Salve Regina Oral History Project

Date of Interview: 6/20/2018

Interviewee: Pat Hayes, Alumna (Class of 1962)

Interviewer: Kathleen Christ, Class of 2020

Kathleen Christ: Okay, so this is Kathleen Christ, today is June 20, 2018, and as a part of the Salve Regina Oral History Project I will be interviewing Pat Hayes, who is a Salve alum of the class of 1962. That’s right, right?

Pat Hayes: You got it.

Kathleen Christ: Okay. So as my first question, I would just like to know more about you and your background, like where did you come from and...

Pat Hayes: I came from close by, I was from Providence and I went to a Sister of Mercy high school, and had no intention of coming to Salve. I had a full scholarship to the College of Mount Saint Vincent[[1]](#footnote-1), but my geometry teacher, or my math teacher, at St. Xavier’s in Providence begged me to at least come look at it, and that was it. [*laughing]*

Kathleen Christ: So, you decided afterwards…

Pat Hayes: Yeah, that I had to come here, that I loved it. I just loved what it looked like, [*more laughing*]. I was lucky because my major here was really one of the best majors, because we had all these people from the War College[[2]](#footnote-2), you know, people who were in Newport, wives and husbands, because they were a part of the Navy, but they were from all over the world, so, it was really nice.

Kathleen Christ: Wow, so…

Pat Hayes: I was a French major.

Kathleen Christ: So what exactly made you choose Salve?

Pat Hayes: What made me choose Salve?

Kathleen Christ: Yes.

Pat Hayes: I fell in love with the campus.

Kathleen Christ: The campus… *[Both laughing]*

Pat Hayes: It’s not a really good reason. [*Laughing*] I loved the ocean.

Kathleen Christ: Wow; I don’t blame you at all. [*Laughs*] So how do you feel about your school experience here?

Pat Hayes: I thought it was great. There was nothing about it that I didn’t think was good.

Kathleen Christ: Really?

Pat Hayes: Yeah…except the food…[*Laughing*]…the food was horrible.

Kathleen Christ: The food, how was it made then?

Pat Hayes: Well, we ate in Ochre Court, in the basement. That was the cafeteria, that little area down there. And [at] breakfast, for example, when you cut the pancakes, the batter would run out onto the plate, so I complained to Mother Hilda,[[3]](#footnote-3) who was the president of the college, and she said, “Oh no, honey, the food is delicious here!” And I said, “It’s not!” [*Laughing*] So, she said, “I’m going to come for Sunday breakfast,” and she was shocked. She was really upset. She thought we were eating what the nuns were eating, but we weren’t. That was my senior year… I was the President of the Student Body so I had more contact with her, and I just said, “This is horrible!” You know, we can’t even eat it.

Kathleen Christ: So, the nuns didn’t…where did the nuns eat then?

Pat Hayes: The nuns weren’t allowed to eat in public.

Kathleen Christ: Really?

Pat Hayes: They wore habits, and even the student nuns, they weren’t allowed to talk to us in class. They had to stay by themselves and they weren’t allowed to talk to us, and they were never allowed to eat with us. They weren’t even allowed to eat with their own families.

Kathleen Christ: Wow.

Pat Hayes: So it was really sheltered.

Kathleen Christ: Wow, I had no idea.

Pat Hayes: Yeah, so even Sister Therese[[4]](#footnote-4), she was the president of the school, she was one of my classmates. But I didn’t know her, because –she­–they had habits on, and they weren’t supposed to *ever* socialize. Maybe there was one who did, out of the ones who were here, but they didn’t socialize.

Kathleen Christ: Oh, wow.

Pat Hayes: They never came to anything.

Kathleen Christ: So, did you ever know, do you ever see any of them come back?

Pat Hayes: Yeah, now we do, now that most of them, aren’t still in the convent. Sister Therese still is, but a lot of them are not. They come back for reunions, but they have new names, so they introduce themselves, and say, “Oh, I was in your math class or your English class or…” but no way I would have known who they were. And the nuns all wore habits, so when I came back, and they weren’t in habits, and they’d changed their names, I didn’t know any of them.

Kathleen Christ: No, it’s like they… were a new person.

Pat Hayes: Yeah, a new person.

Kathleen Christ: So, what was it like being in an all girls institution then?

Pat Hayes: I liked it because there were no distractions, no competition. I wouldn’t like to be competing. In that era, I wouldn’t have liked to be competing with a male.

Kathleen Christ: Mhmm.

Pat Hayes: I like to do well. I’m really competitive. And in that era, it wasn’t cool to be a woman and be competitive, and, you know, ambitious.

Kathleen Christ: Ah, I see.

Pat Hayes: It just wasn’t, you know? So it was nice that I didn’t have to worry about that. I liked it. And I liked how I didn’t have to worry about how I looked, you know? I don’t know about if you worry about how you look with males around, but I might have taken a little more time, you know? [*laughs*]

Kathleen Christ: Yes, definitely. [*Both laughing*]

Pat Hayes: So, I actually liked it. I didn’t mind, and my high school was all female, so I liked that and I didn’t mind.

Kathleen Christ: I see. Okay, what else do I have written here? Can you tell me a little bit more about the field that you studied?

Pat Hayes: I studied French, and as I said, we had really good teachers. One of them we had [was] Madame Ramos.[[5]](#footnote-5) She was Swiss, [and] she also spoke fluent Spanish. I took Spanish too. But, [with] the preparation that she gave us, things were in order. You studied every single century of French literature, French history, except for the 20th century. We were in the 20th century– it was, you know, 1950­–when I came here it was 1958, so we didn’t get into the 20th century. That was new. We did everything methodically, so when I applied to graduate schools, I got into every single one and received fellowships to every one.

Kathleen Christ: Wow!

Pat Hayes: And the thing that they remarked was that I had covered all of this stuff. And everyone in that era, when I graduated in 1962, you had to take a comprehensive exam in your area. So, I was tested on everything I did in my four years of French here. And everybody did it, whatever your field was…History! Imagine having one exam just like a Master’s Exam.

Kathleen Christ: Yes, wow!

Pat Hayes: I just thought it was really good. And took Spanish here, but I had never done Spanish before. So I started at the beginning, but that was really boring, because languages are my thing. So at one point–you know, Spanish wasn’t as popular then, French was– so there was only one Spanish teacher that I remember, and she was sick. So they had a nun who didn’t know Spanish–maybe she took it in high school–replace her. And I remember at the end of the first week I went to her and I said, “You know, I’d really be glad to help you, you know, go out and teach,” and she cried. [I didn’t offer to teach for her. I offered to help her get ready to teach since she didn’t seem to have any language ability.]

Kathleen Christ: Awww…

Pat Hayes: I felt horrible, but she just, they were making her teach it, and she really didn’t [know how]. It was like agony trying to watch..

Kathleen Christ: It was hard to watch…

Pat Hayes: Yeah, yeah. But anyway, I had wanted a minor in Spanish but I didn’t quite make it because I also tried to minor in English. And we had to, if you wanted Education–they had us– you had to do a double major. They didn’t allow you to [minor] in education…

Kathleen Christ: It’s still that way.

Pat Hayes: So you had a double major. And so, I was 3 credits short of a minor in Spanish. So, later I finished a major, but I couldn’t do it here, you know, there was just too much to do.

Kathleen Christ: So you studied French and then also education?

Pat Hayes: Right, French and education simultaneously, because my mother made me. [*Both laughing*] She said, “What are you going to do with French?” And I said, “Well, just enjoy it.” And she said, “Well someday you may have to work.” So, she forced it on me.

Kathleen Christ: So, she said, you will teach, as well? Or at least study education?

Pat Hayes: Well, no. She said you’re going to be ready *in case* you need to teach. But I was married at least sixteen years before I went to work. All my kids were in school by the time I went to work. Because–people–I didn’t know anybody in my neighborhood who worked. No woman worked. So it was a really different era.

Kathleen Christ: And you got married when you were younger then?

Pat Hayes: Yes, I was 22, and that was the norm.

Kathleen Christ: Oh, so right out of college?

Pat Hayes: Well, I went to graduate school for one year. I went to BC.[[6]](#footnote-6) At the end of that year–so it was ’63 when I got married, a year later.

Kathleen Christ: So how did you meet your husband?

Pat Hayes: He was an OC[[7]](#footnote-7) here in Newport. And I met him in, what was the Skoal Room, [at] the Viking.[[8]](#footnote-8) We were only allowed to go to two places, the Skoal Room, and what’s now The Mooring. The Mooring was just a bar, and there was dancing, and the Skoal Room was a cocktail lounge with dancing. Everything else was off limits. The Tavern was on Bellevue Avenue, but that was off-limits.

Kathleen Christ: The nuns didn’t allow you to go?

Pat Hayes: No, I mean people went, but it was off-limits. But I met [my husband] in the summer between sophomore and junior year at the Skoal Room.

Kathleen Christ: Oh, wow! Okay, [so] were there any classes that you particularly enjoyed or disliked?

Pat Hayes: No, I think I liked everything, except Mariology. [[9]](#footnote-9) [*Laughing*] I don’t know if you’ve ever heard about Sister Eloise, they were twins.[[10]](#footnote-10)

Kathleen Christ: Oh, yes.

Pat Hayes: Sister Eloise and Sister Jean. I had Sr. Eloise in high school and college.

Kathleen Christ: Really?

Pat Hayes: She was a sweetheart, and she begged us to take this course that she developed called Mariology. It was horrible! It was the most dry, boring thing I’d ever taken, and she had a voice that droned. I had her for Latin and I loved her, and she taught theology. I don’t remember if I had her for theology, but if I did, I don’t remember. But this Mariology, I think that’s the only course here that I thought, I’m just not going to make it through. [*Laughs*] I only took it because she begged! [*Laughter*] But I loved everything else. English was great, history was wonderful! We had Sr. Martina.[[11]](#footnote-11) She’s the first history teacher I had who made me think about majoring in history. I’d never had a history teacher that made history come alive. But, so… I liked everything, and I didn’t have to take math. When you entered as a freshman you had to take either math or science and I took biology, which I loved, but if I had to take math I would have hated it. No question. [*Laughter*]

Kathleen Christ: I see. So, can you tell me more about Sr. Miley now?

Pat Hayes: I can. She was a very very sweet lady. You know, she didn’t seem like the president of anything. She was just this warm, I don’t know, I can’t even explain it. She was…motherly. We called her Mother Hilda, and she was like a mother. She was never like a sister. She was a mother. And I have a story to tell about her. It happened the year after I graduated. President Kennedy was shot.[[12]](#footnote-12) This little nun, she used to bring Mother Hilda her orange juice because I think Mother Hilda had diabetes, so she would bring her orange juice if she was low. But so the kids–I didn’t know this–but some people called her Sister Mary Orange Juice. But anyway, when the president was shot, [the little nun] burst into one of the classrooms and she said, “The President’s been shot!” And a girl shouted out, “Who would want to kill Mother Hilda?” [*Both laugh*] And that was it. But she was the sweetest lady. But my senior year–well, the end of junior year–I was elected Student Body President. We didn’t have much money, I was here on a scholarship, and my parents said they didn’t think we’d be able to afford room and board next year. So then I went to Mother Hilda and I said, “I think I’m going to have to give up [being Student Body President] because I can’t afford room and board,” and she said, “Forget it, we’ll get it paid,” and it was paid through [Mr.] Goelet,[[13]](#footnote-13) who [had] owned Ochre Court. [He no longer owned it; he had gifted it to Salve.] It was a scholarship, you know, and he paid my room and board. I mean, [Sister Miley] was just wonderful. But the year after I graduated was the first time that there were any demonstrations, and they were outside her office. So I’m sure after that she resigned. [*Laughter*] [In] ’62 nobody did demonstrations; [but in]’63 there were more. Everything had changed.

Kathleen Christ: What kind of demonstrations?

Pat Hayes: Against things. Like they would have demonstrated because there wasn’t good food

Kathleen Christ: Yes, so they decided to actually act out.

Pat Hayes: You know, we just quietly said the food’s not good. But I thought [Sister Miley whom we all knew only as Mother Hilda] was wonderful. Everybody liked her. But she didn’t seem like a president, not like any of the ones who’d followed her. Especially, you know, Sister Lucille and Sister Therese, and Sister Jane, you know they were more presidential.[[14]](#footnote-14)

[*Interruption, Library Clerk announces fire alarms will be tested*]

Kathleen Christ: Thank you.

Pat Hayes: But, she was, everybody liked her. That’s why the girl said who would want to shoot

Mother Hilda? You know, she was the world’s nicest person.

Kathleen Christ: Yes! So, did you ever get to meet, or see anything about President Kennedy [here in Newport]?

Pat Hayes: Oh yeah. We all met him.

Kathleen Christ: Really?

Pat Hayes: Yeah. I lived– my senior year–I lived in what was at the corner of Ruggles Avenue and Bellevue, I mean, yeah, Bellevue. It was called Queen Hall.[[15]](#footnote-15) It’s now a condo building. It–I don’t know if Salve owned it or was renting it, but if you were a student teacher, you lived in that building. And I taught at the high school, which was right at the end of the street from that and everyday, I’d say like mid-afternoon to late afternoon, President Kennedy would ride in from Ocean Drive whenever he was there. It wasn’t summer, because I wasn’t here during the summer. It had to be spring maybe, or fall. He would ride in a convertible, and he’d have Caroline in his lap.[[16]](#footnote-16) She couldn’t have been more than four to six years old, and he’d be in the car alone, top down, Caroline in his lap, and the Secret Service behind him, and he’d always stop at the corner because we’d wait. [*Laughter*] And he’d get out to shake our hands, and the secret service would be pushing us back saying, “Leave them alone,” and I think everybody got to meet him because he’d always stop if he saw us.

Kathleen Christ: So he was here often then?

Pat Hayes: Yes, he spent a lot of time here at Hammersmith Farm.[[17]](#footnote-17) He always came up Ruggles, so we knew… He swam in a pool that was on the ocean side, all the way down. It’s some woman on the right hand side who had an indoor pool, and so he went there every day to swim.[[18]](#footnote-18)

Kathleen Christ: So she just let him swim there?

Pat Hayes: Oh yeah. She was society, and his wife [Jackie] was society. He was not; the wife was. The woman who owned this property,–Wakehurst–Mrs. [Brugiere yes]? When she died, *Time* magazine published an article about her. She was called the “Purple People Eater” of Newport, and they talked about how she blackballed President Kennedy. So he was never really invited to the really blue-blood things. Jackie was accepted, but he never was. And [Mrs. Brugiere] definitely didn’t want us ever to have this property. So...

Kathleen Christ: Yes.

Pat Hayes: But [the President and his wife] went to St. Mary’s.[[19]](#footnote-19) People would see them. You know, people weren’t afraid. Here he was just walking around, driving in an open car, which is what killed him, but in those days, he was just very friendly. And people saw [Jackie Kennedy] maybe playing golf at the country club, but she wasn’t sociable. He was. She was more reserved, which was her right to be.

Kathleen Christ: Yes, she was the First Lady. Okay, so how were you involved on campus? You did mention how you were the Student Body President your senior year.

Pat Hayes: Yes. I did a lot. Whatever you could be in, I was in it. I mean a lot of people were, because there was really nothing else, you know?

Kathleen Christ: So, then what you did…

Pat Hayes: I was [Class] President my junior year, [and] Student Body President my senior year. I can’t even remember all the things we had. We had a lot of conferences. You know, I was on the committee that was helping to organize the Peace Corps, before the Peace Corps was organized. I don’t remember who went with me from Salve, but I remember I was one of the people from Rhode Island who went to that conference. And it had to be 1961, because I met my husband in 1960 and he went to supply school in Georgia in 1961. I went to the conference in Washington DC and then went to visit him in Georgia, so it had to be 1961. So it was a really big deal. But it was you know, world affairs and current affairs, and so I can’t remember even the names of the different things other than, you know, Student Council. That was all I remember.

Kathleen Christ: Mhmm, okay. Can you tell me a bit more about Salve’s traditions and events that they had?

Pat Hayes: Mmm, well there were always teas, and they were very formal. You wore a hat and gloves, white gloves and a hat… I don’t know how often we did it, but you definitely dressed up to go to these. They were in Ochre Court and it was a privilege [to be in Ochre Court for an event because we] were never allowed in [there], except for the chapel. The chapel is–as you come in the room to the right–that was the chapel.[[20]](#footnote-20) That’s the only room we were ever allowed to go in, and we couldn’t use the stairway.

Kathleen Christ: The main…

Pat Hayes: Yes, the main stairway. We had to come in through the side door. So you came in through the side door, and you went into the classrooms upstairs. Those were classrooms on the second floor. Well, actually they became classrooms, maybe they were. Maybe the third floor was the dorm area. Freshmen, when I came here, they were divided between Mercy Hall–that was where I was–and Ochre Court. So I think their rooms were the third floor. But one of the big things was these [teas], and then we had the crowning in May. That was a big deal. One of my classmates at my Fiftieth Reunion said she was so upset when [my] roommate was picked to do the crowning. And I’m like, I couldn’t even remember it! [*laughs*] But then when she talked about it, I could remember that was a big tradition in May, and the May Pole, when you know…what other things?

Kathleen Christ: What exactly was the crowning?

Pat Hayes: There’s a statue as you come into the main gate at Ochre Court. To the right there’s a statue of the Blessed Mother, or there was, I think it’s still there, and you crowned it in May. And my roommate– now that you say it, I see the picture of her crowning so I guess she did–but I don’t, you know, it wasn’t something I remembered clearly, but she said she had prayed that she would get to crown the Blessed Mother. [*Laughter*] And she’s still a very very devout Catholic, so I mean I understand that, to her, it was something really special. What other traditions? I can’t really remember. Those were the two things that really stand out…You had to wear a beanie as a Freshman.

Kathleen Christ: A beanie?

Pat Hayes: A beanie. You know, like a little…You had to wear it, I don’t know, maybe six weeks? Freshmen, almost like a hazing. And we had blazers, but I think everybody had a white blazer with an emblem on it.

Kathleen Christ: Was there a dress code?

Pat Hayes: No, but everybody had this. On certain occasions everybody had to wear the blazer. There’s another tradition. You wore the blazer for things; you had to own it. The beanie was, all Freshmen had to wear the beanie. I don’t know if it was two weeks, six weeks, but, what other traditions? [*Fire alarm beeping*] We had big dances once a year in Ochre Court. The one junior year was the Ring Dance.

Kathleen Christ: Yes.

Pat Hayes: Do you still have that?

Kathleen Christ: No…

Pat Hayes: It was a formal, you know, gowns and tuxes. Senior year was the same kind of thing. It was a senior prom sort of. I don’t know what we called it. And I know I wore gowns to the ones in freshman and sophomore year too, but that was the thing, you know? We had formal dances four times a year, and people…it was definitely formal.

Kathleen Christ: I see.

Pat Hayes: Let me…see I don’t know.

Kathleen Christ: The Ring Dance… there was a whole Ring Ceremony?

Pat Hayes: Yup, there was a ring ceremony, right.

Kathleen Christ: What exactly was the significance of the rings?

Pat Hayes: It was just like when a nurse gets capped. You know, so you got your ring, and it was like a capping almost. You had made it. You got your ring, and you know, you would walk through the ring. Too bad I could’ve brought you the picture! [*laughter*] But I have the picture of the giant ring that you walked through.

Kathleen Christ: And then there was a dance afterwards?

Pat Hayes: Well the Ring Ceremony wasn’t simultaneous with the dance, because you had dates at that, and it was a little corny to walk through a ring, but it was a daytime thing. And I remember on the day, I was Junior Class President, and on the day that we were going to have the ring ceremony I had to give a speech. And the dean who was– Sister Mary Rosalia[[21]](#footnote-21) was her name–everybody was afraid of her. She came up to me and she said, in the sternest voice imaginable, “Your dress is too tight!” As I’m going to give a speech to all these people!

Kathleen Christ: Oh my gosh!

Pat Hayes: And that was, she was known to do things like that. My freshman year, I took seven courses my freshman year. Nobody said how many courses to take, so I just took seven! [*Laughter*] We had our exams after Christmas. So after I took my exams she called me in and she would make you stand in front of her and she would sit at her desk, and, “Miss Silva,” she said. “You took seven classes!” And I said, “Yeah, I know it,” and she said, “Well you’re not allowed to do that.” And I said, “Well I got A’s in all of them!” I mean, I thought that’s what she meant. She said, “No, no one’s allowed to take more than, (I think it was) five,” and I said, “Gee! I’m sorry, I didn’t know. I’m taking seven now too!” [*Laughter*] Senior year, she called me in and said, “You have to start giving demerits to students who don’t return library books,” and I said, “No, absolutely not.” I said, “You won’t even keep the library open on snow days!” If there was a snow day, and we were in our dorms, they closed the library, and I said, “We can’t even use the library! So we’re not going to give any demerits, we have nothing to do with the library.” …I don’t know anybody who didn’t have a run-in with her, when I was here. No one, including the nuns! [*Both laugh*]

Kathleen Christ: How…you would have to give demerits?

Pat Hayes: Yeah.

Kathleen Christ: Was that as a part of…

Pat Hayes: They gave, well I never did it. I mean, I wouldn’t do it. She wanted us, she wanted Student Council to do it.

Kathleen Christ: Oh, so Student Council had that ability.

Pat Hayes: Yeah, but I said, “No, we’re not doing that. You won’t even let us use the library, we don’t have anything to do with the library!” But there were demerits like if you were caught smoking in your room, or…and that not smoking…we had smokers, did you know that?

Kathleen Christ: As in, the smoking rooms?

Pat Hayes: We had smoking rooms. They were called smokers, and they were in the bottom floor of McAuley Hall, the bottom floor of Ochre Court, and you could imagine, they would be closed and they would be *filled* with smoke. And I mean, I didn’t smoke, so I didn’t go in there, even the people who *did* smoke didn’t like it...

Kathleen Christ: I know.

Pat Hayes: But lots of things weren’t allowed. My freshman year, I was in the dorm room at Mercy Hall. There were two big dorm rooms with eight people in each, so sixteen people, and mine had a balcony. Mercy Hall has a balcony, like a fire escape, and we had to sign in…we had to sign in right after dinner every night. We couldn’t go out after dinner. So, if dinner was at five, you had to be back by six-thirty. So, two­–I didn’t know this– but two girls hadn’t come back, and, Sr. Eloise, who was our dorm mother, she was sitting by the door in our room. We had no idea why, and they had climbed up the fire escape. Somehow she knew they were going to come up that way. They came back at nine o’clock and they were expelled on the spot for coming in late. They’d been drinking, but you know, anyway, that wouldn’t even be an offense today! Nine o’clock! And so they were expelled. They could apply to come back the following year, and one of them did come back for a short while and didn’t stay. So things, you know, were really, you know, different. On Friday night you could be out until I guess nine or ten, maybe Saturday was eleven. Sunday might’ve been nine, and during the week right after dinner.

Kathleen Christ: So you weren’t allowed to go to the library or something to study after­–

Pat Hayes: You could go to the library, but not after, no. After dinner you couldn’t go to the library. I could, because I lived in McAuley Hall, and that was the library, so you could go down there. Now, I’m not sure about the other dorms, I don’t remember, I mean maybe we could sign out to go to the library, but I have a feeling that, at nine o’clock–I think lights out were early, like, ten o’clock lights out. I mean, it was like being in a high school boarding school in the old days. I don’t think they even do that [anymore], so it was definitely different.

Kathleen Christ: So, you said that you lived in Mercy Hall…

Pat Hayes: For freshman year I lived in Mercy. Sophomore/Junior year I lived in McAuley, and senior year I lived in what was Queen Hall up on Bellevue Avenue.

Kathleen Christ: Can you tell me a little bit more about Mercy Hall first?

Pat Hayes: The downstairs of Mercy Hall was the gym, and upstairs there were the two big dorm rooms, with eight girls in each. So, when I got there, there were only two beds left. I arrived late on the first day, and there were only two beds left, and they were facing each other, and that was my life-long friend. She came in the same time I did and we took beds right across from each other. And it just happened we had a lot in common and so we stayed friends forever. We’re still friends.

Kathleen Christ: Wow.

Pat Hayes: There were rooms going down the hall, I guess they were doubles or triples. I don’t even know, I don’t remember, but there were even rooms all the way down the hall and the end. And in Ochre Court­, I’m pretty sure it was the third floor that they lived on and the nuns lived up in the attic part, like the fourth floor­, but their rooms were all big. They had at least six girls in each room because those rooms were giant. My sophomore year in McAuley Hall, I had the room that, for awhile [some time after I graduated] was the infirmary, and my bathroom was almost as big as this room. The bedroom was huge, there were three of us, and there was running hot and cold salt water, as well as regular water, in the bathtub.

Kathleen Christ: Oh my gosh!

Pat Hayes: And there was still carpeting… I mean it was very luxurious. So we were in a nice room facing the ocean. I wanted to be in the same room junior year, but Mary, my roommate, she was a nurse, so they had to move [out] to the hospital. That left only two of us. And, we could get two people but not one, so we got two people to room with us and we ended up in the servant’s quarters upstairs, but still facing the ocean. It was a smaller room, and we had to share a bathroom [down the] hall. [Sophomore year] was not a shared bathroom, the one that we had was *our* bathroom, for three people. So upstairs we had a shared bathroom, but no showers. I mean, they were just bathtubs. And senior year at Queen Hall, if you lived in the main part of the house the rooms were nice. They were on the second floor, but I lived in the servant’s quarters so it was a little room. I shared it with the one roommate that had been with me since sophomore year.

Kathleen Christ: [What was it like] living on top of the library? Did that­–were you ever unable to talk as often because…

Pat Hayes: No, because they closed the library most of the time.

Kathleen Christ: Oh, that’s right!

Pat Hayes: They only opened it certain hours. It was really bizarre. Imagine on a snow day, they wouldn’t open the library? [*Laughter*]

Kathleen Christ: So you never ran into any of those kind of issues…

Pat Hayes: No. You couldn’t wear pants below the dorm floors. You could only wear skirts or dresses. No pants were ever allowed during my four years here, except on the dorm floor, on the sleeping floor.

Kathleen Christ: Mhmm…. [only there] you were allowed.

Pat Hayes: And outside, if you were going to play tennis, you had to wear a trench coat because [of] Mrs. [Brugiere]. The tennis courts were somewhere right around here. She didn’t want any girls in shorts walking down the street. So, you had to wear a buttoned up trench coat.

Kathleen Christ: Wow, so you played sports then?

Pat Hayes: I mean, you know, I remember playing tennis. I wasn’t very good at it, but we had gym uniforms, you know, like the kind that people wore in high school. They looked like prison outfits, you know. [*Laughter*] I remember playing basketball, but sports weren’t a big thing. I mean, there were no competitive sports. It was just more for fun.

Kathleen Christ: Mhmm, more recreational.

Pat Hayes: Right.

Kathleen Christ: Ah. Was there…you mentioned having Dorm Mothers?

Pat Hayes: Yeah.

Kathleen Christ: Was there one that you liked the most or the least?

Pat Hayes: Actually it was Sr. Eloise. [*Laughs*] She ended up being our Dorm Mother senior year, and I was going to my husband’s, [at that time he was my boyfriend], OC Ball and they were always on a Thursday night I think. They graduated on the Friday morning, and I told her that I needed permission to be out until, I don’t know, ten o’clock or whatever, and she said I could stay out until like one, [*laughter*], and she said, “I’ll wait up for you.”

Kathleen Christ: Aw, that’s so sweet!

Pat Hayes: I know! And she allowed us every single night, I told you how we weren’t allowed to go out after dinner? But she allowed us –we were mostly seniors– every night we would go to the Creamery at like nine o’clock, as long as we came right back. We’d been out to the Creamery, get our ice cream and come back, and that was because she was the House Mother. So, as strict as she could be, she could also be really sweet. So I’m glad I took her Mariology. [*Laughs*] Yeah, she­– I think she was my favorite. She surprised you, you know? And later, when my son was a Cub Scout, he needed to interview a religious. So, I called Sister Eloise and said, “Can my son interview you?” So, he wore his little Boy Scout uniform and she wouldn’t let me in the room; she closed the door. So when he came out I could see this look on his face. I said, “How’d it go?” He said, “Okay, but after… I interviewed her, she made me take a quiz,” [*laughs*] on what she had told him!

Kathleen Christ: Oh my gosh!

Pat Hayes: I said, that’s Sister Eloise.

Kathleen Christ: She’s tough!

Pat Hayes: Yeah, but she was really the only House Mother I remember from freshman year and senior year. There were others, and there were, um, students who were house parents. You know, one of my friends who had been a “day-hop”– senior year she was a House Mother at Mercy so she [go to] here.

Kathleen Christ: Oh! Interesting.

Pat Hayes: But the word definitely was “day-hop.” I never heard… the word “commuter.”

Kathleen Christ: That became later.

Pat Hayes: Yeah.

Kathleen Christ: I wish we still had “day-hop.” So you kind of mentioned this, but how did you and your classmates socialize out of the confines of the school? So, did you go places, or, during the weekends–

Pat Hayes: Yeah, just the weekends. You couldn’t go out during the week, so we did go. We always­…the two places we went, that *my* friends went, I know there were people who went to the Tavern, but I didn’t break rules. You know, I was an officer. I certainly wouldn’t report you for breaking a rule, but I didn’t feel I could break a rule. [*Laughs*] And we went. I especially liked the Mooring. It was very social. We never drank. None of my friends did, because they wouldn’t have served you. You could go if you were eighteen or older, but you didn’t drink, and it was just dancing. It was a nice place to meet people, and the Skoal Room was too, but mostly in the summer. So that’s the place we went to most. We did have dances in the gym, [but] they weren’t really very good because they would kind of bring guys in from other places and that never works, you know? They don’t really want to come, [*laughter*], but they were told they have to go, [or I guess they were told that]. You couldn’t do that today, but they did that.

Kathleen Christ: Oh, so from other schools they would just–

Pat Hayes: Yeah, from like PC…[[22]](#footnote-22)

Kathleen Christ: They would just be put in a bus and–

Pat Hayes: I guess, I mean, as I recall. But I know I wasn’t living in Mercy Hall because I remember walking from McAuley there. I was wearing heels and they were killing me, because I wasn’t really used to wearing spikes, and that was the style then. And I was like, “Oh my God, this was a mistake!” [*Laughter*]

Kathleen Christ: Was there anything else you would do with your free time then? Or…

Pat Hayes: We went to Ocean Drive a lot. You know we would go by, or down to the beach. It’s when people had cars you had more freedom to go places, but I spent a lot of time on Cliff Walk, a lot of time. I studied there a lot, and we’d walk it all the time. We did a lot of walking because people didn’t have cars. We went into town a lot but you couldn’t go down to Thames Street; it was dangerous.

Kathleen Christ: Really?

Pat Hayes: It was all sailor bars so you didn’t go down to Thames Street at all. That really just was enlisted men bars, so it wasn’t a safe place to be, but we went on Bellevue. There were places you could go on Bellevue. There was…there was the Creamery, and little restaurants, and not a whole lot like there is now, but we spent a lot of time at Ocean Drive and at the beaches and at Cliff Walk, and I was happy with that. I really liked it. As we were older we got invited to parties, there were lots of the– besides OCS there was the War College and there was also the school for JAG, the navy attorneys and [a school for] pilots,[[23]](#footnote-23) and they always had [apartments on] Tuckerman Avenue. There were lots of parties we were invited to, and everyone would go. I mean, everybody went to the same parties because the people who rented the houses, they just carried on the tradition, you know, the Navy people. So, it was mostly–you socialized mostly with [the] Navy because [there] wasn’t anybody else here.

Kathleen Christ: Interesting. Okay, how do you feel your education at Salve impacted your outlook, and kind of your life in general?

Pat Hayes: Well, because I got such a great education, I had my choice of graduate schools. The only reason I chose BC is because my husband asked to be stationed in Newport…I felt like I had to go to a school, you know, since he asked for Newport and he really wanted to go on an Aircraft Carrier which would’ve been in California, but he said he would choose Newport and get a Destroyer instead, so I felt I had to go to BC. So I turned down the other places which were in the Midwest, you know, Indiana, Wisconsin, Kansas. They were big language schools in the big universities and they were mostly straight-through doctoral programs, so I went to BC instead. But it’s just, everything, my friends, the woman I just went to Portugal with[[24]](#footnote-24)…one of my classmates­– she’s the one who’d said she’d do a Face-Time if you want to do it, she’s the one who told me the Mother Hilda story, and she knows *a lot* about dorm life here, because my first two years, I went home a lot, until I met my husband. Once I met him, the summer before my junior year, I never went home on the weekends, ever, and I never wanted to. But she couldn’t go home, she was from New York, so and all her friends were from farther away, but she’d have a lot of stories. And she was very friendly… My freshman year lots of people dropped out. Lots of people who started out with me in the dorm were gone by the end of the school year. I don’t know why… Some people dropped out over OCs, because OCs were notorious for not telling you they were married, and that happened quite a bit. And [one girl] tried to commit suicide and so, you know, that happens at any college. Now it’s stress, but then it was over an OC who was married. [*Laughter*] But I think Irene would have a lot of good stories for you, and she remembers. I just don’t have a good memory; she remembers everything. [*Laughter*] And she didn’t live in the same dorms; she lived in Moore Hall. She says she lived in McAuley Hall and Queen Hall too. I don’t remember her there, I only remember her at Moore… so maybe her junior year she was at Moore. I don’t know where she was freshman year, I wasn’t friendly with her at school. She was just somebody I said hello to, but when I­–those of us who were going to BC, (and it ended up there were four of us who were going to go to BC), and one, my roommate, was going to work in a hospital there, so we all roomed together on Commonwealth Avenue in Boston. It was way downtown, and, it was a building that was not secure. It was a lovely building, but it was not secured and the “Boston Strangler” was strangling in our neighborhood, so it was you know, a scary time except we didn’t know enough to be that scared…That’s how I got to be friends with Irene, graduate school. We lived together then, and she’s been friends with my husband, both of us, ever since. People in this –at least people in my class– tend to retain friendships. You know, I don’t know why, because I think other classes may not be as close, but you should contact her. Another one of my classmates said she’d love to have you contact her. I don’t think you could do Face-Time, but if you want to talk I could give you her phone number.

Kathleen Christ: Thank you… are there… any lessons here you feel you learned at your time here at Salve?

Pat Hayes: Let’s see. I learned the value of friendship, and let me see. Life lessons you mean, or?

Kathleen Christ: Anything in general. It doesn’t necessarily have to be a *life* life lesson.

Pat Hayes: I don’t know. I just can’t pinpoint it because everything about the experience was positive. That was my experience, and I think Irene would say the same thing. Not everybody had a constant positive thing, but I remember –ha– another thing that would never happen now. I told you I went to the OC Ball…the next day was my husband’s graduation from OCS, so I cut my classes and I was called on the carpet for it. You weren’t supposed to cut classes.

Kathleen Christ: Yes.

Pat Hayes: Can you imagine? [*Laughter*] My French teacher said, “You weren’t at class today!” And I’m like, “No, I wasn’t!” [*Both laugh*]

Kathleen Christ: Do you have a favorite memory or particular story you would like to share?

Pat Hayes: I think I shared them all.

Kathleen Christ: You shared them all? Okay. Do you have anything you feel was your biggest accomplishment here while you were at Salve?

Pat Hayes: Oh, I don’t know. My biggest accomplishment? I suppose getting into all the graduate schools I chose was a big thing; for me it was, as I couldn’t pay for that either. [*Laughter*] And that was the thing, lots of people here had a lot of money but some of us didn’t. It didn’t matter as much, like I think I had…[*allergic interruption*]… I remember I came in with two or three or four skirts, and pants, and not a whole lot of clothes or anything, but it didn’t matter. I never felt like I didn’t fit in. Maybe I didn’t, but maybe I was oblivious, [*both laugh*], but I always had a lot of friends so I don’t know. But I thought that was good, that I learned that it didn’t matter, you know? And I’m still friendly with the people, a lot of them.

Kathleen Christ: What did you end up doing as the Student Body President?

Pat Hayes: What did we end up? [*coughs*] We helped plan events like the dances. We didn’t do anything important because we weren’t allowed to. We had no part in the government of the school. It was really just stress… My high school teachers, who were also Sisters of Mercy, were stern, but not here. Here, the nuns were all really –the ones that I dealt with, except for Sister Rosalia– they were all really down to earth and really nice, really nice people [that were] *very* intelligent. One of my French teachers was a woman named Sister Marie Pierre. Our senior year –you had to do a seminar your senior year– and ours was, “The Influence of Women in French Literature and History.” So I was chosen to interview for a Woodrow Wilson fellowship in New York, so I went out there and I remember Dave, [now my husband], was with me because he lived out there in New York, he lived in Mount Vernon. I went in for the interview and the man who was in charge of the Woodrow Wilson [Fellowship] was a friend of Sr. Marie Pierre; he knew her well… and I was interviewed by three people. One of them was a professor from Brown [University] who spoke French. The others were men who spoke no French, but the interview was in French, which was bizarre. And I knew I was in trouble when he said, “Oh, I see you’re from Salve Reg [hard g]-ina” and he’s from Brown. He absolutely knew we didn’t call it Salve Reg-ina but that’s the true Latin; ours is Church Latin. I felt very confident in the interview, and at one point he asked if the [novel “La Princesse de Cleves”] was Cornelian or Racinien, and [the interview is all] in French…I knew that most people thought it was Racinien, but I thought it was Cornelian, and there were both sides. So I said Cornelian, and he turned to the other two men and said, “She got it wrong.” And I said, “How can I get it wrong if there are books written about it?” But again I couldn’t speak English. So, I [didn’t], but he said in English to these men, “She got that one wrong,” and I didn’t get the fellowship, which is fine. I went to BC, but the school wrote a letter of protest telling what had happened, and the following year someone from [Salve] got the fellowship. I don’t know if it had anything to do with it, but it was really…if you were a woman, and a Catholic school woman, I mean this man from Brown absolutely looked down [on] me because I was from a Catholic school and I was a woman. Oh! And he made fun of this course about women! Can you imagine? He said, “Who would ever want to take a course about women?”

Kathleen Christ: Wow.

Pat Hayes: That was in 1962. So, I thought it was…today…

Kathleen Christ: That would not happen.

Pat Hayes: No.

Kathleen Christ: So lastly, is there anything you’d like to add?

Pat Hayes: I can’t think of anything. I think I’ve got it all.

Kathleen Christ: Well, thank you so much.

Pat Hayes: Thank you.

1. The College of Mount Saint Vincent is a Catholic liberal arts college located in New York City. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. The Naval War College, a naval institution located in Newport, RI. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Mother Mary Hilda Miley, first Vice President and President of Salve Regina College from 1948-1964 was quintessential in the creation of this Sisters of Mercy institution. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Sister Therese Antone, current Chancellor of Salve Regina University, graduated from here in 1962 and worked as a tenured professor, Director of Development, Vice President for Corporate Affairs and Advancement and served as President from 1994-2009. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Madame Georgette Ramos, a professor of Modern Languages, specialized in French, at Salve Regina College from 1950-1972. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Boston College, a Catholic university, located outside of Boston, MA. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. An OC is an Officer Candidate. Typically, they attended the OCS, the Navy’s Officer Candidate School, located in Newport, RI. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. The Skull Room was the bar in the Hotel Viking, a beautiful hotel still located on Bellevue Avenue in Newport, RI. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. The part of Christian theology dealing with the Virgin Mary. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Srs. Mary Eloise and Mary Jean Tobin were authors of Salve’s history *With Courage and Compassion* and long-standing professors of Theology and English, (respectively). [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Sister Mary Martina Conley, an original sister at Salve Regina College, the first registrar of the college and history professor. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. President John F. Kennedy was shot November 22, 1963. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Mr. Robert Goelet, donor of Ochre Court and eventually its stable house to the Sisters of Mercy allowing for the creation of Salve Regina College here in Newport, RI. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Sister Lucille McKillop, (President from 1973-1994), Sister Therese Antone, (President from 1994-2009, current Chancellor) and Sister Jane Gerety, current President of Salve Regina University. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Queen Hall was a dorm owned by Salve from 1959-1972, when it was sold in order to acquire the Wakehurst estate. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. Caroline Kennedy, eldest child and only daughter of John F. Kennedy. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. Hammersmith Farm was the estate owned by Jackie Kennedy’s family where the Kennedys used to frequent in Newport, RI as a getaway/vacation spot. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. JFK’s swimming ventures would have been at Fairholme, home of the late Mr. Robert and Mrs. Anita Young. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. St. Mary’s Church, a Catholic church located on Memorial Blvd. in Newport, RI. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. The chapel was originally located in Ochre Court to the right of the main entrance. However, now there is Mercy Chapel, and the former chapel has now been converted into a conference room. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. Sister Mary Rosalia Flaherty was the Dean of Studies from 1957-1967 and played an active role in the Sisters of Mercy and on the school’s Board of Trustees for decades. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. Providence College, the university set up by the Dominican Friars located in Providence, RI. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. The Naval Justice School, relocated to Newport, RI in 1950. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. This woman is Irene Paonessa, a fellow Salve Regina graduate and alum of the class of 1962. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)