

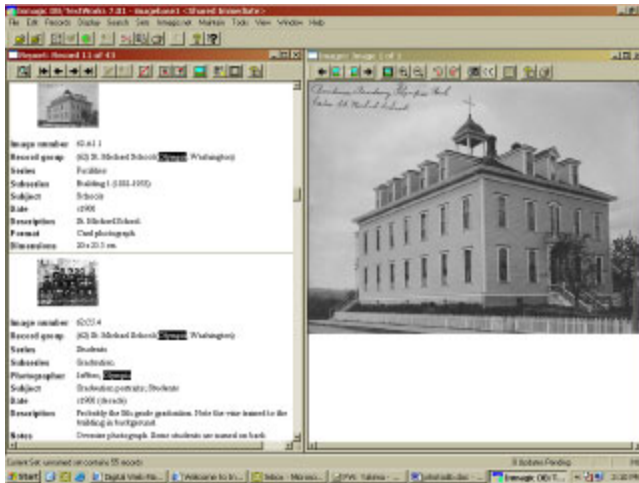
PAST FORWARD

Sisters of Providence, Mother Joseph Province ♦ Providence Health System ♦ Providence Services

THE NEWSLETTER OF PROVIDENCE ARCHIVES

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Photograph Catalog Database Launched



Computer screen shot of the database showing photo catalog records as well as small (“thumbnail”) and large image views. On the right is an image of St. Michael School, Olympia, Washington, circa 1900.

With over 10,000 photographs and a burgeoning collection of images in electronic format, Providence Archives has launched a catalog database system to tackle the need for describing and making photographs more accessible. The high demand among Providence institutions and the general public for photographs and images is one of the most persuasive reasons for cataloging the holdings and entering them into a computerized system. According to visual resources archivist Peter Schmid, who designed and built the database, “It’s a great tool not only for managing the cataloging metadata [intrinsic information about photos and images] but also for organizing digital files themselves.” The database was built using Inmagic DB/Textworks, an information management software product utilized by many archives and libraries.

Catalog records are added to the database as collections are processed and as photos are requested by users. Photographic prints are scanned using a specialized scanner, with the resulting images processed for computer viewing, cataloged, and stored in a network server. The images are in the form of compressed JPEG files, a computer file format used as an Internet standard. Higher

quality uncompressed files (TIFF format), normally used for photo editing purposes such as cropping or retouching, are stored on computer disk. Searching for specific photos is easy involving typing terms or combinations of terms in text fields.

As of August 2003, the database contains over 2,000 records with more being added every week. The database complements existing archival finding aids, tools used by the staff and researchers when working with historical records, photographs, and artifacts. Currently, the database is accessible only in the Archives. However, future plans include making the database available to Providence employees and other users via Web browsers. For more information about the database or the photograph collection, contact Peter at 206-923-4012 or e-mail at peter.schmid@providence.org.



CONSTRUCTION ALERT!

A reminder to our patrons that the Archives will close and services will be limited during the upcoming renovation and expansion. Construction will last from November through the beginning of 2004. If you foresee the need for historical information, photographs or other services during the closure, please notify us by **October 1, 2003**, so we can assist you as best we can. Thank you for your consideration. We'll keep you posted.

Did you know...that Providence Yakima Medical Center had a record birth of six sets of twins during the first two months of 1935?

Newspapers from all over the country and the world carried the story and photograph of the “sextet of twins” born within the first two months of 1935 at the hospital, then known as St. Elizabeth. In fact the Yakima-area had a bumper crop of twins for the entire year—a ratio of 11 pairs out of 119 babies (the average rate is one set to 250 single births). Years later many local folks, such as old friends and kin of the nurses photographed with the sextet, would fondly recall the event and recognize faces from the news photo.

The long history of Providence in the Yakima Valley is evident in the thousands of infants who were born at the hospital since its founding in 1891. By 1920 over half of the babies born in the city of Yakima were delivered at the hospital. Time however brought with it a reversal of circumstances. By the end of 1973, because of declining birth rates and medical ethics issues relating to contraception, plans were made to close the obstetric wards.

A couple of decades later, due to changes in health care policies and the desire for a full-service facility, the hospital was spurred to open obstetrics and maternity services once again. The Family Maternity Center opened in 1992 and was the first to bring state-of-the-art single-room maternity care to central Washington. Expectant mothers could now go through labor, delivery, recovery and post-partum in spacious, comfortable suites.



The Yakima sextet at St. Elizabeth Hospital (now Providence Yakima) consisted of two pairs of girls and four pairs of boys.

These days Providence Yakima Medical Center is experiencing its own rebirth. Since August 15, 2003, the facility, along with Providence Toppenish Hospital, Providence Home Health and Hospice, and connected clinics, has come under the wing of Health Management Associates, based in Naples, Florida. Nevertheless, for growing and grown-up children of Yakima everywhere, the hospital would retain its place in their lives as the place where they first wailed, “I’ve arrived!”

Touring History



Among the guests of Providence Archives this summer were sisters who have worked abroad and a novice from another province. At left, (l-r) Loretta Greene, Peter Schmid, Sister Maria Teresa Lopez, Sister Clarella Fink, Sister Fidela Adriano, and Norman Dizon. The three sisters have returned permanently to the U.S. after extended ministries in The Philippines and were being re-oriented to Mother Joseph Province. At right is Sister Maggie St. John, novice from Holy Angels Province, who was visiting from Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. (Photos courtesy of Sister Mary Wilson)



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