

British Federation of Notre Dame de Namur Associations



St. Julie News 2015

Notre Dame Federation Conference - Hinsley Hall, Leeds.
September 18th – 20th 2015

For some of us, this was our first time at Conference so we were not sure what to expect.

We arrived about 4.00pm on the Friday and settled in very quickly. We were made very welcome by Wendy Banyard, the Conference Secretary, and met with the other groups from all over the country, noting, not for the first time, how very quickly and easily relationships are formed between NDers --- there certainly seems to be some sort of invisible cord connecting us all.

Bernie Shaw, as always, had a piece of knitting on the go, and the evidence of all her hard work and that of others was on display in one of the rooms alongside the tombola and raffle prizes. Together these endeavours had raised a significant amount of money by the end of the weekend (around £500 I believe) so all of the donations for prizes plus generous cash contributions of some £200 did make a big difference to the Charity.

We had a good laugh during the Scattergories game in the evening, especially when asked to list “things that are cold beginning with the letter R” and one group came up with “rigor mortis” – wish we had thought of that one!

We were blessed with glorious weather all weekend and this made our Saturday trip to Ilkley all the more pleasurable. Some people, of course, can never resist the opportunity to shop, but it is a place that you can enjoy just walking around and we found a Church providing coffee and cakes to enjoy too.

At the AGM we saw the President’s chain of office being passed from Margaret Bradbury to Bernie Shaw. We wish her well for her three year term of office and we know she will be a brilliant President.

You have to really admire some people --- Judy Gibbons may be retired, but instead of putting her feet up and relaxing she now spends much of her time running a donkey sanctuary. We were a little apprehensive

about attending this talk as we thought it might be too upsetting, but far from it: it was touching, humorous, informative and inspirational.

There was a Mass on the Sunday and as well as enjoying the lovely singing filling the little chapel, accompanied by Mary Kendal on the organ, the sermon given by Father Chris Thomas advising us “not to sweat the small stuff” made us want to applaud. We were reminded how futile it is to worry about the minutiae in life instead of conserving our energy to deal with what really matters.

After a Sunday roast dinner we said our goodbyes to the many new friends we had made and headed for home.

We are already looking forward to next year.

Judith Maher, Pauline Yates, Kath Wood, Lorraine Platt, Margaret Dolan, Freda Gleave and Christina Wood, Manchester.



THANK YOU!

With many thanks to all members of the BFNDA for the gift voucher received on the occasion of my retiring from my term of office on the B.F.N.D.A. Executive Committee:

Margaret Bradbury	President
Mary Lewis	Deputy President
Bernie Shaw	Treasurer
Lesley Freeman	Secretary
Wendy Banyard	Conference Secretary
Mary Kendal	Literary Editor
Sheila Fuller	Direct Members Convenor

President's Report to the AGM of the British Federation of Notre Dame de Namur Associations, Saturday 19th September 2015 at Hinsley Hall, Leeds

Another delightful Conference Weekend was held at Hinsley Hall during the weekend of 5th – 7th September 2014. The weekend was enjoyed by 43 of us and we were pleased to welcome Sr. Pat Sullivan who had become the Moderator's representative on the Executive Committee. As always, Fr. Chris Thomas spent the weekend with us, leading Evening Prayer on Saturday and saying Mass for us on Sunday morning. Our entertainment was homespun, with BFNDA's Got Talent and a Saturday morning visit to Wetherby.

Immediately after the Conference weekend I contacted Sr. Mary O'Brien in Kenya and told her that we had presented Sr. Pat Sullivan with a cheque for £4,500.00 to help the Sisters continue their work of expanding the school in Malava.

At our Executive Committee Meeting on 19th November we presented Anne Astwood, who had retired from her position as Appeals Secretary, with a gift voucher on behalf of all members, in recognition of the work she has done for the Committee over the years. Thank you Anne from all of us. The Committee considered the post of Appeals Secretary and decided that it was no longer relevant to our needs. With so few Associations, letters were no longer sent appealing for funds and donations could be sent directly to the Treasurer with no extra work involved on her part.

In January we were saddened by the death of Sr. Margherita Cini, S.N.D. better known to members of the Northampton Association as Greta. Greta was a past pupil of Notre Dame Northampton, taught in St. Mary's school Northampton and had been a member of the Association for many years. In July we also heard that Sr. Audrey Wilkinson, another “Old Girl” from Northampton and known to many of the longer standing members of the B.F.N.D.A. had also passed away, a Mass was said for her and a card was sent to the Sisters on your behalf.

On Sunday 8th March, I was once again fortunate enough to be invited, and to be able to attend, Southwark's St. Julie Day at the school in

London. Again the day was packed with all they could fit into it. The speaker this year was Sister Anne Griffiths, an Ursuline Sister who is a lawyer by profession. She gave a very interesting talk about His Holiness Pope Francis. This was followed by Mass and lunch was once again provided in the school canteen. I think I must have commented during lunch that it would be my last visit but I was told I could gate crash and probably nobody would notice. Thank you, Southwark for another lovely day.

On 11th March we held an Executive Committee Meeting at 266 Woolton Road as 285 could not accommodate us on that day. Our thanks go to the sisters at both addresses for allowing us to hold our meetings there and for always making us so welcome.

Catherine Byrne and Doreen Lambert very kindly represented us at the Liverpool Civic Mass in March. After the Mass, Catherine spoke to the Lord Mayor – a lady called Erica Kemp – and when asked, Catherine explained that she was there to represent the B.F.N.D.A. It transpired that Erica had gone to Woolton Hall Prep School and Woolton Hall High School. Following this meeting a small group of us, organised by Catherine, met with Erica for tea in the Mayor's Parlour on 1st April. We had a friendly chat with Erica and Catherine gave her a Direct Member's application form as Erica had been unaware of the existence of the B.F.N.D.A. By the time we were leaving the Town Hall, after a guided tour, the completed form was returned to Catherine. Another delightful day!

I have to mention Northampton's Annual Lunch on April 26th because, I am sure if I wasn't a member I would have been invited as a guest. Once again we held our lunch at the Marriott Hotel. We were really pleased to welcome Sr. Patricia Ellen Gribbin, Provincial Moderator and Sr. Pat Sullivan who travelled down from Liverpool to be with us on the day. 107 were booked for lunch but, due to illness, only 105 made it on the day.

On June 20th I was able to join the Manchester Association for their fundraising day, held at Bernie's house in Stockport this year. Despite torrential rain for most of the day it was another very successful fundraising effort. Thank you, Manchester.

In July the Executive Committee, on your behalf, sent a Mass Folder to Margaret Lawton in recognition of her services to the B.F.N.D.A. over

many years. Margaret has been unable to travel to Executive Committee meetings for the last three years and has been sadly missed – Margaret didn't need to delve into past paperwork for the answer to any queries we may have had, she just knew all the answers. We also sent a birthday card to Maureen Brass, known to many of you and still a Direct Member, on the occasion of her 100th birthday.

All that is left for me to say in this report is that I really don't know where the last 3 years have gone. I have enjoyed my time as President, meeting so many members from the Associations. I can't adequately express my gratitude to the Executive Committee for their unfailing support and guidance during that time, to Father Chris for continuing as Chaplain and to all of you for supporting me and the Federation in all the ways that you do and in particular for your incredibly generous support of the Federation Charity – the work of the Sisters in Kenya. Thank You.

Margaret Bradbury



SOUTHWARK NOTRE DAME ASSOCIATION

A successful St Julie's Day was held at the school in early March of 2015. We are as ever indebted to Sr Anne- Marie Niblock and her team for making the day so enjoyable for us all. The site staff and the catering team are so kind and generous with their time which they give so willingly, and it is good to know that the support for SNDA remains strong within the school community.

We were delighted that Father Rudolf was with us once again to celebrate Holy Mass and we were pleased to welcome our guest speaker, Sister Anne Griffiths, who gave us an interesting and insightful look into the work of His Holiness Pope Francis. The BFNDA was represented once again by Margaret Bradbury and it is always good to have a chance to chat with Margaret - she really is one of us!

During the day we had a swift overview of the events of the previous twelve months and we looked back on the previous St Julie's Day in 2014 when we remembered Louise Zanre from the Jesuit Refugee Service coming to speak to us about the work of the JRS and the plight of refugees across the world. I doubt that any of us would have imagined that we would so swiftly be made aware of just how serious the situation has become in the recent past as we watch, each evening, on our television screens people trying to escape from war and hostilities.

Our activities during the year have included a successful trip to Lambeth Palace, enjoyed by a number of our members. In addition SNDA continues to be represented at the Westminster Quiz Nights and we thank Paula Watson for organising theatre trips through the year.

Although we have had recently to say goodbye to Therese Egan one of our committee members, we are pleased to report that Krystyna Hill has joined us and taken on the role of committee secretary and we are also so pleased to welcome Sue Ringwood to the committee. It is very reassuring to know that we are able to recruit willing volunteers to help us maintain our association. Each one of the committee members plays an important role in the well being of our association and their advice, hard work and involvement is never more evident than on St Julie's Day and I thank them all for their efforts. My thanks also to Diane Donovan who continues to be the SNDA representative on the BFNDA - she helps to promote and maintain a vital link between ourselves and the Federation.

Looking forward to the year 2015-2016 we have a number of events planned and are already thinking about St Julie's Day 2016. We hope to see you there!

Patricia White

Manchester Notre Dame Association

Once again this year our membership has increased, some new members have joined at the Masses, others have been recruited from the Facebook group. There are over 180 former pupils in the Facebook group and our ambition is to persuade them all to join the Association eventually.

The two annual Masses in November and May were well attended and most people joined us afterwards for lunch in the church hall. In true Notre Dame Manchester fashion lunch was followed by singing, which everybody enjoyed, and some have even submitted requests for next year. Afternoon tea at the Radisson in March was enjoyed by all and

although the sun didn't shine on the Strawberry Tea at Bernie's house in June the occasion was warm and friendly and the generosity of those attending contributed to the total of £1392 we were able to donate to the charity this year. We would like to thank Bernie Shaw for her hard work, her knitted scarves and baby clothes and beautiful aprons are popular with members looking for unusual gifts. We would also like to thank all the committee members for their enthusiasm and organisational skills this year and Margaret Bradbury, BFNDA President, for coming to join us.

The new treasurer, Pauline Yates, and secretary, Christina Wood, have settled into their roles, allowing Stella McHugh and Mary Kendal to take a back seat on the committee although we still rely on their knowledge and expertise. Veronica Miles agreed to continue as President for another year until her successor is found; as the year is drawing to a close our search is still ongoing.

Eight people from Manchester went to Federation for the first time this year and you can read about our impressions in a report published elsewhere in St. Julie News.

Christina Wood



Northampton Notre Dame Association

The Northampton Association has had another good year with many of our members enjoying our social events on a regular basis. In October we had a talk from a local poet, David Garrett and in December we had our Christmas Celebration with readings and carols followed by sherry and mince pies.

In March we held our AGM followed by tea and chat and our annual reunion lunch was again held at the Northampton Marriott on April 26th when we were joined by Sr. Pat Ellen Gribbin and Sr. Pat

Sullivan who joined the 96 of us who sat down to lunch. Our St. Julie Mass was celebrated by our Chaplain, Monsignor Tony McDermott on 12th May in St. Aidan's Church.

June saw another speaker to our gathering, Mr. Peter Nock, a local jeweller, bringing along many antiques for us to guess the value of. Our September Tea Party was well attended, as usual and we look forward to two more events this year in September and December.

There are ongoing reports of the varying state of the Sister's Cemetery and the Committee are working with the Borough Council on this matter. The Cemetery is actually the property of the Borough Council.

We have had some younger members join the Association this year and hope that they will continue to bring in younger members to keep the Association flourishing.

Margaret Bradbury



Direct Members Association

For the year 2014-15 we had 78 paid up members. At the present time (AGM September 2015) we have subs for 69. I sent greetings on behalf of Direct Members to Maureen Brass who celebrated her 100th Birthday this year.

As usual I have continued to represent Direct Members at the 3 meetings of the Executive during the past year. In January an invitation was extended again to Federation by Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral to attend the Civic Mass on 15 February with the new Archbishop Malcolm McMahon OP as the Chief Celebrant. We were pleased that a number of Direct Members, living in and around Liverpool, were able to attend this special occasion. Following on from this, an invitation to tea in the Lord Mayor's Parlour was extended by the then Lord Mayor of Liverpool (herself a former Notre Dame Pupil) and happily accepted.

Direct Members continue to support our Charity and, up to the AGM, almost £850 has been generously donated. This has now risen to a magnificent £1075 so now over £300 makes a good start for the forthcoming year. As well as some very generous individual donations, Leeds are particularly generous at their mid week luncheon gatherings and Sheffield has followed in their footsteps and for the past 3 years 12-14 of us have met for a Midsummer Luncheon in the conservatory of the Rutland Hotel and the sun has always shone on us; fingers crossed for 2016!

Our Chaplain, Father Chris offers Mass in May for the Intentions of Direct Members, and in November for Deceased Direct Members.

As most of you will be aware, I resigned as Convenor at the AGM and at the Direct Members meeting at Hinsley Hall I am delighted to say that former President, Mary Lewis, offered to hold the role of Convenor for 1 year, after which Lesley Freeman, formerly Hon Secretary of Federation is willing to take over. They will need to be co-opted at the first meeting of the Executive Committee. I am very grateful that Mary and Lesley have offered to take over this post and wish them well. It is important to have someone in post in order to keep up the contact with those former Notre Dame pupils scattered around the country, and elsewhere, who wish to be included in the Notre Dame Family despite there being no local point of contact. I feel I have been privileged to hold this post for six years and had the pleasure of hearing their news; as well as the friendship of fellow members on the Executive. I also wish to express my heartfelt thanks to my daughter Katherine who has taken on the role of my unofficial secretary and guided me through the mysteries of new technology! Sheila Fuller

Maureen Brass – 100th Birthday

Congratulations to Maureen Brass who celebrated her 100th birthday on July 14th 2015. Many members will know Maureen, who is now a Direct Member.

Born in Wandsworth in 1915, Maureen was a pupil at Notre Dame, Southwark and for many years served the SNDA as both President and Secretary.

Maureen devoted her life to teaching, spending a long career at St. Dominic's primary school in North West London from 1939 until her retirement as head teacher in 1980. Maureen wrote a moving and detailed account of the four

years she spent in Kettering when the school was evacuated. Maureen is pictured (on the left of the back row) during this time. Her full account can be found on the web:

www.stedwardskettering.org.uk/evacuees-tales/

Back in London, in 1952 Maureen established the St. Dominic's Music group, which soon began to enjoy a reputation as a centre for excellence and performed at such prestigious venues as the Albert Hall. It was for this contribution to musical education that, a few days before her 100th birthday, Maureen was awarded a British Citizens Award. From the citation there are two quotations which stand out:

She is attributed with "encouraging many young children whose talent might otherwise never have been realised"

and

"Miss Brass was a pioneer in her field, embracing and nurturing the talent she discovered" Many members of the Music Group have happy memories and Maureen still organises its reunions.



Diane Donovan



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ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP 2014-2015

According to Capitation Fees Paid

Battersea	-
Direct Members	61
Manchester	80
Southwark	110
Northampton	191

These are paid-up members for whom Capitation fees have been received but most Associations have greater numbers than the above. As members pay subs. throughout the year we can never get the numbers absolutely correct

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**CHARITY ACCOUNT 2014-2015**

|                         |                 |
|-------------------------|-----------------|
| Brought forward         | <b>(111.90)</b> |
| Direct Members          | 838.70          |
| Federation              | 465.00          |
| Manchester              | 1392.00         |
| Northampton             | 1225.00         |
| Southwark               | 645.00          |
| Balance carried forward | <b>4453.80</b>  |

**INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT**

|                                   |                       | <b>General Account &amp; Charity</b> |                         |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------|
|                                   |                       | <b>Year Ending 2014</b>              | <b>Year Ending 2015</b> |
| <b>Income</b>                     | Capitation            | 1269.00                              | 1572.00                 |
|                                   | Direct Members        | 240.00                               | 207.00                  |
|                                   | Interest              | 8.21                                 | 7.71                    |
|                                   | Badges                | 30.00                                | 15.00                   |
|                                   | Charity               | 5372.40                              | 4465.70                 |
|                                   | Miscellaneous         | 10.00                                | -                       |
|                                   |                       | <b>6929.61</b>                       | <b>6267.41</b>          |
| <b>Expenditure</b>                | Executive Travel      | 662.59                               | 698.24                  |
|                                   | Printing & Stationery | 96.18                                | 134.15                  |
|                                   | Postage & Telephone   | 179.20                               | 106.45                  |
|                                   | Miscellaneous         | 777.50                               | 452.45                  |
|                                   | St Julie News         | 680.30                               | 299.00                  |
|                                   | Donations to Charity  | 5000.00                              | 4500.00                 |
|                                   |                       | <b>7395.77</b>                       | <b>6190.29</b>          |
| Excess of Income over Expenditure | 466.16                | 77.12                                |                         |
| Carry forward                     | 6931.59               | 6465.43                              |                         |
| <b>Balance</b>                    | <b>6465.43</b>        | <b>6542.55</b>                       |                         |
| Balance at Bank 31.03.14          | 6506.83               |                                      |                         |
| Unpaid Chq No 308                 | 41.40                 |                                      |                         |
|                                   | <b>6465.43</b>        |                                      |                         |
| Balance at Bank 31.03.15          |                       | 6603.75                              |                         |
| Unpaid Chq No 334                 |                       | 61.20                                |                         |
|                                   |                       | <b>6542.55</b>                       |                         |

## NAMUR 2015

I must admit to a certain foreboding before our departure, after five of our intended travellers had unavoidably withdrawn because of illness. I am not superstitious but our numbers had been depleted to thirteen. I need not have worried. On the day, everyone arrived in good time and in good spirits at St. Pancras and we set off for the journey to Brussels, changed trains and arrived at Namur in the early afternoon. Seven of us had opted to stay at the Grand Hôtel de Flandre which is comfortable and very conveniently is just across the road from the station. Having checked in, I joined those who were staying at the convent and walked down with them to meet Sr. Marie Kelly, with whom I had exchanged countless e-mails (checking arrangements, adjusting numbers up and down etc.) to all of which she had responded with great efficiency and endless patience. She greeted us very warmly; I stayed for a short time and then left before Sr. Marie took her guests off to show them their rooms.

The following morning, we strolled down to the convent, where our fellows gleefully informed us that in addition to the expected clean linen etc. each of their rooms had flowers and sweeties. They had been given a bottle of wine and had access to tea and coffee making facilities. With all meals included, they had been charged a very modest amount. They had even been given the back door key, so that they could go out for a drink in the evening. In reply to one of my early enquiries Sr. Marie had written, "Our accommodations are not 4 star but they serve"

Then Sr. Marie, assisted by Sr. Margaret Walsh and Sr. Honorine began to show us the Heritage Centre [heritagecentre@sndden.org](mailto:heritagecentre@sndden.org) which was magnificent. It has been very professionally designed and executed; it records the life of St. Julie and her close, productive friendship with Françoise Blin de Bourdon and traces the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur from their earliest beginnings. It shows the development of the Order right up to the present day showing the work of the Sisters across four continents. A delight for me was the long wall upon which is inscribed the name of every SND, with the baptismal name and surname, name in religion and date of first vows. I enjoyed finding many of the Sisters I had met during my schooldays and subsequently. One day was not enough; we

could have done with more time to take it all in. We were privileged to join the Sisters for Mass and then joined them for lunch, during which I said a very few words about the BFNDA and what we do. At the end of the tour, Sr. Honorine who comes from the Congo took us to see St. Julie's first house in Namur and we visited the Cathedral. It was there that one of our number took a nasty tumble, but fortunately escaped without serious injury.

The next day, after some slight difficulty with a train delay, we all returned safely. I am very grateful to all the Sisters in Namur for their warm and generous welcome and hospitality. I am particularly grateful to the Sister who gave a lift to the station to the member who had suffered a fall the day before. I should mention that Sister Marie Kelly, the whole time we were there, was suffering from a nasty attack of bronchitis, but carried on. Special thanks are due to her and we wish her well in whichever new endeavour she undertakes when she returns in December to her native America.

Finally, I should like to thank my travelling companions for their conversation, willing help and everything that helped to make the trip a success.

Diane Donovan



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## Changes to the Constitution

### ASHFORD REVISITED

In 2014 Veronica Moulding and Jean Coles came to stay with me for few days and, on August 6<sup>th</sup>, Jean drove us from Ashford to Brighton to visit another school friend, Margaret Smart (nee Lord). We had all been in the same year at Notre Dame, Northampton, starting at the senior school in September 1948.

Margaret has a lovely flat and gave us a delicious meal while we reminisced over our time at school. She mentioned that she had visited Ashdown since the change from the Notre Dame Novitiate to a luxury hotel. On our journey home we decided that we should meet up with Margaret for lunch at Ashdown Park Hotel when Veronica and Jean next came to visit. So, on July 22<sup>nd</sup> 2015, we drove to Ashdown where we met up with Margaret. Before lunch she took us to the bar where the Notre Dame badge in stained glass features in one of the windows. From there we walked out on to a patio overlooking the spacious grounds.

After lunch, which we all enjoyed, we stopped at the reception desk and Margaret explained that we were former Notre Dame students and asked if we could visit the corridor where framed photographs of Ashdown when it was a novitiate were hung and also what was the chapel – now divided with an upper floor – now used for conferences and wedding receptions. Doors were unlocked by very helpful staff and we were free to wander along the corridor and into the chapel. The stained glass windows, depicting the life of Our Lady, are still in situ and, with the upper floor installed, are more clearly visible.

The alterations from nunnery to hotel have all been done so tastefully and all the staff were accommodating and pleasant making it a really joyous visit.

Mary Watkinson Northampton Association

Everyone received a copy of the present constitution and the proposed amendments as follows:-

1. At the Executive Meeting on 11 March 2015 the Committee agreed that the position of Appeals Secretary is no longer necessary, due to the small number of associations, and that all references to the position of Appeals Secretary should be removed from the Constitution.

These are: Page 1 Article 5a – EXECUTIVE BOARD  
Page 2 Article 5d – OTHER ELECTED OFFICERS i.  
Page 2 Article 6a – NOMINATIONS i.  
Page 4 – BYELAWS 1e

2. At the Executive Meeting on 11 March 2015 the Committee agreed that the reference to the position of Archivist Liaison should be removed from the Constitution.

This is: Page 4 BYELAWS – 2a

3. It is proposed that the position of Archivist Liaison be replaced with:

A web manager who will:-  
a) Organise the updating of the BFNDA web site.  
b) Deal with queries, arising through the information section of the web site, which may involve liaison with the sisters of the British Province of the Sisters of Notre Dame.

Amendments 1 and 2 were agreed by everyone at the meeting.  
Amendment 3 was altered as follows: A Web Manager who will :-

a) Organise the updating of the BFNDA web site.  
b) Deal with queries arising through the information section of the web site. This could involve liaison with the sisters of the British Province of the Sisters of Notre Dame.

The altered Amendment 3 was proposed by Catherine Byrne, seconded by Diane Donovan and accepted by everyone present.

The records of the BFNDA will continue to be passed on as usual. If there is any change, concerning archive material, a consultation process will take place, involving the Executive.

## National Board of Catholic Women

As most of you know I have been doing this job far longer than I should have done mainly because three years ago I found myself sitting on the Executive of the Board as a representative of an organisation hence it was deemed necessary for me to carry on.

The Board has had a few difficulties over the last couple of years. The secretary resigned early on and the treasurer has been ill for some time.

A lot of the work however is done by the various committees such as the Ecumenical and Interfaith Committee, the Social Responsibility Committee and Health and Bioethics Committee. These three in particular have been very busy over the last three years, organising study days. The Social Responsibility Committee has organised several days around the country concerning 'Women and Poverty'. They have produced what they call a 'tool kit' for anyone interested in this. It can be found on [www.csan.org.uk](http://www.csan.org.uk)

Diane Donovan has agreed to take over the job of BFNDA delegate for the next three years.  
Mary Lewis

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Elizabeth (Betty) Rossall – R I P

Betty died at Nazareth House on 24th November on her 99th birthday. She had lived at home in Prestwich until the last few weeks of her life. She was part of Notre Dame for most of her life – as a pupil from the age of 11, as a teacher from college until she retired and as an active member of our Association. Betty taught P.E. – gym, dance and games to generations of pupils. She was strict and demanded high standards from her classes and teams in their efforts and appearance. WHITE shoes!!! As the school teams played in matches and tournaments across Manchester and Lancashire they had to do their best to be the best. Betty also taught R.E. Her faith was very important to her and she was active in her parish, Our Lady of Dolours. In the S V P she visited the elderly in Nazareth House regularly, well into her nineties. She supported the Red Cross, having worked with them in the war. She was one of the staff who encouraged me to join the Association and become involved in Federation, and she was a great support to me as the Manchester President and Federation President.

May she rest in peace.

Veronica Miles

Sr. Audrey Gladys Wilkinson S.N.D

Prior to my coming to Ayrefield, Audrey was someone with whom I had exchanged a few pleasantries when she came to visit Sr. Therese in St. Helens, or she was a name on a planning group, or an elegant lady at a distance, with her equally elegant friend Sr. Terry Wall.

Audrey Wilkinson was born in Vancouver on the 18th July 1923, the only child of Gladys Ellen and Eric Wilkinson.

In 1951, Audrey entered the Convent of Notre Dame at Ashdown Park, where she took the name of Sr. Philomena of the Sacred Heart. This was by no means Audrey's first encounter with the Sisters for, from the age of eight, Audrey was a weekly boarder with the Sisters at Northampton. When she was seventeen, Audrey decided that she wanted to become a Roman Catholic. On her entry into the Church, Audrey was sponsored by Miss McAllister – better known as Sr. Maureen. A strong friendship was forged, which lasted until Sr. Maureen's death in 2009. Audrey always referred to her as "my godmother".

On leaving Northampton, Audrey went to Notre Dame Teacher Training College, Mount Pleasant, where she specialised in mathematics, which she continued to teach until she retired. Besides being mathematical, Audrey was artistic and musical, playing the violin. She was also a competent needlewoman.

After she made her vows in Ashdown, Audrey's ministry of education took her to Wigan, Woolton and St. George's in Southwark. While in Wigan, Audrey took a 3 year part time course at Manchester University to enable her to keep abreast of the "new mathematics". During her time in Southwark she was awarded a B.A. in mathematics from the Open University.

Despite being quiet and somewhat reserved, Audrey had a great many friends among past pupils, colleagues and people she had met throughout her life and career. Friendships made were sustained for many years. She was even in contact with two children she had looked after during the summer holidays when she was a student in Mount

Pleasant. The “in-out” tray at Christmas spoke eloquently of a lively correspondence.

When she retired from teaching in London, Audrey set off for a sabbatical in the United States, where she followed a course with a view to doing parish work when she returned to London. However, the Lord had other ideas and Audrey set off abroad again. It was fortunate that she loved to travel. This time it was Zimbabwe, where she spent three years teaching mathematics and biblical studies. At that time, Zimbabwe was not for the faint hearted.

When she returned to England, Audrey went to Woolton, where she became Catering Officer and Home-Maker, a ministry she continued on a smaller scale in Ayrefield, with the additional responsibility of Bursar.

Audrey made one more trip to Zimbabwe to represent the British Province at the funeral of Sr. Ignatius Julie. When the photos arrived from Zimbabwe there was Audrey, to the manor born, swaying up the aisle in the procession bearing gifts – still waters run deep!

It was for who she was that Audrey was mostly remembered. When I phoned friends and associates to tell them of Audrey’s death, I was invariably met with “What a lovely lady she was, how sad,” then “she was a very good teacher, a loyal and supportive member of staff; she organised wonderful field trips; she was loved by staff and children; she joined in everything; she was easy to work with” and I would add, easy to live with.

Audrey loved a good get-together. Her Golden Jubilee was organised with mathematical precision and drew together the many strands of her life. There were college friends, past pupils, colleagues, sisters with whom she had shared her life and work, not forgetting “our set” for which she had a special affection.

In recent days, Audrey received a letter from a past pupil of Woolton, who felt she just had to write to express her gratitude and appreciation for all the help and support Audrey had given her when she was a girl

at school. I am sure her sentiments could be replicated many times over in the places where Audrey had worked.

Audrey lived the last phase of her life with the quiet acceptance that characterised the rest of her life. She lived with her diminishments and limitations quietly, peacefully and without complaint. She remained gracious to the end, ever mindful of “Yes please” and “Thank you” when she could barely speak the words. It was a privilege to accompany her on this, her final journey.

I must let Audrey have the last word: During the last General Visitation, Sr. Teresita asked us what we thought the people to whom we ministered would say about us. Audrey said: “I am a quiet person, I don’t say much, but I would like to think that people who met me would get a sense of peace”

May she now rest in the peace and joy of the Lord

Sr. Patricia McMahon S.N.D.

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**Sr. Margherita Cini S.N.D.**

“I feel I have been very privileged to live in beautiful places and I have found happiness and fulfilment in what I have been asked to do”  
Margherita Cini

Sr. Margherita, known to her family as Greta, was born in Northampton on 30<sup>th</sup> May 1934 to Ellen and Giuseppe Cini, the second of two daughters, and baptised Margherita May Diana.

She had a very happy childhood, was educated at St. Mary’s Primary School and Notre Dame High School, both run by our Sisters and went to Mount Pleasant Teacher Training College in Liverpool. Having done the two year course in teaching Junior children she returned home and took a post in her old Primary School, St. Mary’s on The Mounts, where our friendship began. After twelve years she left and entered our novitiate which was then at Birkdale. She loved children and she

adapted well to the various schools she was asked to work in – Leeds, London (at Mile End and Vauxhall) and Plymouth where she was head of Holy Cross Primary School. On her retirement she spent a short time in Liverpool, had an eight month sabbatical in the Holy Land which she described as “a memorable time” and then she went to Oxford and later Birkdale as the local moderator and assistant moderator. Her special concern in these houses was the care of mainly elderly Sisters. For the last few years she was Sacristan in Birkdale taking an active part in all Community events. Always very active, she enjoyed walking and often took a long hike along the Birkdale sands.

Margherita, although normally a very quiet and placid person, had a couple of enthusiasms. First, literature, in particular poetry – which she could recite with great fluency and Dickens, whose works she read and re-read endlessly. Then there was tennis (the arm-chair variety). Many of you will know that Wimbledon fortnight was sacrosanct and any news of Andy Murray’s prowess was the highlight of her day.

Her family meant a great deal to Margherita, in particular her step-brother Bill whom she discovered in 1978 and to whom she always referred as “my new brother”.

Her capacity for friendship was truly remarkable. Over the years she has made and kept many friends and in the days since her death more keep on appearing. Even the ten weeks spent in the Royal Liverpool Hospital have added to the number. There have been so many enquiries, tributes and compliments paid to her that she must be covered in blushes up there. She had no idea that her own joy in living and her cheerful acceptance of life’s inevitable ups and downs had such an impact on others. The hospital staff who gave her the greatest possible care and attention expressed their sadness at her dying and said she was a great lady, a beautiful person who had brought a gift to the ward by her peaceful presence.

May she now rest in true peace with her maker in the place prepared for her from all eternity.

Sr. Mary Smith S.N.D.



R. I. P.

|                                    |                       |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Elizabeth (Betty) Holt nee Buckley | Manchester 1945-50/52 |
| Florence White                     | Manchester 1933-39    |
| Barbara Birchall                   | Manchester 1958-65    |
| Cecelia Farrell                    | Manchester 1969-76    |
| Hilda Wharfe née Hartley           | Manchester 1933-38    |
| Pauline Denny                      | Manchester 1962-67    |
| Nuala Moran née Murdon             | Manchester 1945-50    |
| Christine Wilson née Allcock       | Manchester 1953-60    |
| Barbara Cooney née Ecclestone      | Manchester 1950-57    |
| Rita Jones nee Dugdale             | Manchester 1931-39    |
| Mary Warburton née Loran           | Manchester 1948-58    |
| Catherine Saxon née Cassidy        | Liverpool 1935-39     |
| Sr. Margherita Cini S.N.D.         | Northampton           |
| Sr. Audrey Wilkinson S.N.D.        | Northampton           |
| Maureen Motley                     | Northampton           |
| Barbara Rawlings née Allen         | Northampton           |
| Yvonne Freeman née Clorley         | Northampton           |
| Anne Graham nee Abraham            | Northampton           |
| Josephine Shrubb née Hague         | Leeds 1955-60         |
| Cecelia Callaghan                  | Manchester 1946-53    |