



PAST FORWARD

The Newsletter of the Sisters of Providence Archives, Seattle

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WHO USES THE ARCHIVES?

Raymond Fryberg, a member of the Snohomish Tribe, living in Marysville, Washington, is researching the foundation of Providence of Our Lady of the Seven Dolours School, which the Sisters of Providence operated in Tulalip, Washington, from 1868 to 1901. Ray spent several days in the Archives and marveled at the amount of information available about the school, his ancestors, and the work of the early mission. In turn, he provided information that allowed us to identify several photographs and clarify other material in the collection. Ray plans to share his work with the members of the tribe, especially the young people who are learning about their heritage.

Thank You!



♥ Sister Therese Carignan, SP, Archivist for Holy Angels Province, Edmonton, Alberta, spent the month of August continuing her work of trans-

lating the correspondence of Mother Joseph of the Sacred Heart from 1856 to 1900. Sister Therese completed 167 letters, bringing to 537 the total number of letters she has translated over the past two years. Many of these letters to and from sisters, priests, bishops, and benefactors have never been translated before. We are happy to make available to researchers this important new source of information on the early history of the sisters and their ministry.

♥ We are also grateful to Steve Ball, of the System Office Desktop Publishing and Design Team, for providing graphics and helping us with the digital photographs in this newsletter.

KLONDIKE CONNECTION

After completing our last issue of Past Forward, with its "Did You Know" article about the Klondike Gold Rush of 1897, we were surprised to get a letter from a professor at the University of California, Santa Cruz, searching for information on Belinda Mulrooney Carbonneau, one of the preeminent women participants in the Gold Rush. This inquiry led to several interesting discoveries. At age 25, Belinda Mulrooney went to the Klondike and established several stores and hotels catering to the miners. She later became one of the most successful (and the only woman) mine manager/operators in the territory. Her courage, determination, and intelligence "tamed" the notorious Soapy Smith, while her beloved dog, Nero, became the model for "Buck" in Jack London's The Call of the Wild.

So what's the Providence connection? Well, after making her fortune, Belinda married a French merchant and left the north in 1910. The couple alternated their time between Europe and Yakima, Washington. After her husband was killed--and most of their money lost--in World War I, Belinda moved to Seattle. She lived for a short time at Providence Mount St. Vincent (then St. Vincent's Home for the Aged) shortly after it opened in 1924, and then retired to the Mount in 1957.

A further "Klondike connection" is that Belinda's good friend and fellow prospector/entrepreneur, Michael J. Heney, who built the famous White Pass-Yukon Railway, was one of the founding benefactors of St. Vincent's Home for the Aged!



DID YOU KNOW THAT...

...among the Archives' many interesting and unique artifacts are 102 year-old sugar cake toppings?

These vibrant pink roses decorated the Golden Jubilee cake of Mother Joseph of the Sacred Heart, who celebrated her 50th anniversary of religious profession, August 27, 1895 - the first sister in this province to reach such a milestone! The fact that the decorations have been preserved for more than a century attests not only to the sisters' respect for Mother Joseph but also to the significance of the Golden Jubilee celebration in their lives. Much like a wedding anniversary, Jubilee provides an opportunity for us to honor each sister's loyalty and fidelity to her calling.

At first, each province selected the Jubilee celebration date -- usually a significant feast day in the Church. In 1904, September 23, the anniversary of Mother Gamelin's death, was adopted by the whole community as the fixed date for Jubilee festivities. Liturgical celebrations of prayer and thanksgiving highlighted the day. Gay decorations were made! Plays and songs were written! Special meals were prepared! Keeping within the spirit of simplicity, a grand time was had by all the sisters, providing a respite from the rigorous daily schedules of religious life.

The Great Depression affected Jubilee festivities much as it did the daily lives of people around the world. In a 1935 letter from the Superior General, the sisters were directed: *"It is proper to reduce the little family festival to the greatest simplicity There may be singing at Mass, and recreation but we must avoid giving this intimate festival the slightest mark of solemnity, either by invitations, or decorations, or entertainments whose preparation entails long rehearsals This imposes a measure of economy during the present period of distress which forces us to retrench our current expenses to the very limit."*

While September 23 remained the traditional date of Jubilee celebration through the 1950s, other dates were also selected because of special circumstances like the visit of the Superior General, the majority of sisters already gathered in one location, and the demands of the school year. In the 1960s, the sisters in Sacred Heart Province moved the date to late August for a few years, and then early October, before settling on the second week of August.

From the beginning, Golden (50), Diamond (60) and Ruby (70) Jubilees were observed to give respect and admiration to the senior sisters. Although the twenty-fifth anniversary was not made an occasion for formal celebration, small reminders (such as holy cards and spiritual bouquets) of a sister's Silver Jubilee were permitted. By the 1960s, the Silver Jubilarians received informal recognition and in 1973, they were included for the first time in the official liturgical ceremony and community festivities. At the 1973 Jubilarians' dinner, Sister Louise Gleason, SP, Provincial Superior, noted: *"At a time when commitments in the world are frequently short-lived, we all should honor and recognize those who have given dedicated service for as long as 25 years. We are happy to include our Silver Jubilarians in this the most important day of celebration."*

On August 9, 1997 the sisters of Sacred Heart Province celebrated with Ruby and Diamond Jubilarians, Sister Alice Mary St. Hilaire and Sister Germaine Chabot; Golden Jubilarians, Sisters Cecilia Abhold, Anna Burris, Maryann Bochsler, and Mary Fox; and Silver Jubilarian, Sister Rose Caringella.

Although Jubilee is now an August custom, September 23--the anniversary of Mother Gamelin's death--will always be a feast day for the Sisters of Providence. For the institutions in Sacred Heart Province, it has renewed meaning through the celebration of Mission Day, acknowledging each year the heritage, mission and ministry of the Sisters of Providence.

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Jubilee Greetings



Invitation, icing roses, and mementos commemorate Mother Joseph's Jubilee, described in the chronicles as "a tridium of Thanksgiving . . . never to be forgotten."



Jubilarians are also honored in their place of ministry. Here Sister Mary Conrad and Mother Vincent Ferrier celebrate their Golden Jubilee together at Mass in the chapel of Providence Hospital, Seattle, June 11, 1925.

After renewing her vows "in a strong, determined voice," Mother Joseph was feted by three days of music, public entertainment, and a splendid dinner served to the poor. "Truly, a prelude to the Joys of Paradise."



1973 was the first year the Silver Jubilarians (back row, right) participated in the Jubilee Mass. Now, in 1997, they are celebrating their Golden Jubilee!