

St. Mary's Home



# Heart & Soul

## Celebrating Our Founding Mothers

The following information comes from *Legacy of Love: History of St. Mary's Home 1838-1988* compiled by Vernice McKeever Spotswood (Mrs. Robert S.), Historian of St. Mary's Home Auxiliary from 1986 to 1987. St. Mary's Home owes many thanks to her dedication in compiling our rich history of serving children in need.

The Diocese of Mobile was established May 15, 1829, two years after a devastating fire had destroyed the Church of the Immaculate Conception and much of the surrounding area. Frequent outbursts of yellow fever had caused many homeless and orphaned children to be thrown on the mercy of the clergy and citizens...Such was the situation that greeted Bishop Michael Portier upon his arrival in his see city on January 6, 1830.

In the early years, Bishop Portier cared for some of these homeless little ones by allowing his servant...to feed them. Each morning, the servant would take his handcart to the Market on Royal Street. The merchants...would fill the cart with meat, fish, vegetables and fruit—a supply for the orphans for the day. Other merchants sent provisions, clothing, shoes, wood, coal and bedding...Mrs. John Herpin offered her services as physician.

After the city wide yellow fever epidemic of 1837, the need increased so greatly that Bishop Portier called together a group of Catholic ladies from all parts of the city to form a society to alleviate the extreme poverty and suffering and to give aid to the many destitute and orphaned children in Mobile.

“On Monday, June 4, 1838, at 10 o'clock a.m. in compliance with a previous call, a large number of ladies of the Catholic congregation of Mobile disposed to form themselves into a Charitable Association...” Bishop Portier presided over this first meeting.

“After some preliminary remarks and explanations regarding the nature and objects of the Society about to be



The original “Asylum.” Inset: Bishop Michael Portier

formed the...Preamble and Constitution approved of and recommended by the Rt. Rev. Dr. Portier,...were read in both French and English and unanimously adopted.”

The above paragraphs were taken directly from the handwritten original minutes of this historic meeting, as is the following quotation from the Preamble.

“Having witnessed with pain the many afflictions, and scenes of distress, which have lately existed in our city and anxious to lay up some provision against their future recurrence, we whose names are herewith subscribed resolve to form ourselves into a charitable operation to be known by the name and title of ‘The Catholic Female Charitable Society of Mobile.’”

The two objects of the Society as they were first written...were first, “The support and education of

*(continued on page 5)*

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St. Mary's Home, a non-profit agency, publishes Heart & Soul three times each year.

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Andy Wynne

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Andrea Rehm

**Foundation Director**

Jill Chenoweth

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Susan Veasey

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Paul Wesch

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**St. Mary's Home**

*Our mission is to support and to educate destitute orphans and children abandoned, neglected, or abused by their parents or children whose parents are unwilling or unable to support or educate them.*

# LETTER FROM THE ADMINISTRATOR

As St. Mary's Home celebrated its 169th anniversary, I re-read the wonderful histories compiled for our 125th and 150th anniversary celebrations. I thought of all of the children and families served through St. Mary's Home, the members of the clergy, the Sisters, the staff and the incredible volunteers and donors. I thought of how St. Mary's Home remained operational during the Civil War, the Great Depression, both World Wars and so many other hardships faced during those 169 years. I thought about how many things have changed, and then I realized that with all of the changes, there have been more constants.

Our basic belief is that when children and families are in need, we assist them in meeting those needs. The methods and needs have changed over time, but compassion, caring, and knowledge are still the tools we use to help others, and they must work in concert with each other. New issues such as drug abuse, recognition of sexual abuse, governmental interventions, and court systems have all changed part of what we do, but they have not changed the heart of St. Mary's Home.

We received a memorial from a woman in Texas for her great, great grandmother who lived at St. Mary's Home in the 1850's.



*"It is the human heart that is changed through our services."*

Recently, we had a woman do a staff training for us, and during the training, we learned that her father had lived in Zimmer Memorial which merged with St. Mary's Home in the 1960's. Those are just a few of the indications of the power of the heart. It changes people, not for the day, but for generations. St. Mary's Home is just a tool to help people change their hearts.

Currently, most of our funding sources have either level funded (same amount over differing years) or even reduced funding to St. Mary's Home this year. This is not unique to St. Mary's Home but a sign of the times in child welfare and the needs in our community. I truly do not know what St. Mary's Home would do without the support of wonderful people in our community. In other parts of this newsletter, you will see the reality of this. This brings me back to the one of the constants of St. Mary's Home, and that is the power of the human heart.

It is the human heart that is changed through our services. It is the heart of the donors that is changed by sharing their gifts. It is the human heart that all at St. Mary's Home are dependent on, and we have evidence that it is worthy of our trust. We have 169 years of evidence. You just have to believe. We believe in you.

Members of Diversified Business Alliance present Andy Wynne with a check for \$900 from the *Fore the Kids Golf Tournament* held on March 29.

## Are you on the e-list?

This year, St. Mary's Home plans to create an e-newsletter to send to its friends and supporters. This will keep you informed about the happenings at SMH and help reduce mailing costs. If you'd like to subscribe, please send your email address to Jill Chenoweth at [jillc@stmaryshomemobile.org](mailto:jillc@stmaryshomemobile.org).

## *Inside this Issue*

St. Mary's Home dedicates this issue of *Heart and Soul* to the far-sighted, dedicated and courageous women who founded The Catholic Female Charitable Society of Mobile in 1838 and to Bishop Portier who acted as a true spiritual leader to the entire Mobile community.

Because of Bishop Portier's compassion and because of the ladies who answered his call, St. Mary's Home has served thousands of children who had no place to turn and no one to care for them for 169 years.

Often, we forget the power that one individual possesses. In 1838, women did not possess much power politically, but it did not stop the ladies who answered Bishop Portier's call. In a little over 6 months, they formed a society; raised funds to complete a building the Bishop donated to them (the estimated cost of completing the building was \$1200 to \$1500); completed the building; purchased furniture and supplies; and opened the doors to the Asylum, as it was then called.

Today, we ask the Catholic women of our Archdiocese to rekindle their connection to St. Mary's Home. We ask for your assistance to help children who have endured things that no human should ever have to endure. With your help, we can change the world, one child at a time.

*God Bless.*

# *Seeking All Angels*

**St. Mary's Home seeks Angels to partner with us in our mission to serve abused, abandoned and neglected children. We need:**

**20,000 Angels to donate \$100 annually**

**or**

**10,000 Angels to donate \$200 annually**

**or**

**5,000 Angels to donate \$400 annually**

**or**

**2,500 Angels to donate \$800 annually**

**or**

**2,000 Angels to donate \$1,000 annually**

**or**

**1,000 Angels to donate \$2,000 annually**

**or**

**500 Angels to donate \$4,000 annually**

**Please consider helping St. Mary's Home reach its goal of raising \$2,000,000 annually to provide a safe shelter for children who have suffered things no humans should endure.**

**Please use the enclosed envelope to make your pledge to St. Mary's Home Foundation or contact Jill Chenoweth at 251.344.7733 or [jillc@stmaryshomemobile.org](mailto:jillc@stmaryshomemobile.org).**

# Memorials & Honors to St. M

St. Mary's Home supporters make memorial and honor gifts of loved ones, friends, or business associates. Families make memorial gifts to St. Mary's Home in lieu of sending flowers to memorial or funeral services. Frequently, donors make annual memorial gifts on the anniversary of the death of a loved one, the anniversary of the Day, anniversaries or birthdays to honor their beloved. Memorial gifts provide a remembrance of loved ones who

**In memory of**  
**Dr. Theodore Jack Bender**  
Mr. & Mrs. Ted Burke

**In honor of Chandra Brown**  
Jill Chenoweth  
Mr. & Mrs. Andy Wynne

**In memory of June Bru**  
Mrs. Rosemary Reimer

**In honor of**  
**Dr. Michael Chenoweth**  
Jill Chenoweth

**In honor of Betty & Harwell Coale**  
Mr. & Mrs. David Roberts

**In memory of May Smith Davis**  
Mr. & Mrs. Raymond Baker  
Mr. & Mrs. Wesley Boles  
Mr. & Mrs. Robert E. Fillingham  
McClanahan Class,  
First Baptist Church of Pine Bluff  
Mr. & Mrs. Roy Smith  
Ms. Shirley Snypes  
Mr. & Mrs. Hugh Turner, Sr.

**In honor of Foster Diehl**  
Mrs. Skeeter Diehl

**In honor of Mac Diehl**  
Mrs. Skeeter Diehl

**In honor of Joe Gottstine**  
Terri, Billy, Sam & Will Magruder

**In memory of Mrs. H.A. Guthans**  
Mr. & Mrs. Richard Wilkins

**In memory of Pat Harlan**  
Mr. & Mrs. William Keever

**In memory of Clint Harper**  
Ms. Carolyn White

**In memory of**  
**Mrs. J.M. Harrison, Sr.**  
Ms. Lane Carleton  
Ms. Shirley Mudd  
Mr. & Mrs. Richard Rowan

**In honor of**  
**Kathleen Turner Inge's Birthday**  
Mr. & Mrs. Willson McClelland

**In honor of Mrs. Michi Lunceford**  
Mr. & Mrs. Stephen Quina

**In memory of**  
**Francis Miklic Martin**  
Mr. & Mrs. Samuel Ansell  
Mr. & Mrs. R. Blanchette  
Ms. Sharon Cantrell  
Mr. & Mrs. William D. Eden, Jr.  
Ms. Judith Gibson  
Ms. Sandra Holmes  
Ms. Sandra Kendall  
Mr. & Mrs. Don Sorrells  
Ms. Dorothy Wood  
Mrs. Mary Zoghby

**In memory of**  
**Robert (Joe) Martin**  
AL DHR Office of Child Welfare  
Consultation Staff  
Ms. Sharon Cantrell  
Mr. & Mrs. William D. Eden  
Ms. Sandra Holmes  
Ms. Sandra Kendall  
Mrs. Mary Zoghby

**In memory of**  
**Thomas Todd Martin, Jr.**  
Mr. & Mrs. J. Bradley Donaghey

**In memory of**  
**George Edward Miller**  
Mr. & Mrs. Lewis Shreve

**In memory of**  
**Eric Morgan**  
Ms. Sherry Barlow  
Ms. Beth Barry  
Mr. & Mrs. L. Ersell Beck  
Mr. W.G. Buchanan  
Jeanne & Steve Comer  
Downtown Fellowship Church  
Mr. & Mrs. Gene Guined  
Mr. & Mrs. Lawrence Hyland  
Mr. & Mrs. John Kacsits  
Sue & Chuck Lewis  
Billie Prince  
Mr. & Mrs. John McLean  
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Meaher  
Mr. & Mrs. E. Linwood Morrison, Jr.  
Ms. Amy Mount  
Ms. Edith Owen  
Ms. Maxine Owens  
Mr. & Mrs. Donald Rowe  
Mr. & Mrs. Don Sorrells  
St. Paul's Episcopal School  
Mr. Blacksher White-Spunner  
Ms. Carol Wolfe  
Mr & Mrs. Andy Wynne  
Mr. & Mrs. Charles Yeager  
Mr. C. Stuart Young

# Mary's Home

Members often suggest these gifts to St. Mary's Home on holidays such as Christmas or Mother's Day to help support the mission of St. Mary's Home.

**In honor of Ann & Jack Nichols**

Mr. & Mrs. Taylor Waite

**In memory of Jim Odom**

Mr. Ernie Rogers

**In memory of Arthur Olensky**

Mr. & Mrs. Ron McConnell

**In memory of**

**Dr. Henri Amin Rathle**

Ms. Sandra Kendall

**In memory of Elizabeth Reid  
(she lived at SMH from 1849-1852)**

From her great, great granddaughter  
Mrs. Justin Trevino

**In memory of the**

**Henry Shedden Family**

Ms. Rosemary Chambless

**In memory of Peggy Sellers**

Dr. & Mrs. G. Douglas Hungerford

**In honor of**

**Annie & Frank Summersell**

Mr. & Mrs. Calvin Clay

Jill Chenoweth

Mr. & Mrs. Norm Davis

Mr. & Mrs. Andy Wynne

**In honor of Tom Wilkins**

Ms. Amy Pella

**In memory of**

**Claude H. Willis, Jr.**

Ms. Jeanne Willis

## Celebrating Our Founding Mothers *(continued from page 1)*

destitute orphans and children abandoned or neglected by their parents, or whose parents are unable to support or educate them." Second, "The relief of indigent families or individuals reduced to want by sickness or other inevitable misfortunes, as far as the funds of the society permit, shall be attended to."

How far sighted, dedicated and courageous were these women and their spiritual leader, the first Bishop of Mobile, to set in motion in the year 1838, the forerunner of the agencies, institutions and charitable fund raisers that are so prevalent today.

The first order of business was the election of nine "Lady Managers" as they were called...The ladies chosen at that first meeting were as follows: Mrs. Z. Guesnard, Mrs. M. Beroujon, Mrs. S. Byrnes, Mrs. E. Kane, Mrs. C. Gallagher, Mrs. John Herpin, Mrs. C. Ayres, Mrs. C.O. Calahan, and Miss M. Byrnes.

On December 26, 1838, the Society opened its doors to three orphans.



## Leave a Legacy

Consider leaving a gift to St. Mary's Home in your will. Provided is a sample bequest clause that you can give to your attorney to update your will to include St. Mary's Home.

### SAMPLE CLAUSE

#### ARTICLE VI

I give, devise, and bequeath the sum of \$\_\_\_\_\_ to St. Mary's Home Foundation, Inc. of Mobile, Alabama. This request is to be delivered in cash and not in kind and is unrestricted.

# SMH Happenings

## *Wine Tasting Benefits Saint Mary's Home Foundation*

As the President of Saint Mary's Home Foundation, Frank Summersell wanted to hold an event to raise people's awareness of the Foundation, of St. Mary's Home, and of the children we serve. After consulting his wife, Annie, Frank volunteered to host and to underwrite a wine tasting at his and Annie's beautiful home.



From left: Annie Summersell, Frank Summersell and Andy Wynne

On May 10, Annie and Frank opened their home to 150 people who enjoyed wines and appetizers provided by Filippo Milone, harp music provided by Mahlon McCracken, and beautiful floral arrangements created and provided by Mrs. Stewart Thames.

The guests heard a testimonial from Ms. Chandra Brown, the executive director of the Lifelines Family Counseling Center, a sister United Way Agency. Ms. Brown related a story about one of her family members who lived at St. Mary's Home until she could care for the child. She told how St. Mary's Home provided her relative with structure, discipline, ritual, tradition, and consistency.

Thanks to Annie and Frank who opened their home, so our home can remain open. Also, thanks to the many guests who answered our board members' call to support our children. So far, donations total \$11, 950. Following is a list of the people who generously donated after the wine tasting:

Mr. & Mrs. James Arendall  
Mr. & Mrs. J. Thomas Arendall  
Ms. Alexis Atkins  
Mr. & Mrs. Ted Burke, Jr.  
Mr. & Mrs. Paul Burkholder, Jr.  
Mr. John Carwie  
Mr. & Mrs. Calvin Clay  
Mr. & Mrs. Henry Crawford  
Dr. & Mrs. Bill Curtright  
Mr. & Mrs. Norm Davis  
Mrs. Robert Diehl  
E.E. Delaney's Foundation  
Mr. & Mrs. James Fibbe  
Mr. & Mrs. Wayne Fink  
Mr. & Mrs. Thomas Gangle  
Mr. & Mrs. Stan Gottlieb  
Mr. & Mrs. Emil Graf, III  
Mr. & Mrs. Robert A. Guthans  
Ms. Helen Guy  
Mr. & Mrs. Jim Hasser

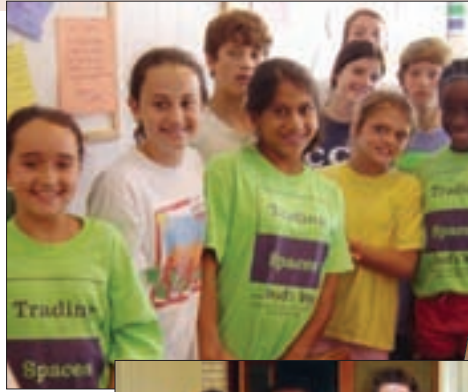
Dr. & Mrs. James Harrison, Jr.  
Dr. & Mrs. G. Douglas Hungerford  
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Hyman  
Mr. & Mrs. Thomas G. Johnson  
Ms. Joanna Kalifeh  
Dr. & Mrs. Henry Koch  
Mr. & Mrs. John Lewis, Jr.  
Mr. & Mrs. Thomas Lightcap  
Mr. & Mrs. Earle Long  
Mr. & Mrs. I.V. Mashburn  
Dr. & Mrs. George Massing  
Mr. & Mrs. Ron McConnell  
Mr. & Mrs. Hallett McDonough, Jr.  
McKean & Associates, P.A.  
Mr. & Mrs. E.W. McKean  
Mr. & Mrs. Lawrence McKinney  
Dr. & Mrs. John McMurphy  
Mr. & Mrs. Johnny Meacham  
Mr. & Mrs. Boyd Megginson, Jr.  
Dr. & Mrs. Michael Meshad

Mr. & Mrs. C. Richard Midkiff  
Mr. & Mrs. James Mostellar  
Mr. W. Austin Mulherin  
Mr. & Mrs. M. Kenny Muscat  
Ms. Audrey Patterson  
Dr. Paul Pietri  
Dr. & Mrs. Daniel Reimer  
Mr. & Mrs. David Roberts  
Mr. L. Craig Roberts  
Mr. & Mrs. T. Lee Robinson  
Mr. Judson Sanders—  
James Donaghey, Inc.  
Mr. & Mrs. Michael Sanders  
Mr. & Mrs. Frank Sims  
Mr. & Mrs. James Stowers  
Mr. & Mrs. Fred Taul  
Mr. & Mrs. Stewart Thames, Jr.  
Dr. & Mrs. Milton Wallace, Jr.  
Mr. & Mrs. C. Richard Wilkins

# Volunteer Happenings



Spring Hill College Lamda Chi Alphas join the children for recreation.



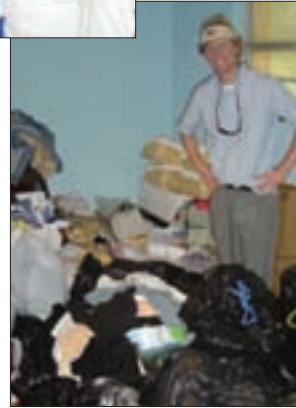
Catholic Heart Work Camp volunteers and local teens helped redecorate some of the bedrooms at SMH for "Trading Spaces... God's Way." St. Ignatius VBS kids showed off the new rooms.



Volunteers from Thompson Engineering organizing our clothes closet as part of United Way's "Day of Caring."



Spring Hill College Knights of Columbus provide yard service for the home.



Ross Lyle delivers the clothing he collected for the children as part of his Youth Leadership Mobile project.



Mr. Bragg with an Easter outfit and bunny for one of the girls.



Young ladies from Purple Labelz social/service club donating Easter baskets to the children.

Philip Steil and Melvin Woodyard delivering refurbished computers for the children, courtesy of Shell Chemical Co. and the Knights of Peter Claver.



Members of the Young Lawyers Association at the Spring Festival which they hosted for the children of St. Mary's Home and Wilmer Hall.



Golfers get ready to tee off at the Diversified Business Alliance Fore the Kids Golf Tournament on May 29.

# Foundation News

In 1838, a group of women took on a challenge from Bishop Portier and created St. Mary's Home. For 169 years, our mission has remained the same with the exception of adding one word—abused. We state our mission on page 2 of every newsletter, because it serves as the driving force of everything we do.

Because of the foresight of Bishop Portier and because of the resilience of the founding mothers, St. Mary's Home has provided shelter to thousands of children in our community. The founding mothers also possessed foresight and realized that children suffered in our community and decided to help not only orphans but any child in distress.

Today, we do not serve orphans as much as we serve abandoned, neglected or abused children; however, I believe that the children served 169 years ago proba-

bly did suffer from abuse and neglect, and I believe the Sisters at St. Mary's Home received many more abandoned children than they did orphaned children.

We owe thanks to so many people who have served the children of St. Mary's Home—staff, volunteers, donors, businesses, churches (both Protestant and Catholic), and civic organizations. Without past support, we could not have remained open for 169 years. Without continued support, we will not remain open for another 169 years.

Please consider following the lead of Bishop Portier and the founding mothers and adopt St. Mary's Home as your own.

For more information about what you can do to help St. Mary's Home, please contact Jill Chenoweth at 251.344.7733 or at [jillc@stmaryshomemobile.org](mailto:jillc@stmaryshomemobile.org).



## Wish List

This year, St. Mary's Home celebrates its 169th Anniversary. During this year, our agency plans to return to its roots. We began as an agency founded by a dedicated group of women who saw a need and filled it. As a community agency, St. Mary's Home wants to strengthen its connection to the Alabama community which has supported this agency for 169 years. Currently, the needs of our children outweigh the amount we receive from our funding sources. In order to increase and

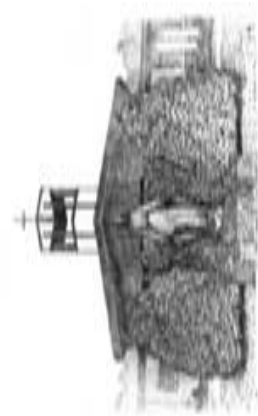
expand our services, we need your help. *Together, we can shape the future—one child at a time.* Please see our wish list:

1. **Invitations to speak to civic and church groups.**
2. **Donors to tithe to St. Mary's Home.**
3. **Foster families for children who no longer need the services of St. Mary's Home.**
4. **Ambassadors to serve as political voices for the children of Alabama, especially those at St. Mary's Home.**

Please contact Jill Chenoweth at 251.344.7733 or [jillc@stmaryshomemobile.org](mailto:jillc@stmaryshomemobile.org) about how you can help us help our children.

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*A United Way & Catholic Charities Agency*



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