

2008: A Year of Providence Anniversaries



Cornerstone of St. Patrick Hospital

Congratulations to the following facilities celebrating anniversaries as part of Providence Health & Services!

§ 135 years

St. Patrick Hospital and Health Sciences Center, Missoula, Montana

§ 70 years

Providence Alaska Medical Center, Anchorage, Alaska

§ 25 years

Providence Extended Care Center, Anchorage, Alaska

§ 20 years

Providence Centralia Hospital, Centralia, Washington

Providence ElderPlace, Portland, Oregon

§ 15 years

Holy Family Hospital, Spokane, Washington

Mount Carmel Hospital, Colville, Washington

St. Joseph Hospital, Chewelah, Washington

Holy Family Adult Day Care Center, Spokane, Washington

§ 10 years

Providence St. Francis House, Olympia, Washington

Providence Benedictine Nursing Center, Mount Angel, Oregon

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Past Forward is published in the spring, summer and fall by Archives staff.

Postage

Spring 2008
Vol. 15 No. 2

Past Forward

PROVIDENCE ARCHIVES NEWSLETTER

Sisters of Providence, Mother Joseph Province • Providence Health & Services

The Results Are In...

Every once in a while it is a good idea to assess or reassess the effectiveness of any outreach tool. For Providence Archives, the time had come to check in with our newsletter audience. We wanted to see who was reading *Past Forward* and what they liked, or didn't like. We also wanted to make sure that those who appeared on our distribution lists still wanted to receive the publication. Furthermore, we wanted to find out what format of the newsletter (paper or electronic) would be most useful to whom.

The survey results helped us, as a staff, refocus our attention on the content of the newsletter. Most importantly it reminded us that we don't write the news, history, and other tidbits of information, in a vacuum. Rather, we are part of a community who shares an interest in the rich history of

Providence Health & Services and the Sisters of Providence.

The response to the survey was very positive. We sent out 200 surveys to individuals as well as a blanket survey to the broadcast e-mail distribution list of approximately 300 Sisters of Providence, Providence Associates, and others associated with the Mother Joseph Provincial Administration. We received 136 responses overall. Of those who responded, 65% said that they had either a high or medium rate of interest in *Past Forward*. 66% responded that they were very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, or satisfied with the content. The remaining respondents hadn't read the newsletter.

As to the areas of most interest, the "Did You Know?" and "Picturing Providence" columns were most highly rated at 21% and 20% respectively followed by



"Verbatim" at 14% and "From the Archivist" at 13%. From this as well as individual comments received from respondents, we have concluded that what most readers really want is more history and more photographs! We are happy to oblige. In response, this issue of *Past Forward* includes a new column called "SP Spotlight" featuring a profile of a notable Sister of Providence. Everyone knows how Mother Joseph and Emilie Gamelin shaped the Sisters of Providence community, but what about the countless other

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What's New in the Archives?

Check out these new additions to the Providence Archives website (providence.org/archives):

NEW in History Online:

§ Public Memorials to Sisters of Providence: a listing of statues, plaques, and other memorials recognizing the Sisters of Providence throughout Mother Joseph Province and elsewhere

§ Letters and Journal of the 5 foundresses: a translation of written documents regarding the 1856 trip to Vancouver, Washington

§ Fun Page: Test your Sisters of Providence knowledge with a quiz about Mother Joseph, a word search and a celebrity matching game

NEW in Collections:

§ As collections of records and photographs are organized and described, we add the inventory and description to the website so you can browse our collections from the comfort of your own desk. These are our newest additions:

✦ St. Vincent Academy, Walla Walla, Wash., records
✦ Providence Alaska Medical Center, Anchorage, Alaska, photos



Sister Ethel Richardson

*Name in Religion: Sister Xavier
Number in Religion: 4886
Date of Birth: March 29, 1917
Entrance to Novitiate: Feb. 27, 1942
First Vows: Feb. 28, 1944
Final Vows: Feb. 28, 1947
Death: July 26, 1997*

Catholic faith and was baptized in 1939. A short two years later, she made application to enter the Sisters of Providence. She entered the novitiate in 1942, professed her first vows in 1944 and her final vows in 1947.

Throughout her over 50 years in religious life, Sister Ethel was very active as a nurse, and hospital and nursing school administrator. The majority of her years were spent working at Sacred Heart Hospital in Spokane in a variety of positions including nursing assistant (1944-1946), supervisor of the OB department (1946-1954), director of pastoral care (1978-1992), and part-time administrative representative (1993-1996). She held other posts at St. Patrick Hospital, Missoula, Mont., St. Mary Hospital, Walla Walla, Wash., and Columbus Hospital, Great Falls, Mont.

Besides her health care ministry, Sister Ethel also served in leadership roles as Provincial Superior of St. Ignatius Province (1968-1974) and as General Councillor in Montreal, Quebec (1974-1978).

Though technically retired, Sister Ethel worked nearly to the end of her life doing what she loved to do: tending to the spiritual and physical health of those around her.

thoughtful comments. For full survey results, please see our expanded survey coverage on the archives website: providence.org/phs/archives/past_forward/5main.htm.

-Emily Hughes Dominick



[We must] keep uppermost in our minds that this is a ministry and not a business.

-Sister Ethel Richardson reflecting on the goals of Providence hospitals.

From an article by Tom Sofio in the Spring 1997 issue of *Heart Beat*, the quarterly publication of Sacred Heart Medical Center, Spokane.



Sister Ethel Richardson with a nursing student at St. Patrick Hospital Missoula, circa 1960s. (Photo # 44.F11.17)

Sister Ethel Richardson didn't grow up knowing she would enter religious life. Raised Methodist in East Helena, Montana, it wasn't until she entered the Columbus Hospital School of Nursing in Great Falls, Montana, in 1935 that she was introduced to Catholicism and the Sisters of Providence. She made the decision to be instructed in the

stories are important to share. See our first installment of "Spotlight" inside this issue.

Thanks to all who took the time to fill out the survey. We appreciate your input and



Sr. Francis Michael (née Catherine Sullivan) admiring a resident's doll collection at Ozanam Nursing Home, Tacoma, 1962. (Photo# 147.F1.1)



Sisters playing cards in the community room at Providence Mount St. Vincent, Seattle, c. 1960. Note the nursing sister's white habit. Just discernable in the background is a plaster bust of community founder Bishop Ignace Bourget, which is now part of the Archives' artifact collection.

(Photo # 140.B12.34)

PICTURING PROVIDENCE by Peter F. Schmid, CA, Visual Resources Archivist

A column highlighting archival photographs and other resources that provide visual documentation of the Sisters of Providence. Peter selects notable materials from the collection of over 50,000 photographs. He can be reached at 206-923-4012 or peter.schmid@providence.org.

Last December the Archives was pleased to receive 300 photographs, most in the form of original 4" x 5" negatives, by Seattle photographer Bill Stephens, taken in the early 1960s. The images were transferred to the Archives courtesy of the Museum of History & Industry (MOHAI),

Seattle, since they document four Sisters of Providence ministries: Providence Seattle Medical Center; Providence Mount St.

Vincent, Seattle; Ozanam Nursing Home, Tacoma; and Providence Heights, Issaquah. The images were given to MOHAI by Stephens' widow, and are the second such transfer: MOHAI gave Providence Archives a set of Stephens' photographs in 1996.

The practice is not uncommon, since archives and libraries sometimes find themselves in possession of material that would be better housed and

referenced at a different repository.

This accession was particularly relevant because Providence Archives already has many of the prints that were made from these negatives. It was gratifying to be able to pair the negatives with prints in the various collections. Our Ozanam Nursing Home collection, however, did not have any of the negatives, so those 20 images constituted an important addition to our documentation of that ministry.

A group of 34 negatives show an early event at the **Heart Center of Providence Seattle Medical Center**, which had been established in 1959 by Dr. Lester R. Sauvage, a pioneer in the field of cardiovascular surgery (it later grew into the current Hope Heart Institute).

A small group of images belong to the **Providence Mount St. Vincent** collection, and show novices and postulants in class and recreation, sisters at a jubilee celebration, and socializing in the community room.

Ozanam Nursing Home was established in 1929, dedicated to Frederick Ozanam, founder of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul in 1833. In addition to the charitable mission of the institution, the dedication makes sense in view of the fact that the building which housed the home had previously belonged to the Tacoma chapter of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul. The photographs illustrate resident life in the home and the work of the sisters.



A speaker at the Heart Center seminar, "Your Heart - Today and Tomorrow," Providence Seattle Medical Center, October 21, 1962. (Photo# 56.C42.3)

The bulk of the negatives were taken at **Providence Heights**, and include shots of building construction, the early days of the College of Sister Formation, profession groups, the extensive art collection, and the first Daughters of Mary to come from Uganda to study here.



Two Daughters of Mary from Uganda, Sr. Maria Leonsia and Sr. Theresa of Avila, trying out the phone at Providence Heights in Issaquah, c. 1960. Sr. Ann Rachel, SP (née Mary Eleanor Schlotfeldt) is at the Daughters of Mary for education programs to this day. (Photo # 189.A15.9)