

NANCY O'BRIEN
Marist College
Poughkeepsie, NY
For the Marist College Archives and Special Collections
Index – Nancy O'Brien

Project Name: Marist Heritage Project

Transcript: Yes

Summary: Yes

Photograph(s): Yes

CD#: 013

Name of Interviewee: Nancy O'Brien

Main Topics: Nancy O'Brien talks about the years she spent working at Marist College. She tracks the progression of her career, from a secretary to the registrar, how she got there and who helped her.

Others present?: No

Interviewed by: Gus Nolan

Interview Date: 06 December 2001

Location of Interview: Marist Archives and Special Collections Reading Room

Recorder model and type: Marantz PMD 690

Length of interview: 40 minutes and 45 seconds

Number of disks: 1

Recording medium/format: Microdrive

Brand of disks: IBM 1GB Microdrive

Archival copy made: Burned to a gold alloy CD (MAM) and is held in the Marist College Archives and Special Collections. Saved as a .wav file at the highest resolution possible. CD copy is available for researchers.

Quality of original recording: Good

Restrictions on interview access or use: None

Transcribed or summarized by: Nancy Decker

Brief summary of interview context and recording contents: The interview was held in the James Cannavino Library on the Marist College campus.

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<u>Time (00:00.00 ~ in hrs./mins./seconds)</u>	<u>Summary</u>
00:00.03 – 00:02.55	To begin the interview Nancy O'Brien discusses her personal history. Her full name, where she was born and when, when she moved to Poughkeepsie, her three siblings, and her parents names and occupations. She jumps ahead in time and briefly talks about how long she's been married to her husband, and about her two children, both of whom graduated from Marist College.
00:02.56 – 00:14.14	Nancy began working at Marist in September of 1966. She was friends with Betty O'Brien, who was the recorder, and whose secretary was leaving so she suggested to Nancy that she interview for the position. When she first began working she strictly did secretarial work, but Betty O'Brien quickly began training her to do jobs such as registering students and recording grades. Nancy briefly reminisces about when technology entered the campus, who she reported to and worked closely with in her job, and who filled the position of registrar. She talks about their responsibility in determining who was going to graduate or not, which at the time had to be done by hand. As far as being a woman working at Marist, and she felt that she was treated very fairly and respectfully and that there was a family-like atmosphere.
00:14.15 – 00:20.12	Nancy talks about being a student at Marist which began in the January of '67 in the evening school division, and she was one of the first women to start taking classes at Marist. She was also the first staff from Marist to take advantage of the free tuition, and she received her BA in English ten years after she started. She really loved working at Marist and never even took her vacations. She briefly comments on the school becoming co-ed, and giving credits to nurses at St. Frances hospital.
00:20.13 – 00:28.23	Nancy spends some time describing Dr. Foy, who she feels was very approachable and friendly. She also discusses some issues that they had with scheduling rooms, and also when department heads changed there were difficulties for Nancy's office because every department head would run things differently, and especially when her department took over the catalog, that was difficult as well. She gives Dr. Foy a lot of credit for setting up the foundation to move Marist into a world of technology, and for nurturing such a tight-knit Marist community, and one of the things

she gives Dr. Murray a lot of credit for his building on that community and not destroying it, because she believes it is incredibly important.

00:28.24 – 00:34.42 Nancy reflects on certain people in the Marist community such as Nilus Donnelly, who she thought was wonderful, and some of the academic deans that she worked under. She also briefly comments on certain members of the faculty as they are mentioned to her, how they were personally, and how they were as a teacher. One of her regrets is never being taught by her husband.

00:34.43 – 00:40.48 Nancy talks about the future of Marist. She doesn't really think it can get much bigger, and she thinks the technology is great, she just hopes that they don't lose the human aspect, and the Marist community which she loves. She would love to see Marist implement a child care center on campus to train their student teachers in child care and special education training. The one thing she would caution Marist about is having too many adjuncts and not enough full-time faculty. She ends the interview by briefly reminiscing about her fondest memories at Marist.