

ST. VINCENT'S HOSPITAL SCHOOL OF NURSING

Alumnae Association Newsletter

Volume 57 Number 1 - WINTER 2015



85th Annual Alumnae Luncheon

St. Vincent's Hospital School of Nursing Alumnae Reunion and Luncheon was held November 8, 2014, with approximately 200 alum in attendance. The Rev. Joseph Tizio, CSR, pastor of the Basilica of Our Lady of Perpetual Help in Brooklyn NY, said mass and gave a wonderful homily. The vocalist was Erin Sullivan, daughter of Peggy Madden Sullivan '70. Mary Jane Koch, a member of the Class of 1964, addressed her classmates and the SVH alumnae that were in attendance. Excerpts of her remarks follow.

Hello Fellow Alums!

Yesterday, Friday November 7th, we celebrated our Class Reunion and the 50th anniversary of our graduation from St. Vincent's Hospital School of Nursing. We started the day with a mass in Our Lady's Chapel at St. Patrick's Cathedral. The mass began with a blessing from Cardinal Timothy Patrick Dolan who spoke briefly about St. Vincent's Hospital and the nurse's wonderful reputation. Monsignor Edward Weber, a relative of Father Weber who was an assistant to Father Fitzgerald during our years at the school, said the mass and was also very complimentary of the legacy of St. Vincent's nurses.

The Class of 1964 Reunion Team did a fabulous job making this great day happen. Mary Ann Byrnes, who is also an active member of the Alumnae Association, helped us stay linked to the Association. Joan Walsh Cassidy, who just completed the New York Marathon, Peggy Lodes Gale, Barbara Glackin, Bea McCarthy McHugh, Peggy Burke Mullery, Maureen Wilson O'Brien, and me, comprised the "awesome" team. This is a team that can plan any celebration successfully and may be willing to "hire out" for your celebration!

Today, we are a few days from Veterans Day so I would like to ask Veterans of all services and all wars and conflicts to please stand and let us say thank you!

My plan is to briefly talk to you about three things: first, the Class of 1964, second, St. Vincent's Hospital School of Nursing, and third, Homework!

First, the Class of 1964 had a great time yesterday and a wonderful celebration.

Some statistics:

- We graduated 172 nurses on June 16, 1964. We have 23 classmates who are deceased, which represents 13% of the class.
- We have the names and addresses / emails of all classmates still living (144), except for 5 who we cannot find.
- We have 96 classmates, or 67% of those 144 still living, in attendance today. We also have 4 "associates" or husbands attending and they have been a great addition.
- What about children and grandchildren? Yes, we had lots of them.
- Who traveled the most miles to attend? Kathleen Madigan came from Norwich, England, plus others from California, Florida, and Texas.
- Number of doses of Botox & facelifts: NO details! Number who have chemically altered their hair... Yes!!



Yesterday, I heard many conversations about the loss of St. Vincent's Hospital and Medical Center and our School of Nursing. Yes, it is a shame that after 99 years, we lose the brick and mortar that housed student nurses, interns and many others for their education, practice and the caring of so many suffering patients in need of our help. We have shared stories of those long-term care and frequent flyer patients, the unusual learning experiences, and the many floors of the hospital that we felt were ours: St. Therese East and West, St. Lawrence East and West, the Spellman and Reiss buildings, and the Emergency Room.

So what is my message? The key to all of this is that WE, you and I, are the legacy of St. Vincent's Hospital. It is not about the buildings. We are the reputation and stories of St. Vincent's. We are what really matters when the buildings are gone or changed for another use. We are what people remember from the many times St. Vincent's was asked to serve the community, as in a time of crisis, like 9/11! That is and will always be our Legacy. If you want to test this premise, join St. Vincent's marchers on St. Patrick's Day when many in the crowd yell out things like "I love you St. Vincent's nurses," "You are the best," and "My children were born there," plus lots of applause.

You will experience a wonderful feeling of pride when you hear those things as you march in the parade. Yes, you will find yourself lamenting the missing buildings and the feeling of losing our "home base," as you share the pride of the school with your classmates. But our legacy is not the buildings.

I heard Jimmy Fallon interview the "Captain" of the NY Yankees, Derek Jeter, the day after he retired. He said that the most important thing to him was his legacy, what he has done both on and off the field. His on-the-field play was extraordinary, however he also wanted his charities and foundations to reflect who he was and what was important to him as a person. He wanted to use his good fortune and celebrity to help others. He told Jimmy Fallon that his legacy "is everything to me."

All of us need to focus on the wonderful things we remember about St. Vincent's, what we learned about life, nursing care, humility, patience, perseverance, and fortitude. We need to think about who we met, who we worked with, who had an impact on us, and then how we applied all of those learning experiences to our lives. What kind of impact have you had on your family, career, and community? Collectively, the answers to those questions have created your legacy, those things that people consider to be your contribution to life and the people around you.

Homework!!! Consider your legacy and connect it to your education and experience at St. Vincent's Hospital School of Nursing. Then realize that St. Vincent's legacy is a combination of all Alums and our contributions, not the buildings. We are and will be St. Vincent's, you and me!! It is the power of legacy. Celebrate your role in that legacy and teach it to your children and grandchildren so they know who St. Vincent's Hospital School of Nursing was and is today. It is all of us.

See you next year and we can talk about homework! Thank You.



Patience, Fortitude, Perseverance



GENERAL ALUMNAE MEETING

The next SVH General Alumnae meeting will be held on January 31, 2015 at 12 Noon at 20 Washington Square North, New York, New York. Hope to see you all there.

ST. PATRICK'S DAY PARADE

Once again the alumnae of St. Vincent's Hospital School of Nursing are invited to march in the 2015 St. Patrick's Day Parade, which will be held on Tuesday, March 17th. In recent years, attendance has been waning so please make every effort to attend this exciting event! Last year Lenox Hill Hospital, situated behind our contingent, had an impressive showing and they threaten to be moved up to our marching slot. Show your commitment to our school and alums by planning to attend the parade in 2015.

Details of when and where to meet will be posted on the SVH Alumnae website at <http://stvincentsschoolofnursingalums.org/>.



ALUMNAE ASSOCIATION DUES

A sincere thanks to all who have paid their Alumnae Association dues and especially to those who have donated so generously to our organization.

CLASS NOTES:

Please keep in touch with us by sending us your class year and email address to SVHalum@gmail.com. Alum frequently request information about their classmates, particularly to reconnect for reunions.

WEBSITE:

Sweatshirts, hats, and other memorabilia are still available at the SVH Shop. Please visit the site for review of Class Notes, Photo Gallery, SVH Shop, and more.

stvincentsschoolofnursingalums.org

TRANSCRIPTS:

Save for future reference!

For those looking for **transcripts or diplomas**, you may write to:

Sr. Constance Brennan, SC

C/O Archives: Boyle Hall

College of Mount Saint Vincent's

6301 Riverdale Avenue

Bronx, New York 10471

NEWSLETTER STAFF

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Bernadette Fleming Hemmer, '68

Maureen Garrett McElhinney, '68

SVHalum@gmail.com

Change of Address, and Annual Dues of \$35.00

Forward to Mrs. Patricia Holland Costello

Attn: ST. Vincent's Alumnae

C/O St Francis de Sales

School for the Deaf

260 Eastern Parkway

Brooklyn, New York, 11225

Faith, Hope and Charity



CLASS NOTES

Class of '58

Geri LaValle Scivetti writes the following: Dear Class of '58, I'm now living in Fate Texas, outside of Dallas. I haven't quite mastered the on/off switch on my computer, and I have no email address yet, but I do have a phone (469-338-0041). All is well here. Let me hear from you!

Class of '59

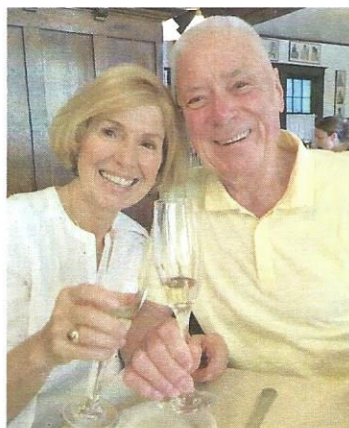
Anne Frain Ray, Ph.D. writes, "With sadness, I am notifying you of the death of **Mary Anne McDermott '59'** on December 4, 2014. Mary Anne was actually the first classmate I met as we both wandered along 12th Street looking for the entrance to the school where we were to take the admission test. At break time she took me upstairs in the residence to visit some students she knew. The stories told and enthusiasm shown by those students was quite influential in strengthening my desire to attend St. Vincent's School of Nursing. I am very thankful for that chance meeting with Mary Anne.

After graduation our paths did not cross for several years until another chance meeting at an educational forum. At that time, we were both raising families, pursuing our doctoral degrees, and teaching nursing at different colleges. Mary Anne's distinguished career included the position of Professor of Nursing at William Patterson College, Hunter College CUNY, and Seton Hall University. Until recently she was Acting Director of the Nursing Ph.D. program at Seton Hall University. Her expertise was further acknowledged when appointed to a group that traveled to China and spent several months assisting with development of nursing programs.

Mary Anne's published obituary stated: "Dr. McDermott is considered to be a 'Nurse's Nurse' who considered her profession an honor and her life's mission to teach the future nurses the 'right' way to take care of the sick." It also emphasized the fact that she began her career as a proud graduate of St. Vincent's Hospital School of Nursing. She will be missed by many, especially the nursing community.

Class of '62'

Carol Abbruzzo '62) Kuffner and her husband Charles celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on August 1, 2014. This picture was taken at the Belton Lodge at Glacier National Park where they spent a week touring the park and Canada. They moved from Staten Island, NY in Sept. 1999 and now live in Portland Oregon.



Michelle Leclerc O'Neill '62' sent an email inviting all alums to participate in Smart Beginnings/Easy Preventions Training Program, which is available free to all those who are interested. The link is listed below.

www.smartbeginnings.vpweb.com

Class of '68

Bernadette Fleming Hemmer and **Maureen Garrett McElhinney** report that this past summer, Cornelia Fleming '57, recommended the book, "Five Days at Memorial," to us. As infrequent readers of non-fiction, we were hesitant to start the book. Almost immediately we were entrenched in the lives of the patients and health care workers at Memorial Hospital in New Orleans during and after Hurricane Katrina. The author, Sherri Fink, gives a detailed and elaborate description of the events at Memorial following Hurricane Katrina, describing them in such a way that the book actually reads more like a novel than non-fiction. As nurses we were struck by the amount and severity of issues that evolved. Their lack of disaster preparedness, lack of effective communications, poor leadership, and questionable ethical decision-making led us to form a small group of mostly nurses to discuss the book.

We highly recommend this book to all nurses and those in health care. Kudos to Sherri Fink!

Class of '81

Nancy Guarino-Rizzuto '81 is currently working as the Associate Director of Nursing in the CT-ICU/Cath and EP Labs at New York Methodist Hospital in Brooklyn, NY. Methodist is part of the New York-Presbyterian/Weill Cornell Medical Center cardiac program. Nancy started at Methodist in April of 2010, after St. Vincent's closed. She has been fortunate to participate in many new programs there, including transcatheter aortic valve replacement (TAVR). Nurse.com did an article that Nancy would like to share in the alumni newsletter.

The link to the article is found at:

<http://news.nurse.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=2014303170012#.VAibHanWqSo>

If you have any questions, feel free to contact Nancy.

Nancy Rizzuto, CCRN, ADN

Associate Director of Nursing

CT-ICU/ Cardiac Cath/EP Labs

(718) 780-7309

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RETIRED SISTERS OF CHARITY ON THE MOVE...

As reported in Catholic News, the retired Sisters of Charity will soon move into assisted living facilities at the Jewish Home Lifecare in the Bronx. An extensive analysis conducted by the religious community determined that it was no longer financially feasible for them to continue their ministry on their own. Most of the sisters have been living at Mount St. Vincent Convent in the Bronx and Mary the Queen Convent in Yonkers.

The Jewish Home has been very accommodating to the Sisters, dedicating 75 beds to the community. They are creating a chapel for daily mass and Sister Grace Henke has found a new calling by volunteering to be the "Welcome Wagon of One!" Good luck to all of them in getting settled in their new quarters.

SISTER MIRIAM KEVIN PHILLIPS MISSION AWARD

The Elizabeth Seton Pediatric Center has established the Sister Miriam Kevin Phillips Mission Award for Excellence in Nursing, to be conferred annually to the RN or LPN who embodies the mission of the Pediatric Center in the care of patients. Sister Kevin has been a member of the Center's Board of Directors since 2001 and currently serves as the Canonical Secretary for the Sisters of Charity. Many of us remember Sister Kevin as the last Director of the School of Nursing and the Vice President for Mission when St. Vincent's closed.

Congratulations, Sister Kevin, on this much deserved honor!

GENERAL ALUMNAE MEETING

Saturday, September 27, 2014: "Angels in Swaziland"

On September 27, 2014 we were honored to have Kathy Maldini Hartmann 68' and Al Hartmann MD as our guest speakers. Kathy and Al spend six months a year working with the people of Swaziland. They presented a detailed description of their years in Swaziland and the progress they have made in providing health care to people living in remote areas, "the bush." there. The pictures of their work with the people of Swaziland tell a beautiful story of devotion to their ministry.

After hearing Kathy and Al speak so passionately about the people of Swaziland and their work with the Home Based Care Team that they established, we must name them the "Angels of Swaziland" for their dedication, hard work, and selflessness. As Mary Jane Koch'64 said at the Alumnae luncheon in November, Kathy and Al are the true legacy of St. Vincent's!

Thank you, Kathy and Al, for sharing your experiences with us and may God bless you in all you do.

Those interested in contributing to the wonderful work that Kathy and Al do can send contributions to:

Kathleen and Al Hartmann
500 East 83rd Street Apt 11E
New York, New York 10028

Please write Good Shepherd Fund on the memo line.



ST. VINCENT'S HOSPITAL IN MY LIFE

By Miriam Kevin Philips, SC

In 1965 the Beatles recorded a song entitled "In My Life." The first line of the song begins "There are places I'll remember all my life."

What was it about St. Vincent's that made it so memorable in my life?

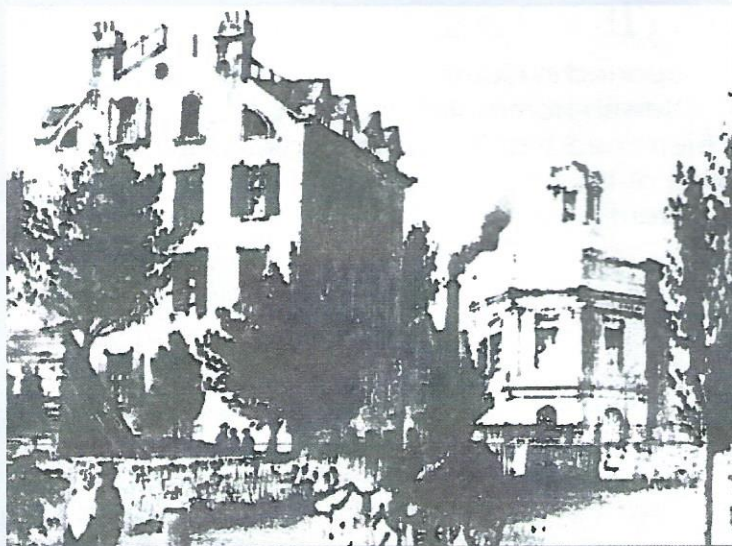
It was not the architecture! St. Vincent's was a hodgepodge cluster of buildings at the intersection of Seventh Avenue, Greenwich Avenue, and Eleventh Street. Bunched on the north was another cluster of buildings. It had "grown like Topsy" from a small community hospital into a major medical center.

Growing up in the West Village, I became fascinated by the imposing Seton Building, known affectionately as "The Wards." It was in this building that the poor, elderly, immigrants, uninsured, and homeless received care. It was an imposing structure visible from the many intersecting, winding streets for which Greenwich Village is famous.

In the area around the hospital its people spilled out into the surrounding neighborhood: famous doctors imposing in their manner, interns and residents hurrying to grab a quick lunch, nurses pristine in their white uniforms and unique nurse's cap, patients arriving and leaving. All the levels of workers necessary to keep the enterprise humming added to the mystique of "the Hospital."

It was the student nurses that held my fascination. Happy, energetic young people wore their distinctive uniform proudly. It was a uniform like no other: snappy, yes; comfortable, no. The blue material that made up the dress was imported from France. How fitting, since the Daughters of Charity were as visible to the poor of Paris as were our own Sisters of Charity to the poor of New York City.

The Sisters for the most part were the least visible outside the hospital walls. It was the age when women religious exerted their influence in more subtle ways. The habit contributed to their anonymity. They were rarely seen on the



In response to the cholera epidemic that was ravaging New York City, the Sisters of Charity opened St. Vincent's Hospital in a rented brownstone on East 13th St. This was the first new mission of the fledgling community and the first Catholic hospital in New York City.

surrounding streets without a stated purpose and, of course, only with the permission of their superiors.

Inside the hallowed halls the Sisters were dynamos of charity. Their presence was palpable, their demeanor appropriate. In their quiet way they set the standard by which the people of St. Vincent's would be measured. The standards were high and consistently carried out. Before St. Vincent's closed someone asked an elderly environmental worker how he knew when he was doing a good job. He answered, "We all just watch the Sisters and follow their example."

Beginning as a file clerk in high school, then a student nurse, later the Director of the School of Nursing, and finally as the Senior Vice-President for Mission, my over fifty years at St. Vincent's has been an unbelievable, faith-filled journey. I watched the evolution of St. Vincent's into a major medical center which attracted outstanding doctors. It was a mecca of learning for students of every discipline in the healing sciences, resulting in many "firsts" for which St. Vincent's could claim credit. Students flocked to enroll in its outstanding teaching programs. Many medical and surgical breakthroughs which benefitted treatment modalities in other institutions of healing originated at St. Vincent's. They are chronicled in the medical annals.

Patience, Fortitude, Perseverance



During those years I was surrounded daily by living examples of charity. The people of St. Vincent's from the least to the most brilliant doctors had without knowing it been infused with a love for the poor, a desire to serve, and a unique identification that has branded them forever. We were a disparate group of individuals branded with that common purpose identifiable as St. Vincent's trademark.

In writing this article I deliberately chose to avoid a chronological history of this iconic institution. Many are readily available. Likewise, I am not addressing the frequently asked questions: How could St. Vincent's have closed? Who is to blame? What happened?

As the last patient was being transferred from the intensive care unit, doctors, nurses, and Sisters stood in tearful silence. In our brokenness we stood with pride for the 161 years of history that this one patient represented.

There would be a final Mass in our beautiful chapel.

Then it was time to close the doors. Hospitals are very hierarchical organizations where chains of command are carefully observed. That day we were equals in grief, love, and bewilderment.

Four years have passed since that dark day. The St. Vincent's family is dispersed in many directions, but our identity is never in doubt as our spirit seeds the institutions of which we are now a part.

Yes, the spirit of St. Vincent's is alive and well, and we thank God for that as we sing with the Beatles, "There are places I'll remember all my life."



September 11, 2001, terrorists attack the World Trade Center

St. Vincent's Hospital staff stood ready to receive the casualties and trauma victims from the horrific tragedy. The number of persons arriving at the emergency room was small because so many perished at the site of the attack.

Student Nurse Statues

Interested in a statue of an SVH student nurse, right down to the bandage scissors carried in her apron and the crease in her cap. These 8.5" statues, colored in metallic bronze, are available for \$25.00 plus shipping and handling of \$15.00. Please order from:



Sr. Kathleen Aucoin, SC
Seton Arts Studio
67 South 5th Avenue
Mount Vernon, NY 10550
Phone: 917-697-6370

Email: setonarts@gmail.com
www.Kathleenaucoin.com

ETERNAL REST GRANT UNTO THEM O LORD

Marie Corcoran Mulvaney '35
 Maureen Bradley Fletcher '53
 Josephine Seuringer Mahoney '56
 Mary Anne McDermott '59
 Nancy Fitzpatrick Rubin '62
 Michelle Waters Di Gangi '90, cousin of Amy Donaldson Badeau '87
 John Thomas Browning, husband of Joan Wilton Browning '52
 Paul A. Murphy, brother of Patricia Murphy Riordan '60
 and Mary Ellen Murphy '64
 Mary Bauer Evans Barski '62, sister of Lillian Bauer Brickmeyer '52
 and Eleanor Bauer De Neufville '58
 Hedwig Ann St. John, sister of Elizabeth Hilterhaus Stroz '63
 Eric Madigan, son of Kathleen Madigan '64
 Richard O'Neill, husband of Dorothy Duhamel O'Neill '69
 Thomas J. Farrell, husband of Patricia Fleming Farrell '73
 Charles McKeon, life partner of Joanne Bilott '75

CORRECTIONS:

Francis Bubolo Weed '66
 Deacon Charles Damian, husband of Elaine Dacey Damian '66



MEETING NOTICE

DATE: January 31, 2015

PLACE: Convent of the Sisters of Charity
20 Washington Square North (Going east from 6th Ave.,
it is between 5th Ave. & MacDougal Street) New York, NY 10011

TIME: 12 Noon

TOPIC: Acupuncture: "How can it help me?" **Includes a demonstration**
Ear acupuncture out of the toolbox: As a supportive modality in chemical
dependency treatment, , in the aftermath of major traumatic events, and
its implication for the management of stress in everyday living

Speaker: Siohghan Joan Dolan, RNC, MA
Mental Health Nurse
Federation of Education and Guidance Services

A Light meal will be served.

RSVP to Pat Costello @ 718-439-8418 or pcostellosvh@gmail.com

NEW OFFICERS AS OF JANUARY 2015

This year there were an opening for the President and three board members. The President was willing to stay another term and three Board Members were nominated. Since the number of people who were willing to run was equal to the number of positions open, we did not have to send out a ballot. We are however informing you of the results.

President: Joanne Billott '75

Board Members

Maureen McElhinney '68

Bernadette Hemmer '68

Patricia Caffrey '79

Thanks to all who are willing to give of their time and energy to keep the Alumnae Association alive and well.