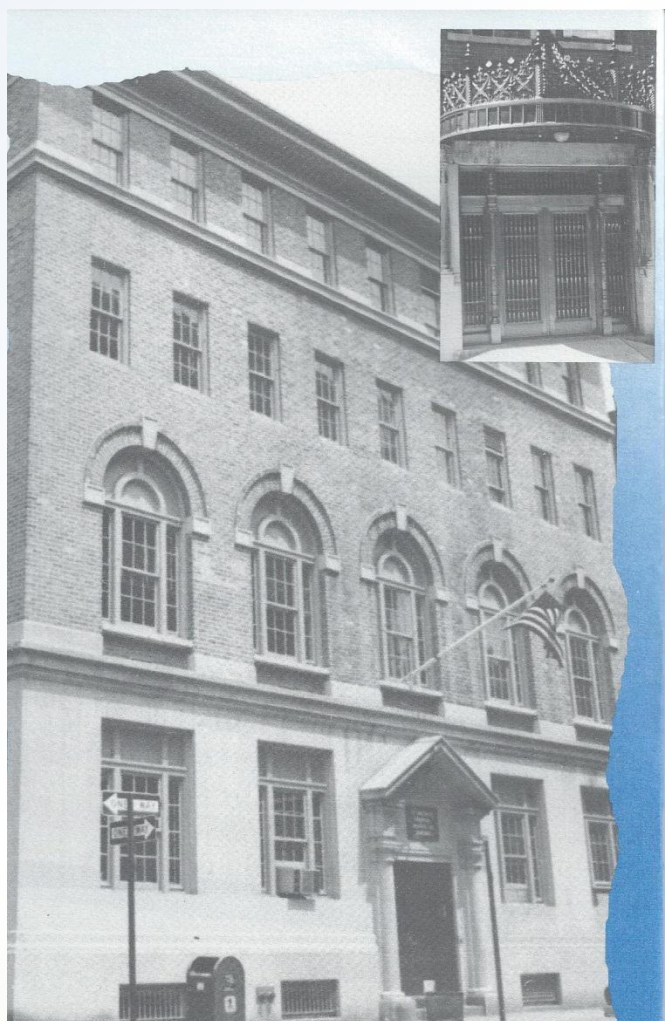




St. Vincent's Hospital in New York City  
Alumnae Association of the School of Nursing

# *Our History*



27 Christopher Street

158 West 12<sup>th</sup> Street (inset)



Stain Glass Window of  
St. Vincent de Paul

Florence Nightingale and many of the earliest symbols of nursing excellence are rooted in the tradition of the Daughters of Charity.

Established by St. Vincent de Paul in 1630 to serve the sick poor, the Daughters opened hospitals in Paris, Alexandria, Egypt, and London. In 1809, under the direction of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, their proud tradition was appropriated in America by the new religious congregation, the Sisters of Charity. Four of the Sisters opened the doors of St. Vincent's Hospital in 1849, in response to New York City's unique needs.

## Sisters of Charity

The Sisters had great faith in their mission, and committed themselves to the provision of kind and compassionate care to the poor. They were also committed to the highest standards of medical and nursing excellence.

In October of 1892, St. Vincent's Hospital School of Nursing was launched as an extension of this commitment.

No one was more committed than **Katharine A. Sanborn**, and much of the school's early success can be attributed to her leadership.



# Katharine A. Sanborn

A graduate of the New York Hospital Training School, Sanborn brought to the School the humanistic ideals of unwavering dedication, tireless devotion and selfless service that have been the hallmarks of St. Vincent's. She integrated these qualities into the educational program that she was instrumental in establishing. For over 40 years (1892-1934), Sanborn served as the School's Director, teacher and administrator. Her visionary leadership was the beacon that guided these early years.



Sanborn (center) with the first class of  
The St. Vincent Training  
School for Nurses, 1895

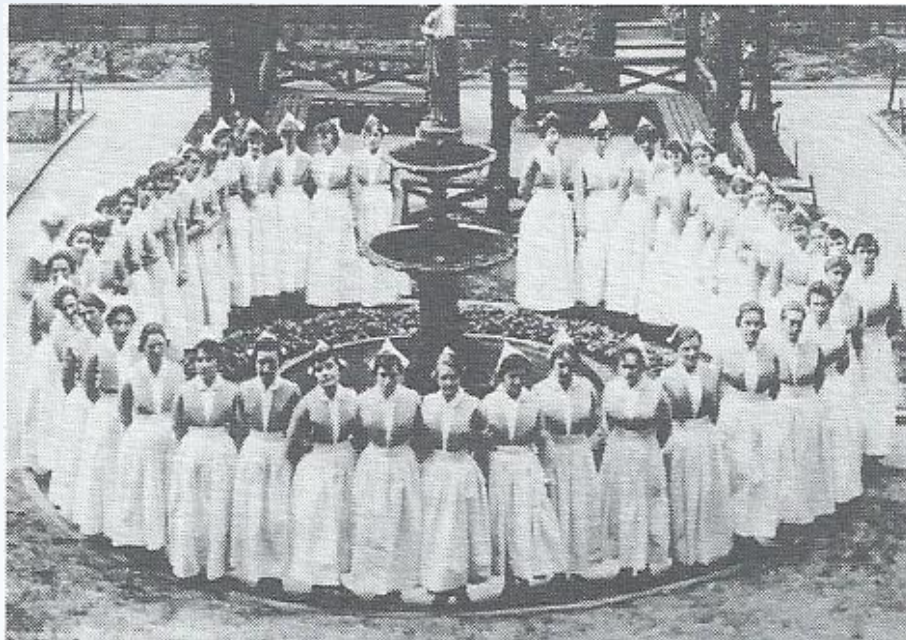
Sanborn's administration was marked by expansion and innovation. Early graduates became faculty members at the school and elsewhere, such as **Miss Helen McElligott**, who was appointed Assistant Principal in 1912 and held the position for 22 years. Having studied and worked closely with Sanborn, she was her mentor's near-perfect counterpart. Together they exemplified the Hospital School's commitment to selfless service. Enrollment and faculty grew, and affiliations with nearby hospitals exposed students to specialized areas of nursing. In 1905, St. Vincent's was among the first schools to receive its Certificate of Registration from the State of New York.

## Graduates of Early Years

The St. Vincent's graduates of early years contributed tremendously to their fledgling profession and to the development of the hospital as a professional, caring institution. They also made important strides in meeting people's needs wherever they went. An example of this was Katherine Sheehan La Rotonda, Class of 1916, who never tired of recounting her experiences as a young graduate working with Lillian Wald at the Henry Street Settlement. By 1918, an undergraduate course as a Visiting Nurse was introduced which became an early forerunner of community



medicine. In 1925, the School became affiliated with the New York Foundling Hospital, to provide training in Pediatrics and Child Care. Sanborn helped inaugurate the *Standard Curriculum for Schools of Nursing* that brought St. Vincent's new courses, an increase in hours of practical instruction and an emphasis on the study of chemistry, biology and other sciences.



## Sanborn Retires

Blessed with the simplicity of the truly great, Sanborn always maintained the ideals of nursing history. After 42 years of efficient, devoted service, Miss Sanborn left within the nursing field an enviable record and ideals which the many graduates of St. Vincent's will always cherish. Her students will always remember with deep affection and



Katharine A. Sanborn as  
she appeared in the  
*American Journal of Nursing*

gratitude their training days under their beloved foundress.

Blessed with the simplicity of the truly great, Sanborn always maintained the ideals of nursing history. Sr. Mary Ursula, RN, BS was appointed to succeed Miss Sanborn. Sr. Edward Mary, RN, BS, who was the supervisor of the Out-Patient Department for the previous 3 years, was appointed educational director. Both were graduates of St. Vincent's School of Nursing and students of Miss Sanborn.

Reference:

American Journal of Nursing, November 1934, Volume 34, Issue 11, pp-1065-1066. On-line : [http://journals.lww.com/ajnonline/Citation/1934/11000/Katharine\_A\_\_Sanborn\_Retires.11.aspx]

## St. Vincent's School of Nursing for Men



Mayor John P. O'Brien distributed the pins at the first men's graduation

Sanborn's idealist spirit would guide the philosophy and leadership of successive directors. **Sr. Mary Ursula** was Miss Sanborn's immediate and much beloved successor, serving from 1934-1936. It was about this time that a separate St. Vincent's School of Nursing for Men was established. This respected program graduated 5 classes and 58 nurses, whose contributions around the country and throughout the years have been significant.

## Curriculum Enrichment

It was under **Sr. Edward Mary** (193-1944) that enrollment doubled and the curriculum was enriched by student eligibility to take academic courses at the College of Mount St. Vincent. Most importantly, the School of Nursing was accredited by the National League of Nursing in 1943, an accreditation which remained until the school closed.

## World War II

The profession of nursing has always been associated with the struggles of humanity. This was never more apparent than when America entered WWII in 1941. Faced with its greatest challenge, St. Vincent's nurses responded with compassion, courage and strength. Efforts were redoubled to minister to the needs of the sick and injured, and to rehabilitate them both physically and mentally. Nursing students demonstrated their commitment by enrolling in the United States Cadet Corps, rallying for the sale of War Bonds and participating in air raid drills. Many of our nurses and alumni served overseas in U.S. Army Hospitals. **Sr. Mary Patrick Dowd** served as the School's Director following Sr. Edward Mary. She was replaced by **Sr. Marie Le Gras Byrne** (1945-1950), who guided the school through the post war era.



Nursing Students at a 1942  
War Bond Rally in Grand  
Central Station



## Post War Era



Sr. Catherine (left) - Capping 1951

In the years that followed that war, many new curricular changes were developed and implemented, which began the transformation of the hospital-based school of nursing from an apprenticeship type of educational institution to a truly student-centered program. Under the direction of **Sr. Marian Catherine Muldoon** (1950-1967), the Department of Nursing Services and the School of Nursing cooperated closely to better utilize nursing skills and impact on more effective patient care.

In 1952, the school celebrated its 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary, marking a period characterized by constant growth, innovation and achievement.



Students Donned Historic Uniforms at the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Jubilee

In the ensuing years, numerous changes occurred to make St. Vincent's School of Nursing one of the nation's premier nursing schools. A Home Visiting program that allowed students to work with patients in their homes was made part of the curriculum in 1963. An affiliation with Hunter College was initiated in 1968 that was subsequently replaced by an affiliation with the College of Mount St. Vincent.



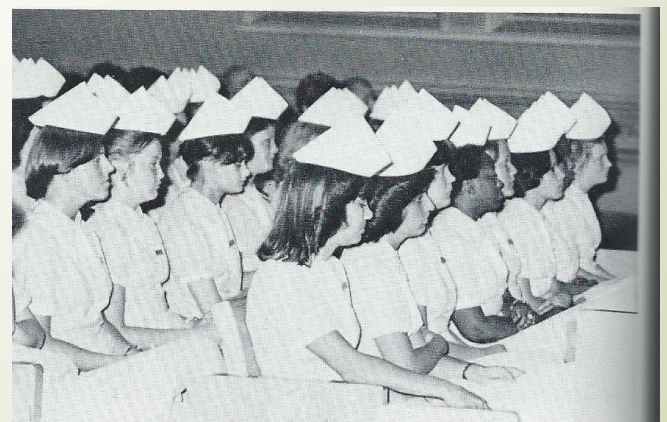
In the 1970's this led to a formalized agreement whereby St. Vincent's graduates are offered the opportunity to complete BSN requirements at the College.

Emerging from the "turbulent 60s", the School was well on its way to following a course of both change and stability.

## Modern Times

Under the leadership of **Sr. Mary Robert Nagle** (1967-1991), and because of the interest of alumnae and friends, fundraising and securing grants for student support and program enrichment expanded. Men were again recruited to the school.

In 1977, the school moved to its new home at 27 Christopher Street, with bigger classrooms, a new science laboratory, a comprehensive library, a vastly expanded television studio and a media production center; all signs that the School was not only a valued part of the community, but a partner in its spirit of progress. The 1980's brought on explosive changes and endless challenges that jeopardized the School's steady course development. Cutbacks in funding, layoffs, a drop in the pool of High School graduates and





expanded career options for women all threatened enrollment in the Nursing School. All of this, in addition to New York's changing demographics, the volatile social and economic climate, the AIDS crisis, nursing shortages and the numerous challenges of the computer age.



The School of Nursing met every challenge and triumphed over every obstacle. Curriculum changes were instituted to meet the needs of a diversified student population, evolving from a standard three year curriculum to a "Multiple Track Program" and then to a two year curriculum. The school also introduced a formalized program called "Teaching

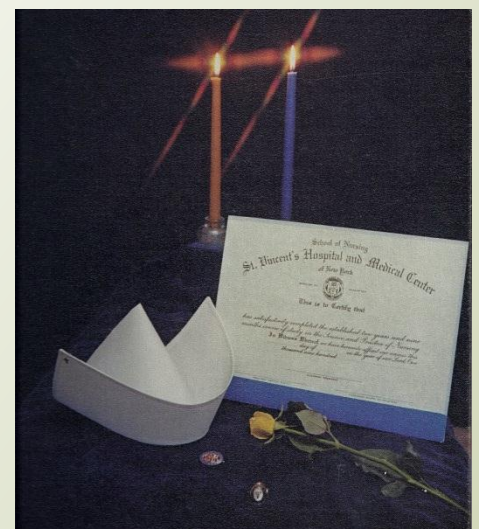
and Learning Strategies for Students of Other Languages and Cultures", that supported a diverse student population. This program was emulated in other parts of the country.

These achievements came about as a result of the expertise and dedication of the school's faculty. Their professionalism and commitment to competence enabled them to publish articles and books, to produce award winning educational videos, and to engage in numerous community services without failing their responsibilities to students and to the school. **Sr. Miriam Kevin Phillips** led that faculty in these accomplishments.

Sr. Miriam Kevin Phillips, served as Associate Director from 1967 until Sr. Mary Robert's resignation in 1991. At which point Sr. Kevin served as director until the school closed in 1999.

On Friday, May 28, 1999, the School celebrated its 107<sup>th</sup> anniversary at the Windows on the World. Over 600 graduates and 200 guests attended this bittersweet occasion.

As alumnae celebrate our history, we know we will influence nursing into the future. Our proud tradition of dedication and achievement is rooted in the ideals first fostered by Katharine A. Sanborn and flourishes by those who will be taught, helped, and healed by our alumnae.



# *Directors, St. Vincent Hospital*

## *School of Nursing*



Katharine A. Sanborn as  
she appeared in the  
American Journal of Nursing

*Katharine A. Sanborn*  
(1892-1934)

No Photo Available

*Sister Mary Ursula Cullen*  
(1934-1936)

No Photo Available

*Sister Edward Mary*  
(1936-1944)

No Photo Available

*Sister Mary Patrick Dowd*  
(1944-1945)



*Sister Marie Le Gras Byrne  
(1945-1950)*



*Sister Marian Catherine Muldoon  
(1950-1967)*



*Sister Mary Robert Nagle  
(1967-1991)*



*Sister Miriam Kevin Phillips  
(1991-1999)*

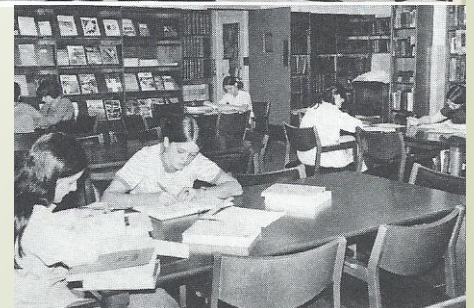
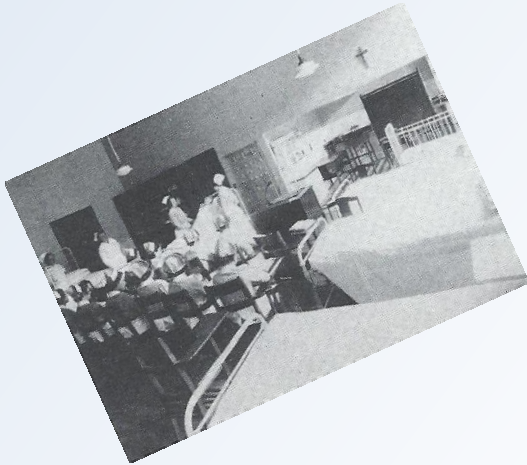


*The Halls were Alive with  
the Sound of Music*

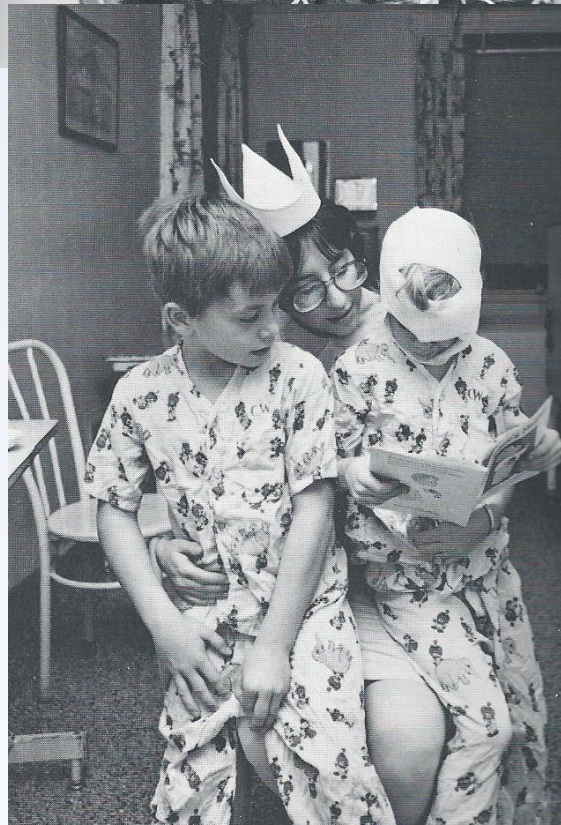




# *Patience, Fortitude, Perseverance*









# *Faith, Hope and Charity*

