



Oral histories keep the flame — and voices — alive

Listening is called a gift. For nearly 20 years, the chief interviewer and listener has been Joan Glisky, IHM.

Formally called the congregation's Oral Historian, Sister Joan has done hundreds of in-person, recorded interviews with IHM sisters. "That's not many when I look at how many need to be done," she said.

Sister Joan began her association with the IHM Archives during the administration of Sister Dorothy McDaniel. Now, the oral histories are so important to Sister Joan that she will not give up on them until someone is found willing to help and/or take them over. "Everybody's story is valuable. That's the richness of it; we are such a diverse group along with the similarities."

Sister Joan often goes to a sister's room to conduct and record the interview. Some sisters review their entire lives or ministries.



Others give the background of specific projects they worked on. Margaret Sullivan, Sister Joan remembers, spoke on fidelity to a loving God. "It was poetic."

At one time, those oral interviews were transcribed word for word, but lately that work is too time-consuming for one person. Now summaries are typed. The interviewee then is asked to review the recording and summary before signing a form granting permission for the information to be used publicly. They have been used by researchers as well as sisters preparing

Rememberings.

"It's different from written history," Sister Joan said. "It's more of a story, a narrative. You really get a flavor of the emotional tone and what kept people motivated." Preserving the sister's actual voice also is a gift.

"It's a generator of hopefulness. It carries us forward, rich in the tradition."

A good interviewer asks questions that prompt the person to go beyond facts and figures. "It's a fortifying experience for any member to get in touch with the way we have lived and how we've evolved," she said.

To learn more, contact Archivist Jennifer Meacham at ext. 695.

Excerpts from sisters:

Claudia Carlen, IHM

Sister Marie Virginia "... came running up to me, she had this great big book in her hands, and I didn't know it, but it was the

decimal classification. I'd never heard of it. And she just planked (sic) it in my arms and she said, 'Mother Domatilla said you're going to go into library work.' And I looked amazed. Library work? I didn't know anything about it."

Celeste Rabaut, IHM

"And that day he went to the party and he said to the people at his table as he got up to speak, 'This is going to be the shortest speech I have ever given.' And he went up to the podium, said about 3 words, and dropped to the floor with a heart attack. Congressman Dingell, the current Congressman Dingell, happened to be there. He realized my father was falling, and he said he caught him in his arms and he died in his arms. They took him to a hospital that was very close but they couldn't revive him...."

By the sea, by the sea, by the beautiful sea — rather, Lake Erie

IHM sisters enjoyed rest and recreation at the Ontario resort called Crawfton. Originally an inn for the public, the IHM congregation purchased the property and hotel in 1967.

Located about 75 miles from Monroe, it became a beloved weekend-or-longer getaway for the Sisters. Groups often arrived for vacation in Catholic Central High School buses. Many sisters also made retreats there.

This photo was taken in 1969. The IHM Sisters sold the property in 2006.



Memories were shared on Facebook:

Joyce Agnes Durosko: “Great and happy times were held at this beautiful Resort. It was rustic but comfortable. We met friends that we had not seen for a long

time from all of the various missions. Swimming was great, the food was delicious and the friends were forever.”

Margaret Chapman: “Great memories for me too! My class went up as postulants on the big yellow school bus with

Sr. Mary Vincent driving, to begin the cleaning process in June 1967, just before our reception. It was in such bad shape that I couldn’t imagine that day what the community was thinking in purchasing it. Gosh, was I proven wrong within a few short years!”

Sister James Marian: “I loved Crawfton and wish we still had it. Fishing was good.”

Lynne Moldenhauer: “I loved Crawfton!!!! Beautiful retreats!”

Mary Ann Hartwell: “Crawfton was so much fun! I read *Watership Down* over a weekend there with about 15 lovely IHM friends.”



Archives tries to discover who, what, when and where of mystery photos

Yes, this is a mystery.... as in what in the world are they doing? It appears they are trying to balance a Dixie cup on a stick. There MUST be a good story behind this one. If you are in the photo or know what activity they were doing and why, contact Deborah Saul, Archives assistant, at ext. 321 or e-mail to dsaul@ihmsisters.org.

Summer meant school for sisters

The traditional last day of school is in June, but school was seldom out for IHM educators. Soon after returning to the Motherhouse from their annual missions, many sisters were back in the classroom for their own higher education studies. Walking across the campus in this photo are Sisters Helen Glaser, Stanislaus Huddleston, Mary Jane Baumann, Leorita Huver, Athonita

Bryden and one unidentified sister.

This photo prompted Facebook comments:

Pat DiVita: "As a former boarder at the Academy, I love seeing these photos. Brings back so many memories. One of which was running the buffer over our dorm floors til they shone like glass! Saturday fun!"

Donna Gallagher



Schneider: "I liked going over to the Barn. It was so peaceful and beautiful,"

Jacqueline Flynt: "Wonderful photo! Radiant Sisters."

From log cabin to snug complex: IHM buildings filled city corner

Although the IHM's sprawling W. Elm Ave. campus today is striking, the original location of the IHM complex also was impressive. This photo looks north and slightly west, showing the Monroe St. bridge over the River Raisin in horse-and-buggy days. Beyond the bridge is the IHM campus as it looked in the late 1800s at the corner of N. Monroe St. and W. Elm Ave. Called the quadrangle, these buildings were constructed under the direction of Msgr. Edward Joos between 1866 and



1895. They included St. Mary's Convent, a chapel and classrooms. The house nearest the bridge (far right) is where the Custer statue stands now. St. Mary's Catholic Church is in the background (right).

The history *No Greater Service* lists the total value of this property in 1899 at \$96,579. The sisters that year had 118 boarders and 52 day students. Tuition and other revenue brought in \$18,374.79.

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Since 2000, all IHM sisters have been encouraged to submit individual chronicles to the IHM Archives. These records about your own life and ministry over the course of a year or more add breadth and depth to the documented history of the IHM Sisters. Your contribution will enrich the future record of the IHM, so please be sure your life's story is included in the community's story.

Sisters since 1845 have continued Motherhouse Chronicles

In July, the IHM Archives staff had to say farewell to colleague Marie André Walsh, IHM. After 13 years, Sister Marie Andre retired, the latest in a line of Motherhouse Chroniclers that stretches back to the very beginning of the IHM congregation in 1845. Although there have been chronicles at IHM schools and individuals' chronicles, nothing comes close to the longevity of the Motherhouse record of important highlights, feast days, deaths, candidates received and vows taken. The authors usually were anonymous as they preserved the history of the congregation. The metaphorical pen now is passed to another. Taking up this duty for the congregation is new Motherhouse Chronicler

Marie Clark, IHM. Thank you, Sister Marie André! Welcome, Sister Marie!

Facebook greetings to this announcement abounded:

Mary Beth Oravec: "Important work! Thank you for continuance of keeping history."

Michele Matuszewski: "Okay, so you've retired again. Blessings and congratulations on yet another assignment accomplished."

Nan Nader-Koob: "Ma Soeur, je t'aime for all these years. Your French class was a highlight of my school day for all those 4 years so long ago ('58 to '62!) Merci!"



Joan Mumaw: "Thanks Sr. Marie André for keeping the records 'straight.' Thanks, Marie, for stepping up."