



## LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT



Ellen Pierce

Dear ACWR Members,

It is October, Archives Month, as I write this letter to you. It is time to remind all those for whom we work and serve to be ever mindful of the legacy they are creating. I urge you all

to do something special - an exhibit, a tour of the archives, a movie series of your best 16mm productions, or quotable quotes attached to e-mails. Many years ago, we collected "archival moments" and broadcasted them on the phone mail system. These were quotes from our founders read by employees and members of Maryknoll. It was a great success!

As many of you may know we have a new slate of officers: Vice President elect is Sr. Rose Marie Martin, OP from the Dominican Sisters of Grand Rapids, Michigan - Secretary is Kathleen Hertel-Baker from the Sisters of Charity Archive in Nazareth, Kentucky - Treasurer is Virginia Dowd from the Sisters of St. Joseph Archive in Brentwood, New York. Past President Sr. Louise Grundish, SC from the Sisters of Charity Archive in Greensburg, Pennsylvania is the editor for the newsletter and coaching me in my role as President. Thanks go to Sr. Francis Assisi Kennedy, OSF, for her service on the board, who unfortunately had to step down as Past President recently. I would like to thank our past Election Committee Sr. Jane Behlmann, CSJ, and Sr. Marylu Stueber, FSM, who have agreed to serve again this year. Assisting all of us is our able Executive Secretary Jan Harvey, who we could not do without.

The board is planning to meet at the end of October to continue our plans and firm up

some of the important details for the 7<sup>th</sup> Triennial Conference in New Orleans, Louisiana in 2012. We hope that we can make this Conference affordable and informative and fill it with networking opportunities and site visits to repositories in the area. I would like to thank those who volunteered to be on the planning committees. There is still room for more volunteers. Contact the ACWR office and let us know how you can help. Whether you have been working in archives a lifetime or a few weeks, your input is valued in the planning of this Conference. It is **your** Conference.

Peace and good wishes,  
Ellen Pierce [epierce@maryknoll.org](mailto:epierce@maryknoll.org)

## COLLABORATION BETWEEN CONGREGATION OF SISTERS AND COUNTY MUSEUM

From 1923-1990, Holy Name Parish Convent in Ebensburg, PA, was a gracious, three-story home built in 1889 by local banker A. W. Buck. Mr. Buck's widow had sold it to the Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown when the family no longer needed it, and it became a home for the Sisters of St. Joseph who taught in the parish school from the time it opened in 1910.

During those 67 years, over 150 sisters lived at Holy Name Convent. They filled the large house, and it was not unusual for them to share bedrooms or to squeeze the youngest sister's room into a small alcove off the community room. It was also not unusual for them to shovel the legendary snow of Western Pennsylvania's Laurel Mountains from their doorsteps and corner sidewalk.

By 1990, there were fewer sisters at Holy Name, and they moved to a smaller house.

The Cambria County Historical Society purchased the large house and turned it into their headquarters as well as a county museum. By early 2010, a few people involved with the museum were aware that even though the sisters had lived in the house longer than the original family, there was nothing in the house related to them. Museum volunteer Donna Mabry contacted Sr. Sally Witt, archivist for the Sisters of St. Joseph in Baden, setting in motion a project that culminated this September with the dedication of a plaque and religious habit in the house.

The museum has a number of dress forms with soldiers' uniforms and styles of various eras, so it was natural for the staff and volunteers to



Sr. Mary Pellegrino stands beside mannequin "Sr. Josephine."

ask for a religious habit. Because the community did not have a habit, Sr. Elizabeth Brown volunteered to make one. Some of the linens were available because another sister had seen the value of holding on to them. Others contributed shoes or polished crucifixes to make the habit a group project. The museum had a dress form, and on the day of the dressing, the staff christened their new resident "Sister Josephine."

Meanwhile, Barbara Hecht, public relations director for the congregation, recommended giving a plaque to the museum. She worked with a freelance designer and local manufacturer of awards to create a wood-base plaque that displayed two laser-etched



Sr. Sally Witt admires plaque.

bronze negatives. One negative was made from a photo, and the other was created from ext. The photo was taken in 1990 showing the last two sisters and the pastor standing by the winding wooden stairway railing, with a

stained glass window in the background. The text described the ministries of the sisters during those years.

The text on the plaque also established that the Sisters of St. Joseph of Baden had been founded in Ebsburg in 1869 by three sisters from Flushing (later Brentwood), New York. This was one special reason why the project delighted the sisters. The house is just a few blocks from their original motherhouse. The first members of the community who died are buried in the nearby parish cemetery. Besides that, the museum staff and volunteers kindly chose the library, the room that was once the convent chapel, as the room to place the plaque and habit. More than 60 people attended the dedication on September 27.

The congregation has always had ties to its birthplace in Cambria County. The addition of these items assures that visitors to the A. W. Buck Museum will know that religious women are part of the fabric of Cambria County.

Sally Witt, CSJ, [archives@stjoseph-baden.org](mailto:archives@stjoseph-baden.org)

## INTRODUCTORY ARCHIVES WORKSHOP FOR RELIGIOUS: A SUCCESS

The fourth Introductory Archives Workshop for Religious Communities was held at the Techny Conference and Retreat Center in Techny, Illinois from July 25-30, 2010. Thirty-five lay and religious archivists representing thirty-three communities from the United States, Canada and the United Kingdom attended the workshop. Once again, Ellen Pierce, Director of the Maryknoll Mission Archives and Malachy R. McCarthy of the Claretian Missionaries Archives USA directed the workshop. This year, David Malone, Archivist at Wheaton College (IL) gave a presentation on content management systems focusing on ARCHON and Patricia Lawton, Digital Project Librarian of the Catholic Research Resources Alliance provided an informative lecture of the CRRA and the development of an open access research

portal: <http://catholicresearch.net>. Visits to the Robert M. Meyer/SVD Archives at Techny and Catholic Archive Collaborative/Claretian-Cenacle Archives in Chicago highlighted the rigorous educational program. The next workshop will again be offered in 2012 and if you wish to reserve a place, please contact CLA headquarters at [cla@cathla.org](mailto:cla@cathla.org). In order to further the continuing education of the 139 graduates of the CLA archives programs and archivists of religious communities, we are investigating hosting two workshops during 2011: an intermediate archives workshop and digitization workshop. Further information on these programs will be posted on the web.

## MERCY ARCHIVISTS MEET IN BELMONT

Some people believe archivists only focus on the past, but when twenty-eight Mercy archivists from throughout the Institute of the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas gathered for their ninth conference, October 3 - 7, they concentrated on the present and the future as well as the past.

The conference location, Mercy Administration Center in Belmont, North Carolina, was chosen because the former Sacred Heart College Library on the campus is destined to be the new Mercy Heritage Center. The



Upper level of former Sacred Heart College Library and future Mercy Heritage Center

archives, heritage, research center will house the archival collections of 25 former Regional Communities and the Institute. The Institute Archives Committee considered two other sites for the Center.

One of the initial conference activities was a tour of the building that is in the process of being renovated. The first floor will include receiving and processing areas, records storage, and offices and will be completed in early December 2010. The second floor will



Mercy archivists visited the future exhibit room in the Mercy Heritage Center in October in Belmont, North Carolina.

include: a meeting room, reference and reading space, artifact storage and feature a display of artifacts and interactive media that will open to the public.

The archivists discussed practical guidelines for what to move, how to pack, and the moving schedule. In January, after the new archivist is in place, the Federation and Union archives will arrive first. The other collections are scheduled to move in one or two at a time over the next two years.

Carole Shinnick, SSND, a member of the history committee of the LCWR "Women & Spirit" exhibit, gave a spirited presentation of what goes into designing heritage space. "Think big," she stressed as she emphasized the need to establish a story line, to be committed to the project, and to believe the funds can be raised. "An energized leader and a diverse committee with complementary skills is a necessity," she stated. The following session focused on how the archivists wanted to tell the Mercy story in the heritage space.

"We want to make the story of the Sisters of Mercy alive to everybody and to connect people to our past and bring them up to our present and future," said Sister Mary-Andrew


Ray, a member of the Institute Archivists Committee who has served as the point person between the committee, the building contractors, and the engineering services staff in Belmont during the renovations.

Paula Diann Marlin, RSM, [pdmarlin@mercysc.org](mailto:pdmarlin@mercysc.org)

## SISTERS OF BON SECOURS USA BOOK PROJECT



Last Autumn, I sent an RFP for a history of the last thirty years of the ministry of the Sisters of Bon Secours USA to the ACWR members. We received several excellent responses. After a lengthy selection process, we awarded the contract to Martin Gordon of the University of Maryland University College history faculty and his team. The publication is expected to go to print next Autumn.

If you, or someone you know, are aware of documents, images, oral history content or objects which inform the ministries of the Sisters of Bon Secours in the United States kindly refer them to me, Mary Herbert, Archives Assistant, Sisters of Bon Secours USA Archives at: [cbsarchives@bshsi.org](mailto:cbsarchives@bshsi.org) or 410-442-3111. Our physical address is: 1525 Marriottsville Road, Marriottsville, Maryland 21104. Bless you! 

## CAN ANYONE HELP???

Many of the congregational archivists are attempting to transfer audio tapes to digital/disk and also video tapes to the same medium before they become too brittle. If anyone can recommend an inexpensive program with which to do the audio transfer, that information would be most welcome. Some have tried Audacity (to record) and Nero Express (to burn CD) programs. These programs do not seem compatible with a newer (2009) computer. Please send suggestions to ACWR office [acwr@juno.com](mailto:acwr@juno.com) and these will be posted on our website.

## SISTERS IN HEALTH CARE IN WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA HAS A NEW HOME

An article in the ACWR Spring Newsletter described the opening of the Slippery Rock University project on the History of Sisters in Health Care in Western Pennsylvania. At the end of the article it was noted that efforts were being made to find a suitable home for the exhibit and artifacts which were included.

Emily Ruby, Assistant Curator of Heinz History Center, had driven to Slippery Rock and viewed the exhibit. The curators of the History Center then contacted Dr. John Bavaro and several meetings were held among members of the History Center, Slippery Rock University representatives and a committee of sisters representing the congregations involved in the project.

In September, 2010 Slippery Rock University deeded the Exhibit to the Senator John Heinz History Center in Association with the Smithsonian Institution. The Exhibit named by Heinz, "*Angels of Mercy: Sisters in Health Care in Western Pennsylvania*" will open formally on November 4, 2010 and be available until after the first of January, 2011.

All the items will then be housed in the Heinz Archives and some will be used in



permanent exhibits. This exhibit is being displayed at the same time that the Heinz History Center is hosting "*Treasures of the Vatican*" in another exhibit area.

The sisters involved in the project and members of the Slippery Rock University community will attend a reception opening the exhibit the evening of Thursday, November 4, 2010.

Louise Grundish, SC, [lgrundish@scsh.org](mailto:lgrundish@scsh.org)

## TRI-STATE CATHOLIC ARCHIVISTS

The Tri-State (OH, KY, IN) Catholic Archivists group had a meeting/tour of the Cincinnati Museum Center on October 14. This group meets twice a year and usually has about 30 people in attendance.



Scott Gampfer, Director History Collections and Preservation led the group in their tour. He and the Center's Conservator demonstrated simple conservation processes they use in their Conservation Laboratory.



The tour also included a visit to the Historical Society Library, repository, and processing area where many volunteers were working under the direction of the Museum Center archivist.

Judith Metz, SC, [judith.metz@srcharitycinti.org](mailto:judith.metz@srcharitycinti.org)

## DEATH NOTICES RECEIVED

In August the ACWR Office received word of the untimely death of **Sister Vickie Lynn Cravens, OSU**. (September 12, 1950 – August 5, 2010) Sister Vickie was the archivist for the Ursuline Sisters of Mount Saint Joseph and an active member of ACWR serving as secretary from 2002-2006. Sister Vickie attended the 2009 Triennial Conference in Milwaukee and arranged for Sister Emma Busam, one of the founding members of

ACWR to join us at the meeting. Sister Emma was kind enough to notify us of Sister Vickie's death. The leadership of ACWR offers our prayers and condolences to Sister Sharon Sullivan, Congregational Leader, and all members of the Ursuline Sisters of Mount Saint Joseph. May Sister Vickie rest in the arms of the loving God whom she served so faithfully.

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**Sister Mary Hermenia Muldrey, RSM**, at the age of 90 years, died a peaceful death on October 11, 2010 at Catherine's Residence in St. Louis, Missouri. Memorial masses were scheduled in both St. Louis and New Orleans, LA.

Sister Mary Hermenia was a former member of ACWR, and she is well known to many of the members as an internationally known scholar, historian and researcher regarding the early Sisters of Mercy in Ireland, England, the Vatican Archives and the United States of America. Sister Hermenia was a published writer of numerous articles in magazines and newspapers as well as contributions to books. She authored the book *ABOUNDING IN MERCY*, a book on the life of Sister Mary Teresa Austin Carroll, one of the founding sisters in New Orleans. RIP

## NEWS ITEMS

Stephanie Morris, PhD., C.A., Director of Archives for the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament in Bensalem, PA has been asked to submit an article on St. Katharine Drexel to the ***Liguorian***. The article was accepted and should be available soon. October 2010 was the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of her canonization. In addition, many researchers have been preparing articles which have appeared or will appear in ***Catholic Southwest*** about St. Katharine and the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament.

In 2009 the archives were moved from one building to another. Stephanie invites all to check the Archives presence on the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament (SBS) website [www.katharinedrexel.org](http://www.katharinedrexel.org) – you can see the new home of the archives.

## NEWS ITEMS continued

Sr. Marylu Stueber, FSM, sent news of her successful search for a place for the Archives of the Franciscan Sisters of Mary. Her search, which has taken a few years, is completed.

The end of May, the archival collection of the Franciscan Sisters of Mary relocated to the SSM Health Care Corporate Archives located in Maryland Heights, Missouri. Along with the collection, Sr. Marylu Stueber, FSM, relocated to the Corporate Archives as well, to continue her role as the congregational archivist.

The archival collection of the Franciscan Sisters of Mary (FSM) includes not only the records of the current congregation but also of the two earlier traditions, the Sisters of St. Mary (SSM) and the Sisters of St. Francis of Maryville, Missouri (OSF).

Even though the FSM archival collection will be housed at the Corporate Archives, the Franciscan Sister of Mary will retain ownership and copyright of their historical material for at least the next few years.

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Many of the archivists in the state of Minnesota meet twice a year. We have a speaker and an article for discussion. Our last meeting was on October 8th at Collegeville, MN. Other archivists attending the meeting were from St. Paul, Mankato, Onamia, Little Falls and Crookston. We share what we are doing and ask any questions that come up during the year. Our meetings are always worthwhile says Sr. Evelyn Strei and Sr. Laurian Lasha.

## INFORMATION RECEIVED

(This may be of interest to members who have research articles in particular subjects.)

The *Journal of Religious & Theological Information*, now published by Routledge (a

member of the Taylor & Francis Group), is an essential resource for bibliographers, librarians, and scholars interested in the literature of religion and theology as well as digital information in a religious or theological context. Both international and pluralistic in scope, this peer-reviewed journal encourages the publication of research and scholarship in the field of library and information studies and related fields, including philosophy, ethnic studies, history and sociology.

Manuscripts should be submitted to the Editor via email, preferably in Microsoft Word format. Send manuscripts to Mark Stover at [mstover@mail.sdsu.edu](mailto:mstover@mail.sdsu.edu)

## ONE LAST VISIT (BEFORE THE AUCTION) TO THE DORMS AT VILLA MADONNA ACADEMY MAY 14, 2010

As I went up the east staircase I noticed that the statue of the Sacred Heart had been removed, also the Mary at the other stairwell. Already it's so different!

I sat for a minute in St. Hildegarde room (the little dorm's play room) and thought of Sr. Amelia and all her years of loving care, laughter and tears of the little girls. I noted there were three wardrobes in the room, two with tags, one labeled "do not sell." I wondered why. Maybe we are saving one for posterity. The L. M. Roth painting was marked with a red dot, as well as a toy chest, and an old green cabinet.

All the shelves in the closet that had contained extra bed linens and blankets were empty. Only four old ironing boards stood in silent testimony. Two were so large they might have been used for curtains or habits way back when. . .

I moved into Holy Innocents dorm. Just about everything is tagged. Beds are still made with bottom sheet and pillows in place, and

curtains hanging on the bed frames, inviting someone to come and sleep.

It's the same in St. Scholastica dorm, all furniture tagged, beds ready, but two were folded for transporting. In the main hall all furniture was marked with red dots and blue tape. Six clocks were hanging on wall, ticking away with pendulum swinging. Time is passing. It's the end of an era. So many memories!

Next, the old sewing room, used for mending, (Sr. Irmgard's domain), was full of many chairs marked with red dots and blue tape. The kitchen still holds washer, dryer, stove, refrigerator marked "Not to sell." This had been the Infirmary in the early days to care for the girls who might pass on a sickness.

St. Gertrude dorm used to hold six beds. More recently it was used as a dining area for retreatants. Now the tables and chairs are marked for the auction. St. Benedict dorm had all beds tagged and wardrobes too.

One bed is marked "Do not sell." Is that for posterity? I think we should have a room set aside for such as this. You can see where the last leak took place. Buckets, garbage cans for collecting the water still stand there along with a ladder. I guess people will see why we need to fix up the place, and the mansard roof.



St. Benedict Dorm was the largest of Villa Madonna's five dorms with 15 beds. Each bed was curtained on three sides and had an accompanying wardrobe.

St. Agnes dorm was empty except for a working telephone on the floor. I looked out the window and thought of Julitta Burkhard walking around the edge outside – she really did!

I thought of the girls I had: Jenny White, Karen Kavanaugh, Tess Gilbert, Mayra and Maryse Roldan, and all those Central American girls. I thought of Sr. Agnes and how creative she was in her activities with the junior high boarders.

The tears came when I think of how this is THE END. I think of how the Sisters took care of all this for a hundred years and NOW – it's like it is being invaded. What will the school do with this? I'm sure there are wheels turning.

On May 16, the day after the auction, I paid another visit. I was struck immediately by the barrenness.

St. Hildegard room: the painting of the children with Jesus was gone, and the chair that I had sat in on Friday. Holy Innocents: Lockers are still there, but chairs are gone. Sister Amelia's bed is still there with its curtains and one child's bed.

St. Scholastica's dorm is bare except for the wooden lockers next to the wall. There's only one bed and an old couch which had been either in the hall or in St. Hildegard room. The hall is completely silent: the clocks which had been ticking away Friday are all gone. Even the huge wooden storage cabinets along the wall are gone!

I looked for the huge ironing boards that had been in the large walk-in closet next to St. Hildegard, but they are gone too. The room is bare with only empty shelves. Sewing room is empty; all the chairs are gone. St. Gertrude dorm has only two tables left, and a handful of

chairs. St. Agnes room was already bare Friday, so no further changes.

In St. Benedict dorm two or three beds still remain, and the metal lockers are still there. Small room at the end which had been added in Sister's corner still has the double bed and other furniture, even the two pillows with pillow cases on them. All this had been sold and would be moved out several days later.

The world of VMA (Villa Madonna Academy) dorms is "gone with the wind" into memory lane.

*Mary Carol Hellmann OSB, Archivist, former student, teacher, and dorm mother*

\* \* \* \* \*

P.S. The auction was a great success, \$46,000 was taken in. The auctioneer was amazed at the high bids offered for certain items, for example trunks that had belonged to two beloved Sisters; both had been teachers here, and one Sister is now 101 years old.

Editor's note: This article by Sr. Mary Carol likely resonated with many of the archivists reading this newsletter. It would seem important to preserve items for posterity and to include a note or two which captures the joy, sorrow, memories and pathos which accompany the many changes experienced in the event of living human life. Thanks to Sr. Mary Carol for reminding each that we hold the history and the memories of those who have gone before us.

## ACWR MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

ACWR welcomes 15 new members for the July 1, 2010 – June 30, 2011 membership year. Addresses, phone numbers, email addresses, etc. for these new members are available in the membership directory on our website ([www.archivistsacwr.org](http://www.archivistsacwr.org)). New members are:

- Banach, Therese, SSC, Chicago, IL
- Bonfiglio, Robin, Toledo, OH
- Chambers, Vicki, SSND, Elm Grove, WI
- Daly, Thomas More, OSU, Alton, IL
- Eiken, Francisca, CCVI, San Antonio, TX
- Elsen, Gertrud, SMIC, Woodland Park, NJ
- Kugi, Elizabeth Ann, OP, Sinsinawa, WI
- Nalitz, Mary Clare, CSSF, Enfield, CT
- Nishke, Carol, SSND, Chatawa, MS
- Osika, Lynn, OSB, Watertown, SD
- Peston, Carol, CSJ, Latham, NY
- Powell, Anna, Nazareth, KY
- Ressler, Denise, OSB, Bismarck, ND
- Studer, Maureen, OSF, Tiffin, OH
- Theobald, Julia, OP, Springfield, IL

The ACWR National Office received word of the death of three members/former members. We offer our sympathy and prayers for:

- Rachel Mayer, OSB
- Vickie Cravens, OSU
- Mary Hermenia Muldrey, RSM

Current membership in ACWR is 251.

### ACWR NEWSLETTER

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### DEADLINE FOR SPRING NEWSLETTER MARCH 15, 2011

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