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SP Spotlight

Anniversaries

Lost-Scanned-Found

Peter F. Schmid

While most projects in the Archives arise as a natural part of our long-term goals of preserving and providing access to historic records, some arise from a single event which requires action. It was just such an event which engendered an exciting new effort to scan the historic Chronicles of the many institutions, open and closed, in Mother Joseph Province.

First, some background on Chronicles. Chronicles are

the single most vital record of Providence institutions, providing a detailed account of the events, personnel and statistics of a hospital, school, or other ministry. Historically, three copies of Chronicles were created: one stayed at the institution; one was sent to the Provincialate; and one was sent to the Generalate in Montreal. Since 1972, the Provincialate copy has been sent directly to Archives. When an institution closes, the local copy at the ministry is also transferred to Archives. Thus,

for any closed institution, Archives possesses two copies.

In 2008, we became aware of an open institution that could not locate its Chronicles. A thorough search at the ministry proved fruitless. So, the value of the Archives copy increased! The mission leader of the institution came in to use the Chronicles whenever she had the opportunity, and we talked about photocopying the resource so she could take a copy back with her. As time went on, we considered other

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Providence Archives Announcements

Loretta Z. Greene

JOAN TUCKER RECEIVES

MOTHER JOSEPH STATUE

After 23 years and 364 performances, writer/historian/actress Joan Pinkerton Tucker has concluded her presentation of *Beggar/Builder: The Story of Mother Joseph*, a 20-minute, one-woman dramatization of Mother Joseph's life and times. In recognition of her devotion to this role, the Sisters of Providence presented Joan with a



(L to R) Sister Rita Bergamini, Joan Tucker, and Loretta Greene

miniature Mother Joseph statue on April 16, 2011.

Joan's interest in Mother Joseph began in 1980. With the assistance of then archivist, Sister Rita Bergamini, SP, Joan used historical resources in Providence Archives. Over the years, Sister Rita encouraged Joan and provided the traditional Sisters of Providence habit for each performance. Joan kept performance journals and donated them to Providence Archives. A count of attendance numbers reveals that she has touched more than 25,000 people. Ever thankful to Mother Joseph, Joan wrote in 1997, "I do believe Mo Jo takes more and more control of the performances... I have little to do with it." ☞

ARCHIVES JOINS NEW EMERGENCY NETWORK

Cultural institutions face the challenge of preparing for

and responding to large and small emergencies that can affect their collections at any time. To help address this challenge, Providence Archives has joined, as a charter member, the Seattle Heritage Emergency Response Network (SHERN). Discussion of formation of the collaborative network began in July 2010, and this broadly-based organization now includes 12 diverse heritage organizations in Seattle and King County: archives, libraries, museums and records management programs. Members of SHERN must have a recovery plan and agree to help each other respond to emergencies. In addition, the members will create a cache of disaster recovery supplies that will be available to any member in need. Bi-monthly meetings include disaster recovery presentations and network planning. ☞



SP Spotlight: Sister Mary Edna Beaudreau

*Emily Hughes Dominick
Associate Archivist*

In the closing paragraph of a short autobiographical sketch, Sister Mary Edna Beaudreau wrote: “My life is very ordinary.” Further reading revealed that it was anything but.

Born in Spencer, Mass., the fifth of seven children, Angelina Lydia Beaudreau first became acquainted with religious life when, as a girl, she would accompany the nearby Little Franciscan Sisters on begging tours. By the time she was in high school, she became interested in the Sisters of Providence and wanted to follow in the footsteps of her Aunt, Sister Mary Edgar, SP. At the age of 15 she set off for the West where



Name in Religion:
Mary Edna
Given Name:
Angelina Lydia
Number in Religion:
2171
Date of Birth:
1894
Entrance to Novitiate:
1912
First Profession:
1914
Date of Death:
1987

she finished high school. After graduation she entered the novitiate in Seattle to begin religious training.

Angelina Lydia became Sister Mary Edna when she made vows in 1914. Always musically talented, Sister Mary Edna taught piano and singing in several Providence schools in Montana, Washington, and Idaho. Nearly half her life was spent at Mary Immaculate

School in DeSmet, Idaho. Sister Mary Edna was assigned to DeSmet several times for two to five year stints. In 1956, she was assigned once again and would remain there until 1973, the year before the school was closed. In all, she spent over 40 years in ministry at DeSmet.

Sister Mary Edna cherished the time she had among the Coeur d’Alene tribe in DeSmet.

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The Sisters of Providence administered Mary Immaculate School in DeSmet, Idaho, from 1878 until its closure in 1974. In its nearly 100 years of operation, more than 130 Sisters of Providence served at the school. This February marked the end of an era when the school building was destroyed by fire. Though the building hadn’t been used as a school for many years, it was a physical reminder of all those who had been educated there over many decades. Here we spotlight one of the many sisters who helped shape this ministry.

Focusing on the Farm at Mary Immaculate School

Even before the fire broke out at the old Mary Immaculate School building in DeSmet, Idaho, this past February, Providence Archives staff had already begun planning an exhibit focusing on the farm at the mission school. Our interest was sparked when Sister Dolores Ellwart brought the dairy can, pictured below, to the Archives. A farmer found it in a field just outside of DeSmet and recognizing its connection to the Sisters of Providence, brought it to DeSmet where it found its way to Sister Dolores, who has lived and worked in DeSmet for many decades.

It didn’t take too much digging to find out that there was an interesting story surrounding the can, the cows, and the farm. To find out more, Pam Hedquist, Assistant Archivist-Technical, conducted an oral history with Sister Dolores in October.

Sister Dolores was born and raised on the farm managed by the Sisters of Providence on land allotted by the Coeur d’Alene Tribe in DeSmet. Her father was hired by the sisters as a young man to work the dairy, eventually becoming foreman and ultimately working for the sisters for nearly 20 years. One of his tasks was to deliver fresh milk and cream (in cans like the one pictured) every day to Sacred Heart Hospital and St. Joseph Care Center in Spokane, Wash.

The dairy can provided a starting point to tell a unique story through our current exhibit: “15 cows, one steer and one bull”: *The Growth and Development of the Farm and Dairy at Mary Immaculate School*. The display can be seen at the Archives in West Seattle and will soon be rotating to the System Office in Renton, Wash., and Mount St. Joseph in Spokane. ☪



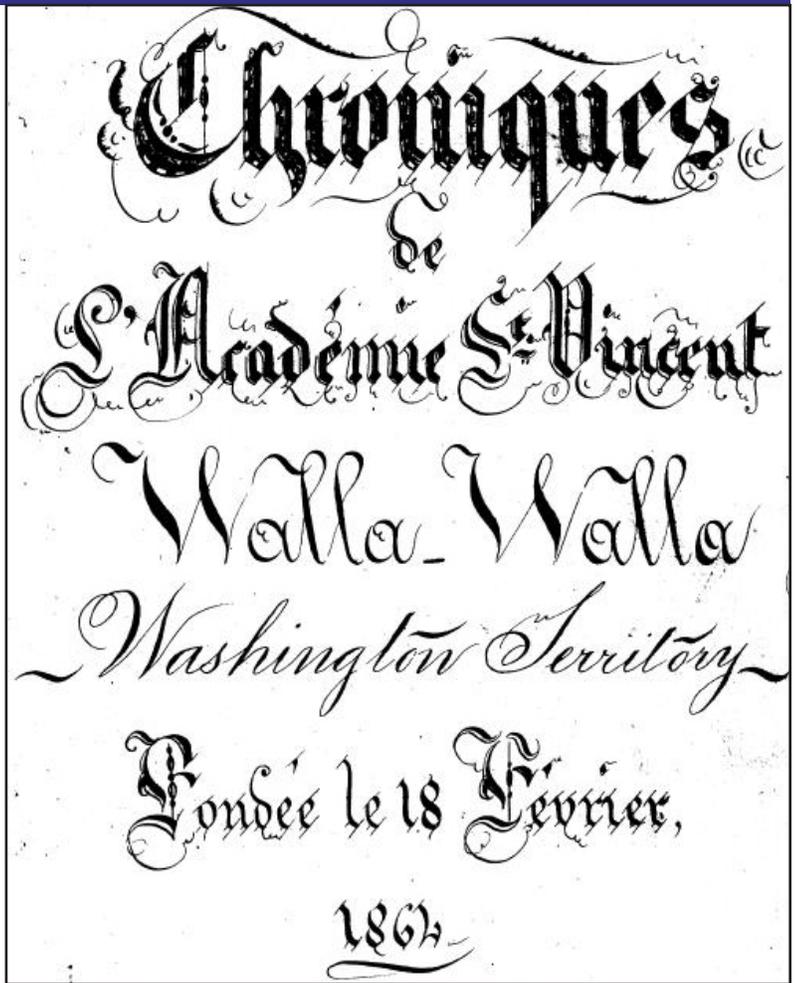
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 options for duplication, like scanning. After contacting a local vendor that specializes in scanning documents and bound volumes, we were able to obtain a good digital file of the Chronicles. The electronic version also had the advantage of being searchable (the type-script portion, not the handwritten portion), much to the delight of the mission leader there.

The success of this small project began to fulfill a long-standing goal of scanning ALL the bound Chronicles. We made an estimated page count, secured a discounted bulk bid from the vendor, and began thinking about funding. Since this project clearly benefited the entire system, we asked for and received generous financial support from the Office of Mission Leadership.

The result? Thus far the Chronicles for some 56 ministries, both open and closed, have been scanned and saved as .PDF files! The files are available through the "Historic Chronicles" link located under Departments/Communications/Chronicles on the System Support Services intranet site.

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 She especially enjoyed visiting families in their homes and joining in their customs, including their church services and processions. She described the community of the Sisters and the Native Americans as a big family.

Through the Native Americans, Sister Mary Edna became familiar with the cause for Kateri Tekakwitha, daughter of a Mohawk warrior.



Scanned image of the first page of the Chronicles from St. Vincent Academy in Walla Walla, Wash. This is one of thousands of Chronicles pages that have been scanned.

Any Providence employee with intranet access can download the files.

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 A few weeks ago, a box was delivered to Archives with assorted material from a sister's residence. Lo and behold, among the items were the missing Chronicles! We surmised that the last sister to leave the

She was declared venerable by the Catholic Church in 1943 and was beatified in 1980, the 300th anniversary of her death. Feeling a special devotion to her, Sister Mary Edna maintained a small shrine to Tekakwitha that included a first-class relic and a statue. She also taught the example of Tekakwitha to the Native American children in religion classes. She was honored

ministry had taken them with her when she retired to Seattle. But the mistake was providential; had the sister not removed the Chronicles we would not have begun the project, at least not now. The volumes have since been returned to the institution, and access to the historic Chronicles is better than ever! ☪

with the Kateri Tekakwitha Award by the Venerable Kateri Tekakwitha League in 1975.

Sister Mary Edna had a good sense of humor and a joyful disposition. She spread happiness by sharing her musical talent throughout her life, first in schools and later at Mount St. Joseph and St. Joseph Care Center in Spokane where she conducted two rhythm bands and directed chapel singing. ☪

2011: A Year of Providence Anniversaries

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE FOLLOWING FACILITIES CELEBRATING ANNIVERSARIES AS PART OF PROVIDENCE
HEALTH & SERVICES!

125 years

☞ Providence Sacred Heart Medical Center, Spokane, Wash.

100 years

☞ Providence Medford Medical Center, Medford, Ore.

25 years

☞ Emilie House, Portland, Ore.

☞ Providence Milwaukie Hospital, Milwaukie, Ore.

20 years

☞ Providence House, Oakland, Calif

☞ Providence Mother Joseph Care Center, Olympia, Wash.

10 years

☞ Providence Peter Claver House, Seattle, Wash.

5 years

☞ Providence Elizabeth House, Seattle, Wash.



Sacred Heart Hospital now known as Providence Medford Medical Center, Medford, Ore., circa 1939 (Image #120.A2.1)

Providence Archives
4800 37th Ave SW
Seattle WA 98126-2793

Archivist
Loretta Zwolak Greene, M.A., CA

Visual Resources Archivist
Peter Schmid, CA

Associate Archivist
Emily Hughes Dominick, M.A., CA

Assistant Archivist-Technical
Pam Hedquist

Telephone: 206.937.4600
Fax: 206.923.4001
E-mail: archives@providence.org
Internet:
www.providence.org/phs/archives

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