



Birthday Wishes from Our Students

- New release books and iPads in every classroom.
- New goal posts on the field, benches and green turf in Grade K courtyard.
- More great students.
- I wish that the teachers all would stay because they are amazing.
- I wish for MSA to still be a Catholic institution of Bermuda and that it will continue to be a loving, faithful, caring school.
- My wish is to have more life skill classes.
- My wish for MSA is for it to continue as the good school that it is and for everyone to feel at home when they come to MSA, like a family.
- My wish is that teachers will continue to be the best role models for students.
- My wish for MSA is that the school continues teaching Christianity because faith matters and we as a school need to have faith and love.
- That we go to church and sing music.
- For everyone to be good for their teachers.
- I wish for a baby panda to live in the school.



P.O.Box HM 1004
Hamilton HM DX, Bermuda

Telephone: 441-292-4134 ext.1943
Fax: 441-295-7265

Email: advancement@msa.bm
www.msa.bm



CELEBRATING 130 YEARS MSA

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The Latest News and Information from Mount Saint Agnes Academy

BLUE & WHITE

Principal's Message

It gives me pleasure to bring greetings to the MSA community as we celebrate another milestone in our school's history-130 years.

an internationally recognized teaching strategy known as Kagan Cooperative Learning for Student Engagement, which was implemented throughout all grades.

The Early Learning Program (ELP) which is housed in a wing of our school known as the Robert J. Kurtz Early Learning Center, has brought a new enthusiasm and excitement to our lower elementary. The foundation of the Reggio Emilia philosophy places the student at the center of all learning. The teachers use strategies which expose the children to a wide variety of learning opportunities that encourages self-expression, communication, logical thinking and creative problem-solving. Encouraged by the development and progress of the students in the early years, which includes the ELP and Kindergarten, teachers from grades 1 – 5 have begun to develop their instructional practices to include the Reggio Emilia approach.

Also, in the past five years, elementary classes have been reduced to less than 20 students and we now have two sections at each grade level (except for grade 2 as it is a class of less than 20 students). In order to accommodate the increased need for classroom space, the school has embarked on a major renovation project. Last summer the lower elementary classes were renovated, and two new classrooms added. This summer we will see the upper floor, where middle school

is currently located, renovated and the rest of elementary classes will be relocated to create an elementary wing of the school. The renovated classrooms are welcomed and bring a fresh, new and climate-controlled learning space.

Our Alberta Canada curriculum is rigorous and requires higher level thinking and learning skills for both our teachers and students. The learning environment has changed, and the demands of the curriculum require student engagement, collaborative learning, and problem-solving. In the past few years, MSA teachers have devoted their professional learning opportunities to becoming skilled at using the Kagan Cooperative Learning strategies to enhance student learning and engagement in the classroom. Kagan structures are “instructional strategies designed to promote cooperation and communication in the classroom, boost students’ confidence and retain their interest in classroom interaction”. Gone is the traditional “stand and deliver” learning environment. Today, the classrooms at MSA are filled with excitement, enthusiasm and engagement where all students are challenged to be engaged and encouraged to share and cooperate.

We extend an invitation to our MSA community to visit and get to know the MSA of today. We are proud of what our school has accomplished and look forward to a bright future for our students. Happy 130th Birthday, MSA!



On June 10, 1968, I opened my billet doux (free translation is sweet note) which we always received on August 15th until Vatican II. After that the billets doux were given out on Community Day. I was stunned to read that my assignment was Mount Saint Agnes Academy, Hamilton, Bermuda.

After the initial shock the Sisters with whom I lived were telling me rather interesting and scary things about Bermuda. The one thing I remember that I was told was that we caught rainwater in a barrel and I would have to go out to fetch the barrel each day!

On August 31, 1968 I boarded a plane for Bermuda. I was seated by Sister Mary Theophane who was filling out the immigration documents as my eyes bulged when I saw her write August 6, 1893 as her birthdate.

Judy De Souza met Sister Mary Francis and me at the airport and brought us to the convent where Sister Jean de Chantal was on the porch with Duchess, the first of many dogs who have been part of my 51 years living in Bermuda.

From September, 1968 through the summer of 2005,



HIGHLIGHTS OF 37 YEARS

Sister Judith Marie Rollo

many amazing things happened. From my first Christmas Concert which opened with an 85 piece band followed by the curtain's opening on a thatched cottage in the first scene of Babes in Toyland complete with the 160 strong Glee Club accompanying the story of Christ's birth through Christmas, 2004, each one ending with tableaux, each year combining the story of Christ's birth with events of the day. For many the Tableau made Christmas for them. The importance of music and drama in the life of the students and the reputation of the school was always evident. Spring Concerts also were memorable, especially Joseph's Amazing Color Dreamcoat which was sold out three nights and held over for a 4th night.

Our students' prowess in quiz shows was revealed both in 1969 when ZBM engaged the islands schools in weekly quiz shows which were filmed on Saturday morning. MSA came out on top and won four overhead projectors, artifacts now. Then in the late 90's into the early two thousands the Department of Sports and recreation had quiz competitions on Bermuda's facts and figures. Thanks to the diligence of parents and teachers, while not always winning, MSA was by far the most often victorious.

On my 40th birthday I was asked to assume the position of assistant principal in charge of the high school. I accepted with two caveats that I would have complete authority in high school matters and that I could continue to teach both chemistry and physics. Sister Dolores became the elementary school principal in 1985 and we worked together as Co-Principals until the "Mother of All" Retirement Parties in June, 2005.

From 1980 until August 2005 I was a teaching principal with many joys, sorrows, and challenges from seeing the accomplishment of

our students, the sorrow of faculty and students losing loved ones and the challenges from parents not agreeing with policies.

Spanish was introduced into the high school curriculum and over the years our students continued to excel. The graduating class of 2002 received over \$100,000 in scholarships. When parents and guests were sticking to the chairs in the auditorium during the 1999 graduation, a couple offered the school \$50,000 towards air conditioning it. The amount of work required including Belco poles on Dundonald Street made this an impossible expense.

Several years later with graduating classes numbering near 50, the ceremony was moved to Saint Theresa's Cathedral. In the summer of 1989 a miracle occurred when the addition to MSA started on the last day of school and was ready for school's opening and the beginning of celebrations of the 100th anniversary. A time capsule to be opened in 2040 was placed in the wall outside the new office

From seeing the joy of chemistry students getting 100% in their unknowns to members of the class of 1985 wrapping my car in toilet paper, removing the tires and then getting the Royal Gazette to take a picture of it, there was never a dull moment.

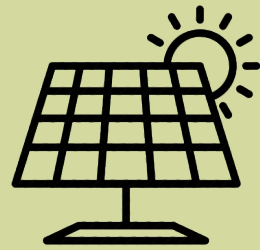
On the last day of school in 2005 I presented each student with a butterfly, symbol of life, change, growth. My 51 years in Bermuda are about to end. My love for MSA and the people continues as Sister Dolores and I bring our Sisters of Charity mission in Bermuda to a close after 130 years of serving God's people and by being gifted by them we leave with gratitude in our hearts.

Nil Sine Deo.

MOUNT SAINT AGNES ACADEMY GRADUATES



To see a full size image of our Wall of Graduates, stop by the school for a visit. Located outside the Main Office.

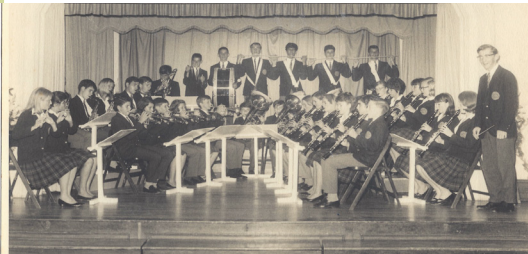


Solar Project

We recently held our “Champagne and Denim” Event to raise funds for our Solar Project. We are working with Be Solar to put together a fundraising plan and here are some interesting facts that Be Solar provided us with about the Solar Project:

- We plan to install 391 Solar Electric Panels to start
- MSA will save \$56,820 per year in energy costs
- MSA will save 5,492.00 Barrels of Oil over 25 years
- We will stop 3,085 Tons of CO2 over 25 years
- MSA will save over \$1,420,500 over 25 years

If you are interested in contributing towards the MSA Solar Project please contact our Director of Advancement, Suzanne DeCouto at sdecouto@msa.bm



DID YOU KNOW?

If you have a story to add, please email sdecouto@msa.bm

- MSA opened with only 22 students and they were all girls
- It took 150 workers to build MSA’s new building .
- The cost to build the new school in 1967 was £400,000
- 50,000 concrete blocks were used to build the new school in 1967
- The first graduation date was July 19, 1890
- The fair raised £250 (about \$12.00) which was used to purchase the Woodmount House
- Back in 1915 some students would boarder at the school as they lived to far to commute. So they would stay at school Monday to Friday and spend the weekends at home.
- All Nuns at MSA would have German Shepherd dogs
- Back in the day, Nuns would wear wooden rosary beads around their waist so students could hear them coming. The beads would bang together as they walked.
- Some of the subjects taught when MSA first opened: Music (vocal & instrumental), Ancient & Modern Language, Rhetoric, Science, Writing, Reading, and Arithmetic
- Currently we have 50 staff that work at MSA and 22 are alumni
- Mrs. Lisa Rhind has worked as a Teacher here for 36 years
- Girls used to have to wear blue felt tams to cover their heads every time that they went to a school Mass, which then was held every Friday
- The nuns used clapping patterns and the students instantly would know when to kneel and when to stand
- There used to be a mineral stand in the junior lunchroom. The mineral (soda) came in small glass bottles and was available for purchase. There was also a canteen set up each day in the junior lunchroom. A favorite sell out item was “Chippels” which is similar to the modern day potato stick.
- There is a fine of \$25 if you get your phone confiscated
- We now have an exchange student each year in Grade 12
- Diploma exams are now written online on specific days
- The top floor of the convent would be where the nuns would live
- Glee Club used to sing at rest homes, hospital and Hamilton Princess
- The Glee Club produced a CD
- We have a Time Capsule in our School to be opened in 2040
- In the convent days – there was a line down the middle of the playground – boys on one side, girls on the other
- When you heard the nuns coming down the hallway, you had better sit up straight with your hands folded
- Glee club was a mandatory activity, not a choice, and we all loved it and never took our eyes off Sister Joseph Anthony while singing
- HS boys were allowed to smoke in the old days. There was an assigned space for them to go to during recess and lunch! Boys only – not girls!
- Girls did cooking classes at Dellwood, making such things as cinnamon toast and Scotch eggs
- There was sewing offered to the girls and wood working for the boys
- Girls had to kneel down on the stage in the auditorium to see how long their skirts were – if they did not touch the floor, they were too short!
- School used to end in early June and go back way after Labor Day
- Blazers had to be worn at all times including on your bike and while walking around town
- There was a commercial and a classical division in HS – commercial learned typing, accounting etc. and went straight into the workforce, Classical were going to University
- Non-Catholic students sometimes went to services at St. John’s
- The elementary girl students wore blue beanies (skull cap type hats) to match their uniforms and saddle shoes
- We are the only school Early Learning Program to Grade 12 that is in in Hamilton
- In the early 60’s Sister Marion Edward used to coach the Soccer Team
- In 1968 MSA had 630 students the most we ever had
- In 1892 the Sisters were given the gift of a newfoundland dog
- There are no registers of attendance from 1945-1967, as these went missing when the school moved from Experimental Hill to the current school.



MSA PRINCIPALS

1890- 1893 Mother Mary Cleophas
 1893 – 1895 Sister Mary Irene LeBlanc
 1895 – 1901 Mother Mary Cleophas
 1901 – 1903 Sister Mary Evangelist
 1903 – 1907 Mother Mary Cleophas
 1907 – 1909 Sister Mary Flavia Donahue
 1909 – 1912 Sister Mary Angeline O’Rourke
 1912 – 1914 Sister Mary Constance Kelly
 1914 – 1916 Sister Marie Reine Doran
 1916 – 1917 Mother Mary Fidelis Eustace
 1917 – 1920 Sister Mary Pauline Burns
 1920 – 1926 Mother Mary Fidelis Eustace
 1926 – 1930 Sister Mary Florentine Feeley
 1930 – 1936 Sister Mary Frederica Fox
 1936 – 1940 Sister Agnes Carmel Baldwin
 1940 – 1944 Sister Maris Stella Murphy
 1944 – 1950 Sister Teresa Catherine Keenan
 1950 – 1956 Sister Frances Patrice Kelleher
 1956 – 1957 Sister Francis Louise L’Esperance
 1957 – 1963 Sister Angela de Lourdes MacDonald
 1963 – 1968 Sister James Michael Donelan
 1968 – 1971 Sister Gertrude Sullivan
 1971 – 1976 Sister Doris Schoner
 1976 – 1980 Mr. Chris Jones
 1980 – 1985 Co-Principals - Sister Judith Marie Rollo & Mr. Chris Jones
 1985 – 2005 Co-Principals - Sister Judith Marie Rollo &, Sister Dolores Sullivan
 2005 – 2007 Mr. Jim Silcott
 2007 – 2019 Sue Moench



Sister James Michael Donelan



Mrs. Sue Moench



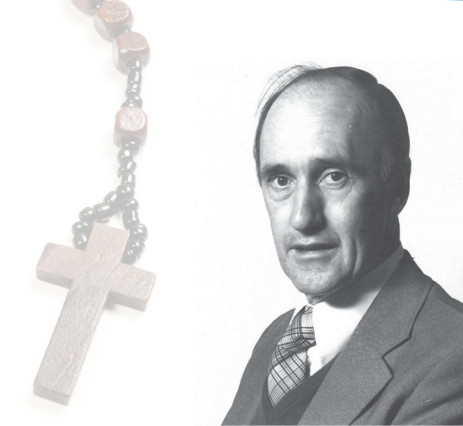
Mr. Jim Silcott



Sister Judith Marie Rollo



Sister Dolores Sullivan



Mr. Chris Jones

COMING SOON: THE LATE NITE CATECHISM



The Late Nite Catechism came to us in 2015 and was a sold out performance but on by the MSA Alumni. This is a solo comedy play about a fictional Catholic nun, written by Vicki Quade and Maripat Donovan. The show itself is a form of participatory theatre where the actress playing the nun is the only person on stage, and members of the audience become members of the nun’s school class. Put it in your calendar for MAY 8TH & 9TH, more details to follow.



A Historical Timeline

Mount Saint Agnes Academy 1890-2020

