

Past *Forward*

PROVIDENCE ARCHIVES NEWSLETTER • SPECIAL NURSES WEEK EDITION
Sisters of Providence, Mother Joseph Province • Providence Health & Services

Providence and its Nursing Legacy

FROM THE ARCHIVIST

Loretta Z. Greene, M.A., CA

From May 6-12, health care facilities in Providence Health & Services and around the country will celebrate National Nurses Week. This year is the 55th anniversary of the celebration. In recognition of this occasion, Providence Archives staff is dedicating this issue of *Past Forward* to nursing education in Mother Joseph Province.

Did you know that there were 15 hospital-based Providence schools of nursing in Mother Joseph Province? From the opening of the first school in 1892 until the closure of the

last in 1978, more than 12,930 nurses graduated from Providence schools. For a list of all of the Providence schools of nursing in Mother Joseph Province see page 5.

Nursing care is a principle ministry of the Sisters of Providence religious community so it is not hard to understand why schools of nursing were established. Mother Emilie Gamelin and the early sisters in Montreal were dedicated to relieving the suffering of others – elderly, orphaned children, immigrants ravished by disease, the poor. This formed the foundation of the community's two historic ministries of health care and education.

The Rules for Schools of Nursing Conducted by the Sisters of Charity of Providence, published by Sister John Gabriel Ryan in 1925, identifies reasons for the organization of schools of nursing: for a pool of staff educated according to the sisters' requirements, thus giving the sisters an opportunity to care for a greater number of sick; and to extend the sisters' influence to the world at large, through the women educated in their schools. She was right. Many graduates chose Providence hospitals for their careers and the remainder carried Providence with them into other

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Hello to a Familiar Face: Welcome Pam Hedquist

On December 21, 2008, a familiar face from the Provincial Administration Spokane offices joined Providence Archives as Assistant Archivist-Technical. Join us in welcoming Pam Hedquist to this new position! She will perform duties in support of Providence Archives, including sister personnel database research and entry, artifact cataloging, scanning projects, and oral history transcribing.

Pam, tell us a little bit about yourself.

My husband, Rick, and I have four children and two grandsons. We love the outdoors, camping, fishing, and

hunting. During my down time I love to cook and be at home with my family.

What is your history with the Sisters of Providence?

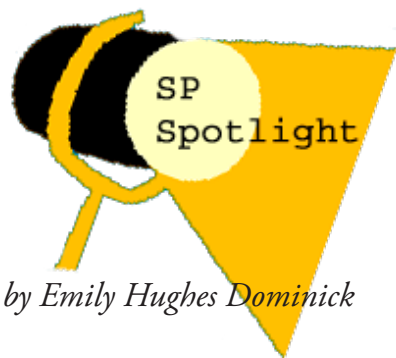
Fifteen years ago I was hired as a Finance Assistant. I also worked for the Development Office under Sister Loretta Marie Marceau. To hear and read about how the sisters impacted the lives of so many people was very touching and heartwarming. It made me feel even closer to the sisters and their ministries. As the years went on I moved into other positions within Provincial Administration, eventually leading to my last position as Office Manager for the Spokane office.



Why did you choose to be a part of the Archives?

When it was announced that my position would be eliminated when the two Provincial Administration offices

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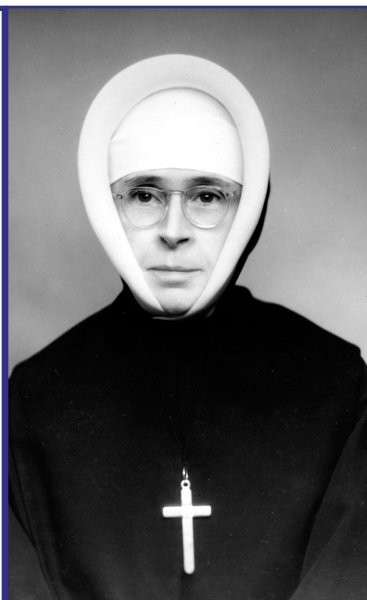
by Emily Hughes Dominick

Mary Ann Ryan was determined to enter religious life when she was a teenager, so determined that she fled from her home in Rhode Island at the age of 19 when her father had arranged for her marriage. Her first attempt to join a religious community failed when she contracted tuberculosis at the Sisters of St. Anne novitiate and had to return home. Ever persistent, several years later, she entered the Sisters of Providence novitiate in Montreal. After taking her first vows in 1901, Mary Ann was given the name Sister John Gabriel. Though her name had changed, her persistence, determination, and commitment never would.

Sister John Gabriel's first mission was at Columbus Hospital, Great Falls, Montana. Here she studied pharmacy and assisted in the hospital when called upon. On one occasion she was called away from her pharmacy duties and asked to sit with a patient who was just out of surgery and waking from anesthesia. Afraid that her inex-

Sister John Gabriel Ryan

Name in Religion: **John Gabriel**
Given Name: **Mary Ann Ryan**
Number in Religion: **1257**
Date of Birth: **August 30, 1874**
Entrance to Novitiate: **June 9, 1899**
First Vows: **August 7, 1901**
Final Vows: **August 7, 1906**
Date of Death: **December 25, 1951**



perience in patient care would be revealed when the patient awoke, Sister John Gabriel busied herself by moistening a towel and bathing the woman's face. When the woman was fully awake, she said, "What a consolation to have a capable nurse near me." Sister John Gabriel shared this story often throughout her life. It was the first time she realized that she could be a successful nurse. She decided to dedicate her life to the profession.

She threw herself fully into the venture. Her first step was learning as much as possible which she did by way of formal education and hands-on training. She graduated from Columbus Hospital School of Nursing (Great Falls, Mont.) in 1906. She was transferred to St. Vincent Hospital, Portland, Oregon, where she assisted in the pharmacy. She sat in on lectures and classes and completed final exams alongside of the students and is listed among the first class of sister graduates in 1912. A year later she and another sister were the first in the community to take the Oregon State

Board examination and become registered nurses.

Sister John Gabriel was asked to teach several courses for the sister nurses at St. Vincent Hospital who were preparing for State Board examinations. There was such a positive response to these classes that she was asked to establish regular courses. Her enthusiasm and knowledge helped establish Sister John Gabriel as an effective instructor and she quickly rose in the ranks of nursing education.

In 1924, Sister John Gabriel was appointed to the position of Directress of Schools of Nursing and Hospital Consultant. In this capacity she supervised 16 Providence schools of nursing throughout Montana, Washington, Oregon, California and British Columbia. Even though she was an administrator, Sister John Gabriel never missed an opportunity to continue and enhance her own education. She took courses at a variety of universities; she earned a Bachelor of Arts degree from University of Washington in 1927 and a Master's degree from

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verbatim

The complex system of modern medicine, the constant evolution of nursing and the ever-increasing demands for higher educational standards place upon each successive class the responsibility of bringing into the profession a different type of service; not necessarily a better nor a truer service, but one which will correspond with the changing needs of humanity and one that is better adapted to the age in which it lives.

-Sister John Gabriel

Part of her letter to the Class of 1926 in the 1926 edition of Vox Nursarum, the yearbook for the Sacred Heart Hospital's School of Nursing, Spokane, Wash.



PICTURING PROVIDENCE

Peter F. Schmid, CA, Visual Resources Archivist

A column highlighting archival photographs and other resources that provide visual documentation of the Sisters of Providence. Peter selects notable materials from the collection of over 50,000 photographs. He can be reached at 206-923-4012 or peter.schmid@providence.org.

The Teacher and the Nurse

In this image, Sister Mary Cabrini Rohr and Sister Charlotte Marie Franetich work together: the former as teacher, the latter as student. Their paths crossed after taking very different journeys in religious life and ministry.

Frances Mildred Rohr first entered the postulancy of the Sisters of Providence in 1930, but returned home to Yakima, Wash., almost immediately, after her mother fell ill. Though she had left the community, Frances kept in close contact with the Sisters of Providence while working at St. Elizabeth Hospital in Yakima. After her mother's death, Frances entered the St. Elizabeth Hospital School of Nursing, and graduated in 1940.

Later Frances worked full-time as the nursing school librarian at Providence Hospital in Seattle, while earning her degree in nursing at Seattle University. When she went to certify in medical technology in San Francisco she befriended Sister Elizabeth Clare (Tyrrell), director of the College of Nursing at Providence Hospital in Oakland. At 32 years of age, Frances still felt called to religious life, and Sister Elizabeth Clare encouraged her to re-enter the novitiate, which she did: she made profession in 1946 and took the religious name Mary Cabrini.

After working two years at the hospital in Seattle as nursery supervisor, Sister Mary Cabrini became the director of the school of nursing at St. Joseph Hospital in Vancouver, Wash., then a science instructor at the school in Walla Walla. In 1954,



Sister Mary Cabrini (Rohr) instructs Sister Charlotte Marie (Franetich) in anatomy at the St. Peter Hospital School of Practical Nursing, Olympia, Washington, 1969. (Image #72.E7.5).

she began directing the professional nursing program at St. Peter Hospital in Olympia until its closure in 1955, at which time she created the practical nursing program, which was in operation until 1970.

It seems fitting that one of Sister Mary Cabrini's final nursing ministries was Sister Charlotte Marie's first; she must have felt blessed to be under the tutelage of such an experienced professional, for she herself was completely new to the field. After making profession in 1933, Sister Charlotte Marie spent over three decades as an educator and administrator in St. Ignatius Province.

She taught grade school at the academies at Sprague, Missoula, Wallace, and DeSmet and served as superior of the schools in Glasgow and Mis-

soula, Mont., and at Marysville Academy in Des Plaines, Ill. In 1962, Sister Charlotte Marie became superior of St. Ignatius Province, a post she held until June of 1968. She resigned the position five months ahead of the expiration of her term, reasoning that the new superior should have the benefit of attending the General Chapter of Renewal to take place that summer. In her decision to change roles from administrator to practical nurse, perhaps she felt a need to return to more direct ministry to people. She entered the one-year program at St. Peter Hospital and graduated in 1969. She then returned to St. Ignatius Province to pursue her "second career" as a nurse and coordinator of Patient Services at Sacred Heart Hospital in Spokane. §

Familiar Face

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would merge into one location, I wasn't sure what I would do. I was approached by Sister Kaye Belcher, Leadership Team liaison to the archives, and Loretta Greene and asked if I would like to become a part of the archives team. There was a need for someone to enter data for over 1,500 sisters into the new personnel database, and other projects that the department was unable to get to because of limited staff time. My background knowledge working with the sister personnel files, processing reports to Montreal on sisters' ministry and personnel changes and being actively involved with the Sisters Da-

National Nurses Week is 55!

National Nurses Week is celebrated annually from May 6, also known as National Nurses Day, through May 12, the birthday of Florence Nightingale, the founder of modern nursing. The purpose of National Nurses Week is to raise awareness of the value of nursing and help educate the public about the role nurses play in meeting the health care needs of the American people.



tabase Committee will benefit me in the Archives. Though still a "newbie," I feel a part of the team and enjoy working

with such a great group. I look forward to learning more of the history of the Sisters of Providence and their ministries. §

The Nurse's Cap and Pin

Perhaps more than anything, the most well-known symbol of a nurse is the white cap perched upon her head. It stood as a symbol of her education and the design was unique to each school. The cap was awarded in a special school ceremony after a probationary period of several months and was commonly referred to as 'capping'.

There are varying accounts of the development of the Providence nurse's cap; however, a document in the archives notes that the Providence cap is believed to have originated in the habit worn by the Sisters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul, who established the first modern school of nursing in Paris in

1864.

Over the years, individual Providence schools varied their cap design so that in 1957 the directors of Providence nursing schools in Washington and Oregon met to discuss a uniform cap. It was agreed to keep the cap as close to the original, at least as early as 1923, as possible. The cap from St. Vincent Hospital, Portland, Oregon, School of Nursing, was the one chosen by the group as closest to the original design. It did not have bands or stripes. A tiny gold cross was allowed and worn on the left hand corner of the cap band. When the school of nursing was a department of a college or university, the initial or monogram of the college could appear in the right hand corner of the cap band.

The committee left it up to the individual schools to use



Capping ceremony at Columbus School of Nursing, Great Falls, Mont., 1966. (Image #84.E3.4)
Inset: Nursing pins from Providence, Seattle (through Seattle College) and St. Vincent Hospital, Portland.

stripes, black bands or other insignia to designate different stages of the educational program. At the St. Elizabeth Hospital, Yakima, School of Nursing, a one-stripe bar was worn on the left side to designate the freshman year, 2 bars for junior year and a complete black stripe across the entire band of the cap for the senior year.

The nurse's pin was

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Providence Schools of Nursing

Mother Joseph Province

*SPONSORING HOSPITALS BY LOCATION WITH DATE SPANS OF THE NURSING SCHOOLS AND
THE TOTAL NUMBER OF GRADUATES*

Washington

Spokane

‡ Sacred Heart Hospital, 1898-1973, 2700 graduates

Seattle

‡ Providence Hospital, 1907- [circa 1941], 1296 graduates

Yakima

‡ Providence Yakima (St. Elizabeth Hospital), 1907-1971, 1085 graduates

Walla Walla

‡ St. Mary Hospital, 1907-1958, ≈359 graduates

Colfax

‡ St. Ignatius Hospital, 1908-1945, ≈181 graduates

Everett

‡ Providence Hospital, 1911-1957, 424 graduates

Vancouver

‡ St. Joseph Hospital, 1911-1954, 353 graduates

Olympia

‡ St. Peter Hospital, Graduate Program 1919-1955, 341 graduates

‡ St. Peter Hospital, Practical Program 1955-1970, 273 graduates

Oregon

Portland

‡ St. Vincent Hospital, 1892-1975, ≈1200 graduates

‡ Providence Hospital, 1944-1962, 635 graduates

Astoria

‡ St. Mary Hospital, 1905-1949, 180 graduates

Medford

‡ Providence (Sacred Heart) Hospital, 1913/14-1933, 28 graduates

Montana

Great Falls

‡ Benefis (Columbus) Hospital, 1894-1968, 1116 graduates

Missoula

‡ St. Patrick Hospital, 1906-1978, 1243 graduates

California

Oakland

‡ Providence Hospital, 1904-1972, 1515 graduates

Ongoing Exhibit!

Nurses at Your Service: A Century of Caring

April 11 - July 5, 2009 at the Washington State History Museum, Tacoma
Uncover a century's development of nursing in Washington state. Rare documents, medical equipment and photographs tell how the field has advanced since nurses began registering in the state. Learn how war, technology, science and compassion have drastically changed the way patients receive care.

Organized by the Washington State History Museum and the Washington State Nursing Centennial Consortium

From the Archivist

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care-giving environments.

For many years after the sisters' arrival in the West in 1856, administration of the hospitals, nursing care, and all services were handled by the sisters. As hospital censuses increased, the need for lay help increased.

Nursing, or training, schools were hospital-based. The first Providence school of nursing in the West opened at St. Vincent Hospital, Portland, Oregon, in 1892. Sacred Heart Hospital in Spokane opened the first Catholic school of nursing

in Washington (1898). Prior to standardization, staff physicians conducted lecture series as time permitted. Washing, sweeping, and scrubbing were part of the trainee's duties in addition to bedside nursing.

In Washington, curriculum requirements changed in 1909 with passage of the Nurse Practice Act and registered nurses were required to pass a state board examination. Now, students followed an apprentice model and were taught by and worked with more advanced students as well as experienced nurses and the sisters. In 1919,

the National League for Nursing Education produced the first national nursing school standards which included nursing arts, *materia medica* (pharmacology), nutrition, care of the patient environment, and operating room techniques.

During the 1920s, the Sisters of Providence studied how well their nursing schools fulfilled the new national requirements. Sister John Gabriel Ryan was named Directress of Schools of Nursing over the *continued on page 7*

Cap and Pin

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awarded at graduation. The Providence pin is gold and oval in shape with a laurel twig and a Latin cross. The Sisters of Providence motto, *Caritas Christi Urget Nos*, the Charity of Christ Urges Us, along with the name of the hospital, encircles all. Each of these details is symbolic. Gold symbolizes brightness, justice, faith, strength and constancy. The laurel twig represents the merits of a nurse: hope and victory. The Latin cross represents the blood shed by Christ to recall the great gift of charity of health care personnel, who devote their talents and love to the sick. §

John Gabriel

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Seattle College in 1937.

Besides working directly with the Providence schools of nursing, Sister John Gabriel spread her ideas about standardization of nursing education and administration by way of lectures, classes, writing, and involvement in professional organizations. Sister John Gabriel wrote several influential books including *Through the Patient's Eyes* in 1945. She was actively involved in the

American Nurses Association, Washington State Nurses Association, and the American College of Hospital Administrators, to name a few. She also served on the boards of several professional journals.

The thrust of her work was always to find the best and most up-to-date way of doing things and to be sure that these methods were followed across the profession. It was her persistence, commitment to excellence, and forward thinking manner that made her a true leader. §



Florence Hansen in front of a history of nursing exhibit on the Colby Campus of Providence Regional Medical Center Everett

New in the Archives

Early in February of 2009 Providence Archives staff transferred a large accession of materials from Providence Regional Medical Center Everett (Washington). This collection of papers, photographs, scrapbooks, and artifacts was in the care of Florence Hansen (pictured here) who was Historian under the auspices of the Medical Center Foundation. Most of the collection relates to General Hospital, Everett, a community hospital that merged with Providence Hospital, Everett in 1994. Florence was a longtime employee in the Public

Relations department at General Hospital. When the merger occurred, Providence General Foundation established an archives to collect and maintain the history of General Hospital.

Florence's work included assembling collections from the hospital and its staff. Since 1999, she was instrumental in creating exhibits focusing on both Providence and General Hospitals and their impact on the Everett community. The most recent of these exhibits chronicles the history of the schools of nursing at both hospitals in Everett. §

From the Archivist

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Providence schools in the Western United States and Canada. One of her responsibilities was to ensure that standards for training were developed and utilized. She wrote several books about nurse training that raised the quality of patient care. For a closer look at Sister John Gabriel's work, see the SP Spotlight article starting on page 2.

As the decades progressed, the curriculum expanded beyond the basic sciences and nursing arts courses to include, for example, anatomy, physiology, bacteriology and communicable diseases, dietetics, ethics, obstetrics and gynecology, pediatrics and surgical nursing. It was visionaries like Sister John Gabriel and Sister Genevieve of Nanterre at St. Vincent Hospital who understood the implications of this change. They supported nursing education in an academic environment, grounded in programs offered at liberal arts institutions.

World War II brought a change to nursing education with creation of the United States Cadet Nurse Corps, a subsidized government program for training of nurses for military service. Several Providence schools had cadet programs. At the same time, since a large number of practicing nurses had enlisted, the one-year Practical Nurse program was developed to alleviate a shortage of nurses.

The post-war years had a huge impact on nursing education. New nursing and treatment skills, changed convalescent practice, increase of practical nurses and aides, increased respect for and autonomy of nurses, and the pursuit of college degrees through the GI Bill all contributed to the changing face of nursing, nursing education and a shift from hospital-



School of Nursing class of 1905, Providence St. Vincent Medical Center, Portland. (Image #53.E12.50)

Did you know...

It is a misconception that a nurse graduates as an RN. A professional nurse, sometimes called a graduate nurse, receives a degree or diploma after a 2-4 year program. The Registered Nurse, or RN designation is only given once the nurse passes a state licensing examination. Practical Nurses, sometimes called graduate practical nurses, receive a diploma after a 1-year program. Passing their state licensure exam gives them the designation of Licensed Practical Nurse, or LPN.



based schools. In 1948, a report, *Nursing for the Future*, called for nursing education within a college or university setting. A follow-up report predicted the development of two levels of nursing: registered nurse and licensed practical nurse. Naturally, this report created conflict in the medical field, hospitals and among nurses.

At the same time, rising hospital costs, higher education standards, demand for qualified instructors and decreased enrollment forced most hospital schools to close while others, like Providence Hospital, Seattle and St. Vincent Hospital, Portland, chose to affiliate with colleges and universities. Under this model, students received class lectures at schools of higher learning and completed their clinical training at the hospitals. In time, the programs were fully transferred to the colleges and universities. For many hospital-based schools, the alternative to affiliation was closure; a survey

of Providence schools of nursing demonstrates this. The professional nurses' program at St. Patrick Hospital, Missoula, Mont., was the last Providence school of nursing in the West to close in 1978.

For more information...

Visit: Providence Archives, Seattle, Washington, houses a collection of historical materials for each Providence school of nursing in Mother Joseph Province. Contact the archives for access.

Read: *Living the Legacy. A History of Sacred Heart School of Nursing* (Spokane).

Go online: here are a few sites of interest:

‡ <http://nsweb.nursing-spectrum.com/Articles/time-line.htm>

‡ <http://www.medical-colleges.net/nursing4.htm>

‡ <http://www.nurses-careers-abroad.com/newsletter.pdf>

§ § §

2009: A Year of Providence Anniversaries

Congratulations to the following facilities celebrating anniversaries as part of Providence Health & Services!

85 years

§Providence Mount St. Vincent, Seattle, Washington

30 years

§Providence Newberg Hospital, Newberg, Oregon

§Providence Hospitality House, Seattle, Washington

25 years

§Providence Regina House, Seattle, Washington

10 years

§Providence Hood River Memorial Hospital, Hood River, Oregon

§Providence Blanchet House, Centralia, Washington

§Providence Rossi House, Centralia, Washington

§Little Company of Mary Health Facilities in California



Entrance to what was then known as "St. Vincent's Home for the Aged," just after completion in 1924. Providence Mount St. Vincent, Seattle, Wash. (Image #140.A1.1)

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