

Christamore House Guild Historic Timeline

In the old northeast area of Indianapolis, Miss Edna Stover and Miss Edith Surby, both graduates of Butler College, began the work of “Christamore”. They had conceived the idea of establishing a settlement house – the first in the city – during their undergraduate days in the late 1800’s.

- In 1905, with \$5.00 and a deep conviction, Edna and Edith purchased property for the first Christamore Settlement House.
- In 1908, Martha Stewart Carey, who taught kindergarten in the Christamore building, formed the Christamore Aid Society, (now called Christamore House Guild), an organization of young women to provide volunteer services and financial aid to the House.
- In 1924-25, after a major fundraising campaign, the new Christamore House was built on 7 city blocks at its current location at the corner of West Michigan Street and Tremont Street.
- In 1937, the Guild established the first Christamore summer camp with over 100 children enjoying the camp experience.
- By 1952, the Christamore Aid Society had expanded its volunteer services to include pre-natal, baby and dental clinics, and various classes at Christamore House.
- From 1952 to 1958 the Follies brought the message of the Christamore House to the city of Indianapolis. Every other year during this time, a New York Cargill Production Director and Choreographer would come to Indianapolis and in three weeks train local talent to perform in a wonderful 2 night 2 ½ hour show at the Murat Theater. A sold-out house had the opportunity to enjoy an amazing show and be introduced for the first time to the work of the Christamore House.
- In 1965, Christamore Aid Society became a not-for-profit corporation.
- In 1970, Frances Carter Coburn, a past president of Christamore Aid Society, received the first annual “Volunteer of the Year Award” from Mrs. Richard M. Nixon.
- In 1974, the first Christamore Tree Spree was held selling holiday décor to fund House maintenance expenses. This event has morphed over the years

into other types of fall fundraisers including galas, tailgates, auctions, fight nights, and many more.

- In 1978, the Christamore Aid Society established the Frances Carter Coburn Scholarship Fund, designed to offer supplemental college aid to students in the Haughville area.
- In 1980, the Book & Author Benefit Luncheon was born to raise funds for the Frances Carter Coburn Scholarship and educational programs at Christamore House.
- In 1984, through the efforts of Guild member Anne Ewing Scheele, grant monies were obtained from the Lilly Foundation and the Indianapolis Foundation for renovation and restoration of the 74-year-old House. With a \$45,000 contribution from the Society, a total of \$120,000 was pledged for the project. In 1985, with an additional \$5,000 from the Society, auditorium and gymnasium windows were preserved and restored. Coinciding with the completion of the renovation, the building was formally placed on the National Register of Historic Places in March of 1985.
- In 1997, the membership of Christamore Aid Society voted to alter the name of their beloved organization to Christamore House Guild to more adequately describe the purpose of this dedicated group of women.
- In 2003, President George Bush visited Indianapolis and presented Liz Hamilton, a Guild member, with the Freedom Corps Volunteer Award.
- In June 2006, the Christamore House unveiled its new walkway into the House of brick pavers, which were purchased, engraved, and donated thru the Guild's fundraising.

Additional renovations and modifications are continually ongoing, thanks to the fundraising efforts of the Christamore Guild members. As of 2019, the Guild is the largest source of private funds donated to the Christamore House. As times change and the needs of the House change, the Christamore House Guild maintains its creativity and flexibility in response to various demands for its volunteers and monies. As the challenges of the economy appear, the commitment of the Guild remains firmly planted in the facility and people of the Christamore House and our Frances Carter Coburn scholars.