benefit and care of elderly women. The New York Community Trust was named to administer the fund, with the aid of an advisory committee from the former Board of the Home.

Thus, after more than a century, the elderly continue to benefit from the vision and solicitude shown through five generations by the members of Trinity Chapel. Their concern is expected to continue generation after generation through the Trinity Chapel Home Fund.



The New York Community Trust is a publicly supported community foundation which provides centralized management for many charitable funds. New York's major banks serve as trustees. Trustee for the Trinity Chapel Home Fund is Manufacturers Hanover Trust Company.