

Since 1920

# Swanson

Painting & Wallcovering LLC

## A Family Business with 100 Years of Experience

We began four generations ago...

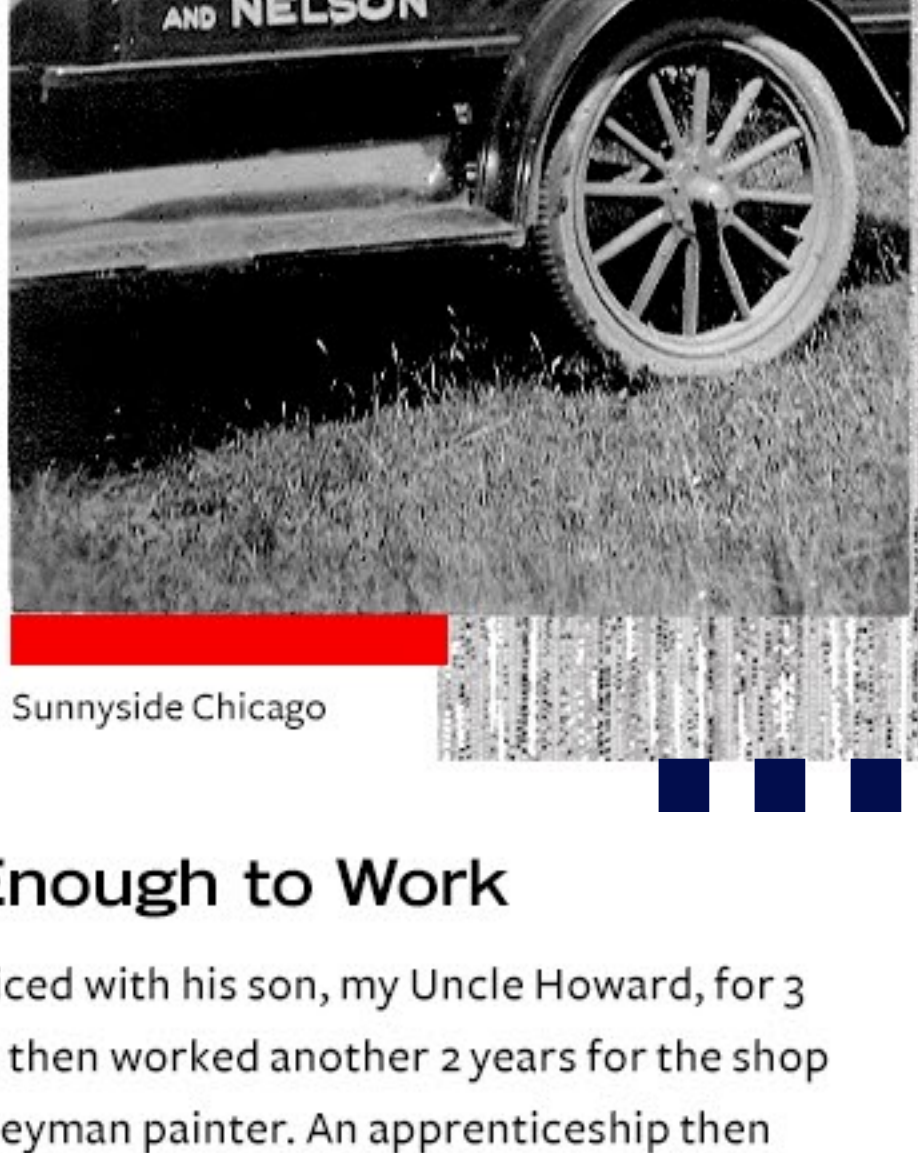


1920

Swanson 1920's storefront

### I Remember Grandpa Laughing...

When I was around 12 yrs old I was deemed "old enough to work" by Grandpa and he would bring me to the Nelson and Sholin paint store on Devon Ave on the occasional Saturday to clean paint pots. He had soaked the pots in lye for a few days in the slop sink getting ready for me. I'd wear rubber gloves up to my elbows and start with wire brushes and end with steel wool getting them back to the bare metal. Of course the lye water ran down the gloves to my arms and hands. It burned like paint stripper. I remember Grandpa laughing.



Sunnyside Chicago

### Old Enough to Work

I apprenticed with his son, my Uncle Howard, for 3 years and then worked another 2 years for the shop as a journeyman painter. An apprenticeship then consisted of 4 days a week working with the painters and 1 day per week at Washburne Trade School learning the science of coatings, color mixing and paper hanging. We mixed all our colors on the job from a white base and with practice could match a color really fast.



1970

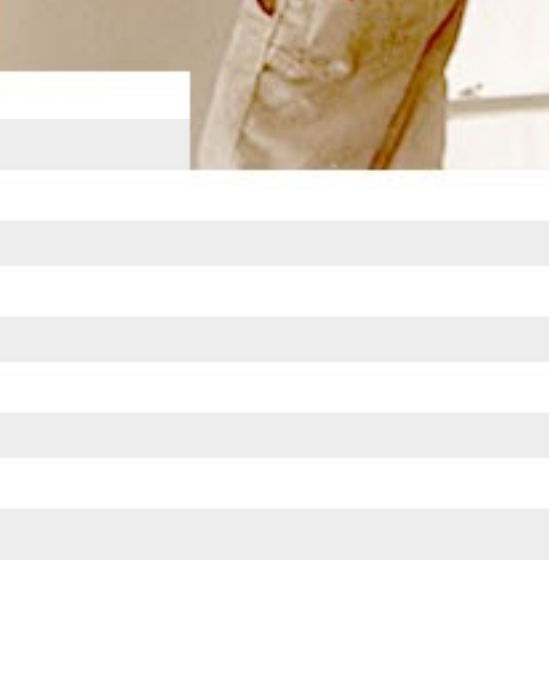
"Big Red"

### "Do-It-Yourselfers"

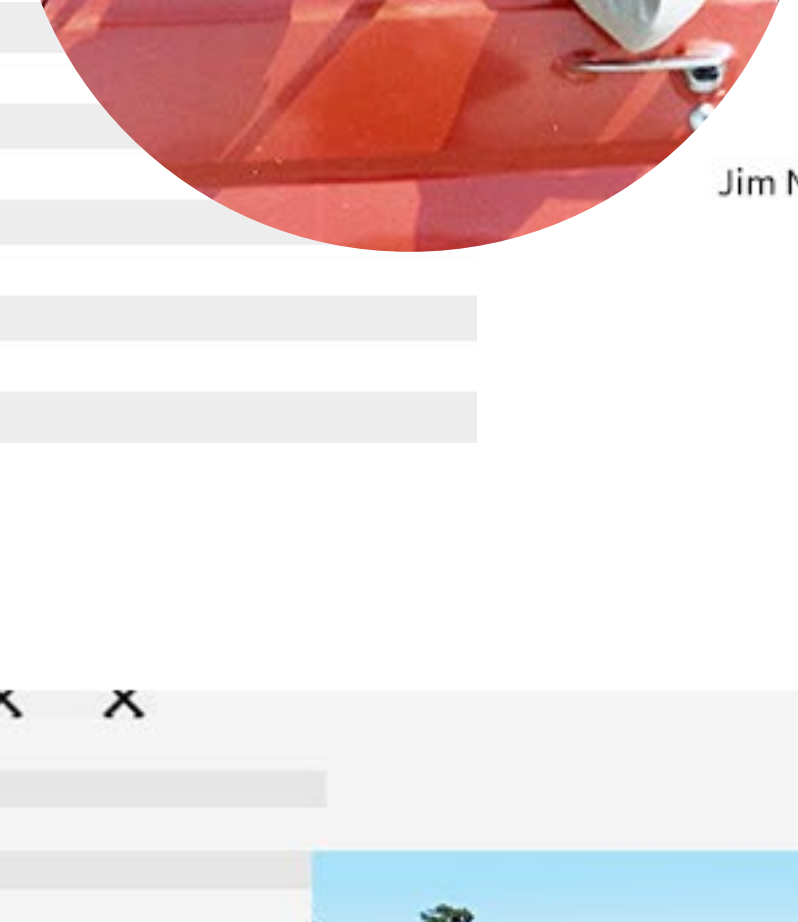
I remember Howard mornings as a young boy when my father, Howard Nelson, would bring me with him to the old Nelson & Sholin paint shop at 2307 West Devon Avenue in Chicago. My father grew up in an apartment above the shop, and when I was younger my Swedish-immigrant grandfather, John Nelson - who with his boyhood chum Joe Sholin began the business in 1920-- would always be there, even into his Seventies.

It was a dank and musty old place, and held intriguing drawers full of red and white lead and rosins - actual paint-making materials like in the old days. Gallons of paint and tins of the solvent benzene - since banned -- lined the walls, and my Dad would sit at a desk in one of the small offices in the back, his fingers cranking endlessly on an adding machine as he worked on estimates for painting jobs while my grandfather worked the front, selling paint and whatever to professional painters and do-it-yourselfers who wandered in off the avenue.

Bill Swanson



Howard Nelson



Jim Nelson

Painters and Decorators Since 1920

1739 Chestnut Ave. Glenview, Ill. 60025

Phone: 724-6916 or Dial PAINTER

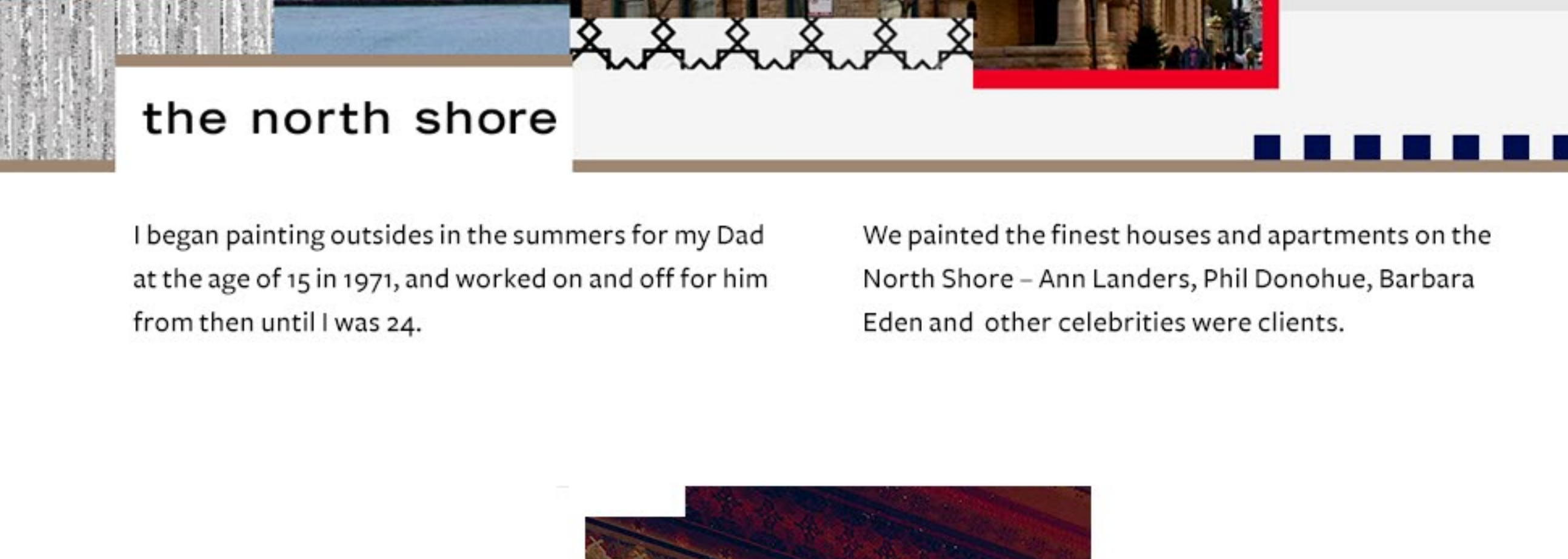
Dial "PAINTER" Company Business Card



### the north shore

I began painting outsides in the summers for my Dad at the age of 15 in 1971, and worked on and off for him from then until I was 24.

We painted the finest houses and apartments on the North Shore - Ann Landers, Phil Donohue, Barbara Eden and other celebrities were clients.



1980

Chicago Stock Exchange

### The Chicago Stock Exchange Building

I was lucky in that I got to work on the recreation of the old Chicago Stock Exchange, which was originally designed by the famed architect Louis Sullivan, in the back wing of the Art Institute in 1976 and 1977. I spent weeks and weeks hanging hand-crafted wall designs there, and always pay a visit when I'm in Chicago.

Hand done quality is in the details.



Adding the Finishing Touches

The Drop Cloth Press Clipping

I most remember the men with whom I worked. Some were Old School German artisans - Big Karl; the gaunt, chain-smoking Hans; Gerhard, the cherubic former of Little Arthur, and LITTLE KARL, who voraciously read the newspaper during lunch and who had the brusque manner of a European Classics professor. There was also Frank "Frankie Da Baby" Havran, who had escaped from what was then Soviet-dominated Czechoslovakia after World War 2, and who referred to himself as a "Czechy-Walky." And there were Swedes - old Sven, the kindly, tall Alf, and the immensely Wally Gustafson. There were the whiz-kid paperhangers Don and Reinhard - Big Karl's son - and LeRoy "Red" Flink, who sanded floors, loved the Chicago Cubs, and talked endlessly of his time on the island of Bougainville in World War 2. And there was Bengt, a Dane who had belonged to the Resistance during the war and lost some of his hearing when the Germans poured cold water through his ears in a vain attempt to make him talk.

## Today

The old paint shop is a pizza parlor now, and most of those men who worked out of it are gone. But I know Matthew Swanson is carrying on the proud traditions of his great-grandfather John Nelson, and of the varied and fascinating group of Old World craftsmen that I was so lucky to have worked with in my youth.



We have all your finishing needs covered.

We've chosen to remain a small and efficient team to ensure every customer gets the quality and attention they deserve.

### What We Do

- Painting
- Wallcovering Removal
- Wallcovering Restoration
- Wood Finishing
- Drywall Taping
- Plaster Repair
- Ceiling Texturing
- Flat Texturing
- Window Film
- Marine Finishes
- Color Consultation
- Travel/2nd Homes and Cabins
- Protective Wallcoverings / Wall Guard
- Dry Erase Wallcoverings / Paint

### Customers

- Healthcare / Clinics & Hospitals
- Church Restorations
- Nursing Care Facilities
- Interior Designers
- Individual Homeowners
- Commercial & Residential Contractors
- Schools
- Office Environments

### Contact



Swanson Painting & Wallcovering LLC  
2007 Sargent Ave.  
St. Paul, Minnesota 55105

Phone: 651-247-9775  
info@swansonpww.com