

Today and Yesterday

Stories from the Archives

Spring 2023

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A collection of recent discoveries and activities in the IHM Archives



War can touch, but can't stop, Sisters' resolve

One current project of the IHM Archives staff is creating digital, searchable copies of the entire 178 years of Motherhouse Chronicles. While recently working through the Chronicles from the mid-20th-century war years, we noted how the global conflict was felt and recorded here.

While no mention of Pearl Harbor (Dec. 7, 1941) or the country's entrance into World War II is included in the Motherhouse Chronicles, the effects of war would not be excluded for long.

At first, what occurred were typical kinds of things. Sister Augustine Maguire's funeral, Dec. 9, 1941. A few weeks later, Jan. 2, 1942, 18 postulants were received, 22 Sisters professed first vows and 13 final vows.

However, the year would not continue in a normal fashion. *[Quote marks used below indicate direct excerpts from the Chronicles.]*

Mother's Feast, Feb. 2-3, 1942: The usual program was carried out for Mother Ruth Hankerd despite "the tinge of sadness which prevailed." The novices had taken note of the winds of war. Their play "was unique in its manner of presentation — being based on the present situation, the war, with the angels looking down to see what was going on on earth. They finally point their telescope on Saint Mary's Novitiate."

Mar. 31, 1942: "Because Russell Sweeny, our riding

master for the last six years, was called to service on February 19, it became necessary to discontinue our riding school." Sister Miriam traded 17 horses for a "handsome Buick." "At this time the purchase of a car is not easy."

March 31, 1942: Reverend James Keller, a Maryknoll priest, spoke to students. "His address was very unusual in that he did not talk about his society or their work, but rather about the necessity of all taking an interest in the world at large." He added, "When we see the communists working so hard to spread their doctrine of hate, we can understand why the world is in its present condition."

Spring, 1942: The Colonial Tea, which had been bringing in extra funds since 1933, was discontinued. "This year, however, because of war conditions, with people trying to save tires and generally being more interested in defense problems than social affairs, it was thought best to refrain from putting on a bridge tea."

August 17, 1942: "The Sisters refreshed after an exceptionally long vacation, returned to their respective Missions. The question of transportation caused a little concern, but friends were most generous in offering their cars notwithstanding scarcity of oil and gas."

(continued on Page 3)

Meet Agnes and Olive, St. Mary Academy Class of 1907

Getting to know these two girls started with a random discovery of a student photo album in SMA Alumni Association Box 4, File 41. The photos are informal shots around campus, not all seniors, but all looking happy, modern, fresh and confident. The future seemed bright with possibilities. The class list includes all the names – among them Cassilda, Irma, Hazel, Nellie, two Gertrudes and two Mildreds, Gladys and Blanche.

The June 1907 Messenger tells us 21 young women graduated on June 20. Fifty-nine clergy from around Michigan, Ohio, Illinois and Ontario attended. Nearly all 1,000 seats in the auditorium were filled.

Bishop J.S. Foley addressed the graduates: “In this world that you about to enter, there are many temptations, many snares, but keep ever in mind the principles of honor and of right that you have learned at your Alma Mater, and be true to them.” He told them to be open to the duties awaiting them, those of home and family.

Miss Olive Muzzy followed that path. In 1908, she married Daniel Healy at St. Aloysius Church in Detroit. In 1909, she returned to SMA for a two-year reunion. That’s when the photo with Bishop Foley and the members of the Class of 1907 was taken (see Page 3). Olive is the woman in the back row holding her tiny baby, Mary Jane.

Olive and her husband, a judge of probate in Wayne County, stayed in Michigan and raised four children, two girls and two boys. Clearly, education was important in their family as their daughter Mary became a psychologist and Anne was a social worker. Olive lost her husband in 1951, but survived him by 13 years and is buried in Mount Olivet Cemetery in Detroit.

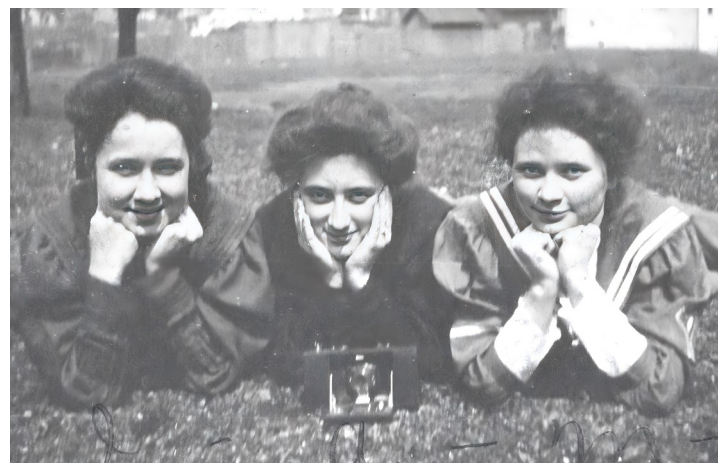
Agnes Daily took another route. She entered the IHM community in 1908 and received the religious name Marie Therese. She wanted to be a nurse, but detoured into music. She taught voice and piano at St. Mary’s Academy from 1909 through 1966. Despite having several photos of



Academy girls in the first years of the new school being open (1905) left behind a photo album of joyful youth. In this photo are (left to right) Cassilda McGann, Olive Muzzy and Irma Ryan.

her from her time as a student at SMA, this later portrait (below, left) is the only picture we have of her as a Sister. Her sober expression belies the reality of her life and ministry.

Her Remembering mentions her “sparkling personality” and her own clear, resonant singing voice. She graduated from Michigan State Normal College in Ypsilanti and studied music at Manhattanville College



Posing with a camera for a camera are Gladys (Ladie), Agnes Daily (center) and Marie.

Meet Agnes and Olive (continued from Page 2)

outside New York City. She taught hundreds, if not thousands, of young singers and musicians and led all manner of choirs — novices, postulants, senior Sisters, students and so on. She introduced Gregorian Chant to the IHM community and worked years to perfect its style for the Motherhouse services.

She died at 5 minutes to 2 on the morning of Nov. 7, 1969, at the age of 81. All of Monroe was welcome to attend her funeral and many alumni and her former music students came.

Thanks to IHM Archivists of the past, we have these stories to share.

Members of the Class of 1907 with Bishop Foley in 1909. Olive is in the back row holding her daughter.



War can't stop (continued from Page 1)

Nov. 19, 1942: The Reverend Father Edward Barron of the American Foreign Mission Society described to Sisters and students how he and two other priests were arrested in Korea and held in an internment camp in Japan for four months. “You must live under a despotic government in order to appreciate what a democracy means. It is a war which we have to fight with all the strength of our being in order to preserve the most sacred heritage that any human could possess — our Faith.”

Summer School, 1943: Almost 1,000 Sisters returned to the Motherhouse to attend classes on the home campus. “To promote the war effort, classes in physics and aeronautics were crowded.”

Mother's Feast Feb. 1, 1944: 270 cadets in uniform sang, marched and presented Mother Teresa McGivney with \$150 in war bonds.

While the war continued, the IHM community

maintained its familiar activities: Jubilees and funerals, retreats and devotion, opening and closing school years. Besides, between VE Day and VJ Day, the Sisters were a little busy planning and observing a special event of their own: the Centennial of the founding of the IHM.

One day after Japan surrendered, the *Chronicler* noted a ceremony closer to home, exciting and hopeful: nine postulants were received, 11 Sisters professed first vows, and 17 final vows.

Great news!

The IHM Archives' most recent history exhibit, “Heritage: The Fire That Lights the Way,” is now available in book form. A circulating copy is available in the Liguori Library and another just for browsing will remain on the antique desk located at the main entrance to the Archives. Please enjoy at your leisure!

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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: From Africa to Motherhouse



Annette Boyle celebrated her 75th Jubilee in 2017 with Sisters who shared the overseas mission experience. Shown are (back row) Joan Mumaw, Gen Petrak, Peg O'Shea, Annette St-Amour; (front) Judy Coyle and Rose Graham.