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A collection of recent discoveries and activities in the IHM Archives

Today and Yesterday

Stories from the Archives



Precious cargo survived airline handlers

An appeal from Haiti for help. A custom-designed solar computer system carefully packed and hand-carried through airports. Sisters Anne Wisda and Barbara Berg were taking pieces of delicate equipment that would bring power to Sisters of St. Therese at Rivière Froide.

Imagine their consternation, then, as they watched an airline worker toss their precious cargo down a luggage chute in Miami.

It was 1998 when the IHM agreed to help the convent in the mountains of Haiti. Since there was no power they could not run a computer and they wanted one.



Sister Anne Wisda

First, Anne and Barb secured a grant from the Conrad Hilton Fund for Sisters who Work with the Poor. This allowed them

to buy a computer, printer and a French language module.

Next, they worked with a DTE technician who calculated the power needed to run the equipment and custom ordered two small solar panels and adaptors. DTE donated the solar panels and taught the Sisters how to connect everything. They used colored tape to match which wire went with which connection.

Since the airline allowed passengers two carry-on bags, they each had a personal bag and one carried the equipment while the other carried the panels. Boarding at Metro Airport went fine, but the workers in Miami allowed only one carry-on. That's when the bags went flying into the cargo hold. After a tense flight, they were relieved to see that everything arrived intact.

The Sisters of St. Therese had hoped that somehow they could have reliable electrical power for their 50th Jubilee. It happened.



Sister Bernadette Nicolas, general superior, learned the ins and outs of her new solar panels.

The office was on the second floor and the solar panel wires fed through a window. The Sisters worked hard to learn how to operate the system, with Barb translating Anne's English instructions into French and Creole.

Never underestimate the excitement of seeing paper shooting out of a printer for the first time.

Little asides often found throughout the IHM story

Parents made a good call

Sister Angelora Foley (1905-1998) was born in County Cork, Ireland, the ninth of 13 children. She came to the States in 1923, worked in Detroit for a while before entering the IHM community in 1931. She had a long life here teaching, loving and being loved.



But her older sisters Hannah and Margaret came to America first ... and almost didn't make it. They had tickets for the maiden voyage of the *Titanic*. According to Sister Angelora's Remembering, when their parents heard the almost blasphemous boast: 'Not even God can sink the *Titanic*,' both passages were canceled and rebooked on another ship.

Sister's father rode with Gen. Custer

Sister Philippa Kerwin (1887-1984), the first of many Kerwins in the community, honored her father with her religious name. Philip had an interesting life. As an Army scout for Gen. George Custer, he survived the

Little Big Horn because he had been sent to find and return with reinforcements. In civilian life, he was a patrolman in New York City and a respected police inspector for the city of Detroit. Three of his five daughters joined the IHM: Catherine (Philippa), Sarah (Margaret Ellen) and Marguerite (Marie Winifred). Two granddaughters also joined the community: Sisters Marie Lillian and Mechtilde.



Fire protection extended to the Farms

Sister Miriam Raymo (1875-1965) learned a hard lesson with the 1929 fire: take no chances with fire. While the new campus was brick, the farm buildings were not. In a 1936 prospectus from Burkett Lightning Rod Co.,

Sister Miriam signed off on \$1,016.65 — not a small sum — to install lightning protection equipment on farm houses, chicken houses, silos, a hay barn, tool sheds, and a hog house. All-copper equipment for the new rectory was another \$142.50.



Special aunt enjoyed having special namesakes

Sister Lorraine (Honey) Humphrey was the youngest child of nine in a close, fun-loving family. She cherished them and the feeling was mutual. She had created a thick three-ring-binder of photos and information about each family member. Recently, this treasure was sent to the Archives and with the help of Sister Margaret Babcock and General Secretary Monica Tylinkski we were able to send the scrapbook to one of her nieces in out west. Along with her email of thanks, Honey's niece sent along this photo of another favorite. Here is part of her note:

*I can't thank you enough for sending along the Humphrey family memory book. It means so very much! Honey was always a favorite — my middle name is Lorraine — so we joked that she had a namesake. When I acquired my miniature horse and named him **Honey Jr.** she was ecstatic.*

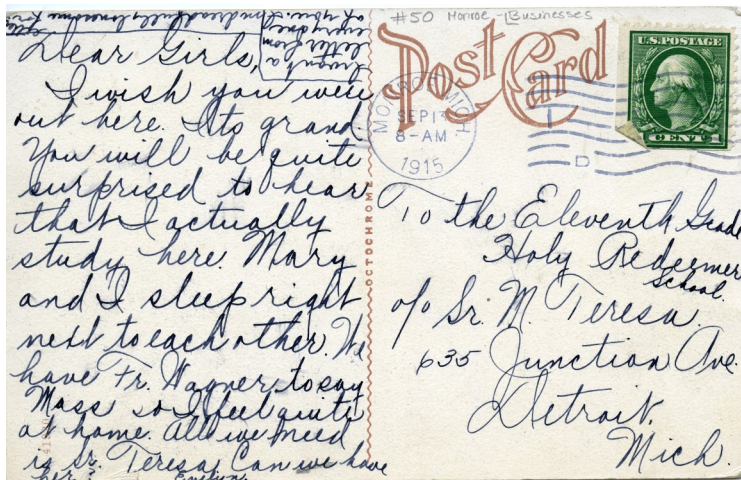
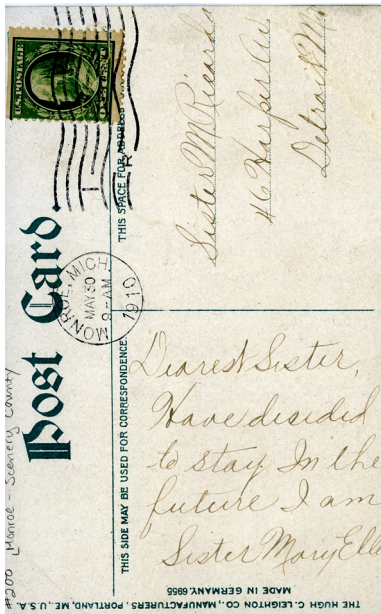


Early postcards to Sisters also in Archives

The postcard below must have been music to the ears of Sister Ricarda Stanley, teaching at Holy Rosary in 1910, when it arrived. "Dearest Sister," it says, "Have decided to stay. In the future I am Sister Mary Ellen." Mary Ellen Bader was an IHM for almost 70 years.



Sister Marcellina Golden received this card from her mother in 1914. She was teaching at Holy Rosary in Detroit. The bell at St. John's, Monroe, her home parish, was pictured. She spent 50 years as an IHM.



Sister Teresa McGivney was teaching at Holy Redeemer in 1915 when she received this postcard addressed to "The Eleventh Grade." It was from "Evelyn" who was then in Monroe. "Dear Girls, I wish you were out here. Its grand. You will be quite surprised to hear that I actually study here." She tells them she expects a letter from each of them. "I'm dreadfully lonesome for letters," she squeezes in at the very top of the postcard. She adds that she knows "Mary" and "Fr. Wagner" so it feels like home. "All we need is Sr. Teresa? Can we have her?"

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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.



Among Ourselves: Toronto, Ontario

These IHM Sisters were visiting the home of Sister Mary McCann in Toronto, about 1986. Mary was at Regis College working in faculty spiritual development. They are (left to right) Joyce Durosko, Jean Ann Campana, Evelyn Craig and Anita Pfeiffer. At the time, Joyce was executive officer at the Academy, Jean Ann was at St. Joseph Mercy Hospital in Pontiac, Evie was doing campus ministry in Ohio and Anita was working with Hospice in Southfield.

