

Alumnae Association of Mercy-Douglass Hospital School of Nursing records

MC 27

Finding aid prepared by Center staff, updated by Bethany Myers.

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Summary Information

Repository	University of Pennsylvania: Barbara Bates Center for the Study of The History of Nursing
Creator	Alumnae Association of Mercy-Douglass School of Nursing.
Title	Alumnae Association of Mercy-Douglass Hospital School of Nursing records
Call number	MC 27
Date [inclusive]	1939-1987
Extent	1.5 linear feet
Language	English
Abstract	<p>This collection consists of two parts: records of the alumnae association in the period of Mercy Hospital and records of the organization under its present name. It complements the Mercy-Douglass Hospital records (MC 78) in that the latter are exclusively hospital and school records organically created before the hospital closed in 1973. The alumnae association collection contains historical accounts of the hospital and the school as prepared by the alumni, minutes of alumni meetings, programs of various kinds of activities the association sponsored, newsletters, correspondence, clippings, and material the association collected of other organizations.</p>

Cite as:

Alumnae Association of Mercy-Douglass Hospital School of Nursing records, Barbara Bates Center for The Study of The History of Nursing, University of Pennsylvania

Biography/History

The Mercy-Douglass Hospital was formed in 1948 from the joining of two Philadelphia hospitals which served a predominantly African-American patient population: the Frederick Douglass Memorial Hospital and the Mercy Hospital. Originally, the Frederick Douglass Hospital and School for Nursing was founded by Dr. Nathan F. Mossell in an effort to create an institution where African-American physicians and nurses could have equal opportunity to train and practice. Prior to this conceptualization, it was a common occurrence that African-American medical school graduates would be denied intern positions in Philadelphia hospitals, which were presided by white administrators and medical professionals. Similarly, it was difficult for young African-American women to formally enroll in institutions that would provide quality nursing training. Therefore, in a bid for equality, the Frederick Douglass Hospital opened on October 31, 1895 at 15th and Lombard Streets in South Philadelphia. By its second year of operation (1896), Frederick Douglass Hospital had five students enrolled in the nurse training program. The curriculum for the nursing students prescribed attendance at 3-4 lectures per week given by the hospital's medical staff, a course in massaging, and a course in "invalid cooking". Later, due to dissent within the Frederick Douglass Hospital regarding the limited opportunities for younger physicians to gain practical and surgical experience, a group of physicians sought to organize a newer, more "progressive" hospital. Thus, Dr. Eugene T. Henson and his colleagues opened the Mercy Hospital and School for Nurses on February 12, 1907 at 17th and Fitzwater Streets in South Philadelphia. The Court of Common Pleas of Philadelphia County granted a charter of operation to the Mercy Hospital and School for Nurses on April 2, 1907. The curriculum for the nursing students consisted of a series of lectures given by the director of nursing and attending nursing staff of the hospital. The first class of nurses, seven students in total, graduated in 1909. In 1917 the length of the nurse training program was extended to three years. In 1919, the Mercy Hospital relocated to 50th Street and Woodland Avenue in Southwest Philadelphia. By 1931 the School for Nurses charged students an entry fee of \$50 and distributed an allowance (termed "pin money") of \$5 per month to the students. By 1941 the cost of entering the School for Nurses had increased to \$125 and "probationers" who had successfully completed six months of the curriculum were awarded caps. Capping exercises were held for those who had proven themselves capable in mind, spirit, and body to follow the profession of nursing.

However, due to recurrent financial difficulties, and consequently a growing deficiency in supplies, equipment, and facility quality in both the Frederick Douglass Hospital and the Mercy Hospital, the two institutions agreed to merge into the Mercy-Douglass Hospital and School for Nurses, which opened on March 11, 1948. In addition to hopes for better economic forecasts through shared facilities, equipment, and staff, the joining of the two hospitals represented a united front in promoting the ideal that a teaching hospital could be established where both African-American and white medical interns and nurses could receive quality training.

Prior to the merger, there existed an alumnae organization for the nurses who were trained in Mercy Hospital, named the Mercy Hospital Alumni Association. Even before the hospitals had officially joined,

the nurses from these two institutions anticipated the union of their hospitals and organized the Alumnae Association of the School of Nursing of Mercy-Douglass Hospital on December 1, 1918. After the two hospitals merged in 1948 to form the Mercy-Douglass Hospital and School for Nurses (later renamed the School of Nursing), the alumni association was renamed the Alumnae Association of Mercy-Douglass Hospital School of Nursing. The alumnae association met monthly, with the exception of July and August, to carry out its functions and activities. As early as November of 1948, meetings, events, and organizational duties of the Alumnae Association were managed by executive officers in the positions of President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Corresponding Secretary.

Also in 1948, the Association was subdivided into the following committees: Scholarship, Entertainment, Membership, Sickness/Births, Donation Day, Home-Coming, and the Drive Committee. Each committee was led by a member of the Association who served as a committee chairman. Notably, the Alumnae Association maintained a scholarship fund from which members of the Association could borrow money for educational purposes. Those who withdrew from the fund would later be sent a bill for the amount borrowed to be repaid with interest; this fund was managed by the Scholarship Committee. The Entertainment Committee was responsible for organizing regular social events for all members of the Alumnae Association, in order to foster a sense of community among the members. The Membership Committee recorded the activities of individual members in regard to their duties to the Association, namely notices of new members who joined the organization and whether current members had paid their dues. The Sickness/Births committee would regularly announce any known reports of members who had fallen ill or given birth to children within the past month, sending flowers and cards to convey the best wishes of the Alumnae Association; acknowledgements of recent marriages were also often noted in the communications of the Sickness/Births committee. The Home-Coming and Donation Day Committees primarily planned for their respective annual events, the Home-Coming formal for all Alumnae Association members and the Donation Day for alumnae seeking to contribute monetarily to the Association. Finally, the Drive Committee was responsible for reaching out to all members of the Alumnae Association to recruit help in organizing, staffing, or donating to fundraising drives for the Mercy-Douglass Hospital.

The copy of the Constitution and Bylaws for the Alumnae Association of Mercy-Douglass Hospital School of Nursing enclosed in this collection was last revised in 1959. Article I of the document describes the organization's name, purpose, and functions; Article II delineates the types of membership available within the organization, the methods of application, and the terms of membership forfeiture; Article III describes the rules regulating membership joining fees and dues; Article IV describes the types of meetings, meeting notices, an outline of a typical meeting agenda, and the rules governing the process of voting; Article V describes each of the individual Executive Board officer positions and duties; Article VI describes the powers and responsibilities of the Executive Board as a whole, as well as the rules governing Executive Board meetings; Article VII lists the committees and their duties; Article VIII describes the rules governing the process of officer elections; Article IX describes the rules governing the process of amending the Constitution and Bylaws; and Article X describes the Parliamentary Authority in place during meetings, as described in Roberts Rules of Order Revised. By 1959, the Alumnae Association had developed into a sophisticated, well-organized democratic body. Their executive board had expanded to include the following positions: President, First Vice President, Second Vice President, Recording Secretary, Corresponding Secretary, Financial Secretary, Treasurer, and Chaplain. Meanwhile, the Association committees had expanded to include: Program (organizing a document detailing the agenda for meetings), Membership (now responsible only for the recruitment of new members and aiding in the processing of applications), Sunshine (previously the Sickness/Birth Committee), Scholarship, Nominating (to aid in elections), Auditing (a division of the previous Membership Committee devoted only to managing individual members' accounts and rights of membership), By-laws (to review, study, and revise Bylaws as needed), and Homecoming. Above all, the Alumnae Association had successfully grown into an organization capable of fulfilling its ultimate purpose -- fostering high standards of

professional nursing and promoting a cooperative and friendly spirit among graduates of the Mercy-Douglass School of Nursing.

The Mercy-Douglass School of Nursing graduated its last class of seven students in June 1960. Since its inception, the Mercy-Douglass School of Nursing had successfully trained and graduated 520 students, but due to financial difficulties, the school could not remain in operation. However, the Alumnae Association of Mercy-Douglass Hospital School of Nursing, Inc. survived and thrived beyond the closings of the School of Nursing and the Mercy-Douglass Hospital, which shuttered its doors in July of 1973.

Administrative Information

University of Pennsylvania, Barbara Bates Center for the Study of The History of Nursing
Finding aid prepared by Center staff, updated by Bethany Myers.

Sponsor

This collection was processed with funds provided by the National Historical Publications and Records Commission as part of the Nursing History Processing and Cataloging Project.

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Immediate Source of Acquisition note

Gift of the Alumnae Association of Mercy-Douglass Hospital School of Nursing.

Related Materials

Related Archival Materials note

See also: MC 78, Mercy-Douglass Hospital records.

Controlled Access Headings

CORPORATE NAME(S)

- Alumnae Association of Mercy-Douglass School of Nursing.
- Mercy-Douglass Hospital.

FORM/GENRE(S)

- Administrative records
- Photographs

GEOGRAPHIC NAME(S)

- Philadelphia (Pa.)

SUBJECT(S)

- African American nurses
- Nursing schools.

Collection Inventory

SERIES 1. MERCY HOSPITAL ALUMNAE ASSOCIATION, 1948-1949.

Scope and Contents note

This series includes one file of meeting minutes prior to the merger of Douglass Memorial and Mercy Hospital.

	Box	Folder
Minutes, 1948-1949.	1	1

SERIES 2. ALUMNAE ASSOCIATION OF MERCY-DOUGLASS HOSPITAL SCHOOL OF NURSING, 1939-1987.

Scope and Contents note

Included in this series are documentation of the history of Mercy-Douglass school of nursing and the alumnae association (1918-1973), also the constitution and by-laws (1959). In this series are programs of home-coming for the Philadelphia and other state chapters; newspaper clippings concerning the activities of the hospital and school of nursing; and the study "Career Achievements for Graduates" (1909-1960).

	Box	Folder
Constitution and bylaws, 1959.	1	1
History of Mercy-Douglass Hospital and School of Nursing, 1948-1973.	1	2
History of the Alumnae Association of Mercy-Douglass Hospital School of Nursing (2 copies), undated.	1	3

Minutes, 1950-1978.	1	4
Annual Reunion, agenda, with financial reports, 1978-1985.	1	5
Annual Reunion, agenda, Recognition Lunches, financial reports, 1989, 2001-2005.	1	6
Annual Reunion, agenda, Recognition Lunches, financial reports, 2006-2012.	1	7
Budgets, 1981-1982.	1	8
Correspondence, 1951-1983.	1	9
Home-coming programs, for Philadelphia and other Chapters, 1940-1982.	1	10

REUNION PROGRAMS, MERCY-DOUGLASS HOSPITAL FAMILY.

	Box	Folder
1981.	1	11
1987 (2 copies) and 1996.	1	12
Memoria and death notices, 1957-1983.	1	13
Membership list, 1969-1980.	1	14
Miscellaneous, 1939-1984.	1	15
Newsletters, 1966.	2	16
Newsletters, 1997, 2000, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, March 2009, June 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013.	2	17
Black doctors, 1966-1983.	2	18

Cancer Detection Center, 1964.

2

19

NEWS CLIPPINGS.

Box

Folder

Closing of the hospital (MDH), 1970-1973.

2

20

Edna Gray and accident, 1963.

2

21

Miscellaneous, Hospital, School of Nursing and Alumnae Association.

2

22

Box

Fold

Mary E. Mahoney, First Graduate Nurse, AFPO Magazine Section, September 24, 1954.

9

Box

Folder

Nursing Care Facility, Mercy-Douglass Human Service, 1974-1977.

2

23

Philadelphia Tribune and Kingsessing News, 1964-1969.

2

24

Study - "Career Achievements for Graduates, 1909-1960".

2

25-26

Yearbooks: "Invictus" 1953, "Ibis" 1954 (see MC 78 Box 3 for another copy of the 1953 yearbook).

2

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SERIES 3. OTHER ORGANIZATIONS, 1941-1985.

Scope and Contents note

In this series are files of people with whom the Alumnae Association has had contact. It documents a study of Negro nurses done by the Local Association of Colored Graduate Nurses of Philadelphia and Vicinity (1946) and includes programs and newsletters from the National Association of Colored

Graduate Nurses (1941-1949).

DELTA CHAPTER OF CHI ETA PHI SORORITY, INC.

	Box	Folder
Nurse of the Year, 1982.	2	1

HEALTH AND WELFARE COUNCIL, INC.

	Box	Folder
"Chronic Illness: Problems of Professional Education", after 1946.	2	2

MEDICAL SOCIETY OF EASTERN PENNSYLVANIA.

	Box	Folder
Mercy-Douglass Lectureship, 1982-1985.	2	3

NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF HOSPITAL ADMINISTRATORS.

	Box	Folder
Questions for round table discussion, 1946.	2	4

LOCAL ASSOCIATION OF COLORED GRADUATE NURSES OF PHILADELPHIA AND VICINITY.

	Box	Folder
Survey of Negro Nurses in Philadelphia, summary, 1946.	2	5

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COLORED GRADUATE NURSES, INC.

	Box	Folder
Programs and newsletter, 1941-1949.	2	6

PENNSYLVANIA STATE NURSES ASSOCIATION.

	Box	Folder
Bylaws for District Association No. 1, after 1951.	2	7
Wayne State University, School of Nursing, Scholarship Fund, Dorothy L. Bailey, 1966.	2	8

SERIES 4. PHOTOGRAPHS, 1949-1982.

Scope and Contents note

There are 598 photographs in this series depicting special events, such as the naming of the new nurse's home for L.G. Warlick (1956); reunions; alumnae meetings and home-comings. It includes photographs from Grace Manning Green's scrapbook (Class of 1930).

	Box	Photo
Group photo at special banquet. Some names included., October 15, 1949.	3	1

NOVEMBER 1954.

	Box	Photo
Alumnae Association viewing new MDH facility, November 1954.	3	2
Miscellaneous others, November 1954.	3	3-5

NAMING OF THE NEW NURSES HOME FOR LULA G. WARLICK, OCTOBER 13, 1956.

	Box	Photo
Lula G. Warlick and unidentified woman, October 13, 1956.	3	6
Lula G. Warlick with name plaque, October 13, 1956.	3	7
Presentation with Lula G. Warlick standing left, October 13, 1956.	3	8
Presentation with Lula G. Warlick standing left, October 13, 1956.	3	8a
Miscellaneous others, October 13, 1956.	3	9-12
	Box	Photo
Ross House, October 26, 1957.	3	13-14
New York Chapter, 1961.	3	15-25
Gala Reunion, 1962.	3	26-33
Gala Reunion, photo with two postcards, 1963.	3	33
Homecoming, 1964.	3	34-37
Nursing Alumnae Dinner, 1964.	3	38-43
Special Event, 1965.	3	44-57

PICNIC AT MISS BRADFORD'S LINCOLN, PENNSYLVANIA HOUSE, JUNE 1966.

	Box	Photo
Miscellaneous, June 1966.	3	58-60
Mr. Sharp at picnic, June 1966.	3	61

	Box	Photo
Alumnae Associating meeting at the Benjamin Franklin Hotel, 1966.	3	62-64

HOMEcomings CELEBRATION, 1966.

	Box	Photo
Planning committee during celebration.	3	65
Class of 1938 receiving cup for most members present.	3	66
Miscellaneous others.	3	67-72

	Box	Photo
Special Event Reception, 1966.	3	73-75
Special Gathering, November 1967.	4	76-79
Mrs. Marie Crawford Cawanns, October 1968.	4	80
Presentation of Miss Warlick's Portrait, October 1968.	4	81-85

HOMEcomings, BENJAMIN FRANKLIN HOTEL, 1968.

	Box	Photo
Homecoming Committee, 1968.	4	86
Homecoming speaker, unidentified, 1968.	4	87
Homecoming speaker, unidentified, 1968.	4	87a
Class of 1938 at Homecoming, 1968.	4	88
Class of 1938 at Homecoming, 1968.	4	89

Miscellaneous others, 1968.	4	90-100
	Box	Photo
Smitty Boat, 1969.	4	101
NEW YORK REUNION, 1969.		
	Box	Photo
Alma Fleming and Connie Hill, 1969.	4	102
Deloris Smith, Ella Williams, and Emily Ragland, 1969.	4	103
Alan Green, Judy Brewer, Rubie Holloway, Deloris Brewer, 1969.	4	104
Lucille Mitchell, Lu Holloway, Ann Parker, Daisy Bell, and Sara Williams, 1969.	4	105
Hazel Mosley, 1969.	4	106
Hazel Mosley and unidentified others, 1969.	4	107
Marion Sessoms, Marie Hamilton, Elizabeth Sharp, 1969.	4	108
Two oldest nurses present receive corsages, 1969.	4	109
Two oldest nurses present receive corsages, 1969.	4	109a
Mary S. Henderson, 1969.	4	110
Mary S. Henderson, 1969.	4	110a
Class of 1938 receiving prize for most members present, 1969.	4	111
Bradford-Henderson Manning, 1969.	4	112

Shirley Nolley, Thelma Bourke, Margaret Patterson, and Marion Morton, 1969.	4	113
The Hotel, 1969.	4	114-118
Miscellaneous others, 1969.	4	119-129
The Bus Trip, 1969.	4	130-132
	Box	Photo
June Meeting, 1970.	4	133-142
September Alumnae Meeting at the Valentine home in Bridgeton, New Jersey, 1970.	4	143-151
Miss Flora Brown and Mrs. Margie McDonald at Homecoming, October 1970.	4	152
Ella Calbert-Morton and friends visit sick classmate, Edith H. Haynes, 1974.	4	153
Ms. Morton, Mrs. Bennet, and G. Manning Green, 1974.	4	154
G. Manning Green, 1974.	4	155
Ms. Morton with classmate, Ransom, and husband, Washington, 1974.	4	156
G. Manning Green in the car, 1974.	4	157
MERCY-DOUGLASS CRUISE, AUGUST 1974.		
	Box	Photo
Miscellaneous People, August 1974.	4	158-160
Picture of tugboat with postcard of the cruise ship, the Queen Anna	4	161

Maria, August 1974.

Box Photo

Reunion at Tamiment, October 1976. 5 162-181

Reunion formal photograph, 1977. 5 182

Jack Frost Mountain, October 1979. 5 183-184

Alumnae Reunion, Pocono Hershey Resort, 1979. 5 185-226

Christmas, at Elizabeth Sharp's daughter's house, 1979. 5 227-239

Christmas, 1980. 5 240-262

Mercy-Douglass Hospital Nurses Reunion, 1980. 5 263

Class of 1946 at the 1980 Homecoming, 1980. 5 264

Ski Weekend, February 1981. 6 265-298

FAMILY REUNION, OCTOBER 10, 1981.

Box Photo

Formal Group Photo, 8x10, October 10, 1981. 6 299

Formal Group Photo, 5x7, October 10, 1981. 6 299a

Formal Group Photo, 8x10, October 10, 1981. 6 300

Formal Group Photo, 5x7, October 10, 1981. 6 300a

Banquet, formal pictures, October 10, 1981. 6 301-316

Banquet, informal pictures, October 10, 1981. 6 317-340

Checking-in, October 10, 1981.	6	341-383
Miscellaneous People, October 10, 1981.	6	384-423
Miscellaneous Others, October 10, 1981.	6	424-455

G. MUSLEY, M. HAMILTON, AND B. GREEN VISIT MISS ETHOL AT THE BRADFORD HOME, 1982.

	Box	Photo
The visit, 1982.	6	456-458
Miss Ethol, 1982.	6	459-461a

MISCELLANEOUS.

PEOPLE.

	Box	Photo
4 unidentified girls.	7	462
Miss Lula G. Warwick, undated.	7	463
Miss Lula G. Warwick Memoriam.	7	464
Group photo, formal, unidentified.	7	465
Miss Hamush Baker Manus and unidentified others.	7	466
Mrs. Valentine (sister of Miss Morton) and son.	7	467
Group photo, informal, unidentified.	7	468

H. Alexander, G. Perry, and G. Green getting ready for a swim.	7	469
4 unidentified adults.	7	470
Ruth W. Jackson on top of the Cadillac, Maine Mountain.	7	471
Zanthia D. Conway and Vlenaetha McCaslin (wearing Junior nurses cape).	7	472
Delores Brewer.	7	473
Delores Brewer.	7	474
M. Morton and her brother, Plummer, 1974.	7	475
Dr. and Dorothy Ferguson, Christmas 1977.	7	476
Elsie Thomas' 100th birthday at Notre Dame Home for the Aged. She died June, 1980., May 30th, 1978.	7	477
Unidentified Group at Banquet.	7	478
Lela Bethel, 1992.	7	479
Lela Bethel, 1992.	7	479a
Unidentified Members of Alumnae Association at formal affair.	7	480
Group photo, formal, color.	7	481
ACTIVITIES.		
	Box	Photo
Special dinner, 1950s(?).	7	482-485

Alumni Members presenting a check for \$500 in memory of Dr. Eugene T. Hinson.	7	486
Alumni Members presenting a check for \$500 in memory of Dr. Eugene T. Hinson, members identified.	7	486a
Members of Alumnae Association present electrocardiograph to MDH.	7	487
Members of Alumnae Association present electrocardiograph to MDH.	7	487a
Fortune telling (?).	7	488
Carnival.	7	489
Card game.	7	490
Special banquet, 1950s(?).	7	491-492b
Special event, 1970s.	7	493-502
Picnic.	7	503-509
Special function, some people identified, 1980.	7	510-515
Unidentified.	7	516-536

GRACE MANNING GREEN, CLASS OF 1930, PHOTOGRAPHS FROM HER SCRAPBOOK.

	Box	Photo
Individual student nurse photos, 1929-1930.	7	537-543
Group student nurse photos.	7	544-550

Classroom photo (part of Class of 1930), 1929.	7	551
Class, 1930.	7	552
Student nurse, holding two newborn infants, undated.	7	553
Student nurse holding two toddlers, undated.	7	554
Individual photos, graduate nurse, 1930s.	7	555-566
Group photo, graduate nurses, 1930s; Social get-together, 1929-1980.	7	567-568
Friend's photo.	7	569-573
Group photos.	7	574-592
Alumni Meeting, group photo, undated.	7	593-595
Hospital, dietary kitchen, group of employees, undated.	7	596
Hospital, dietary kitchen, chef and assistant, 1930s.	7	597
Portrait, J.N. Kirton, December 25, 1932.	7	598

SERIES 5. ARTIFACTS.

Scope and Contents note

This contains two (2) small souvenir glass vases from the hospital family reunion (1987).

	Box
Two small souvenir glass vases inscribed with the words "Mercy-Douglass Hospital	8

Family Reunion, October 3, 1987".

SERIES 6. EPHEMERA, 1896-1962.

Scope and Contents note

This series includes scrapbooks, announcements for a benefit concert (1896), and a poster for the School of Nursing basketball game (1951).

	Oversize	Folder
Scrapbook, Grace Manning Green, Class of 1930.	9	1
Scrapbook, Hospital and School of Nursing Functions and Activities, 1930-1962.	9	2
Poster, Basketball, "Harlem Hospital Nurses vs. Mercy-Douglass Nurses", Saturday, February 10, 1951.	9	3
Announcement, Concert for Douglass Memorial Hospital and Training School, February 26, 1896.	9	4
