

19th WARD Quarterly

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New Mercy Circle resident Margaret Carroll shares her storied career at the Chicago Tribune

After retiring from the Chicago Tribune in 2000, Margaret Carroll moved in with her sister, bought a piano and took lessons. She and her sister also travelled.

In late July, she moved into Mercy Circle from her condo in Oak Lawn. She hadn't finished unpacking nor had she found the right place to put everything. There was a framed pastel drawing of nine of her 10 great-grand nieces and nephews resting against the wall. Nearby sat three stuffed toy dogs on the floor. "While I was packing, I made a lot of choices. Apparently, I did not make enough," she said with a chuckle looking at the boxes to empty.

One of her favorite interviews was with Ray Rayner, host of a WGN-TV children's show. "He got us up in the morning," she recalled because she remembered watching the show as a young adult. "He had a duck named Chelveston, always nipping at his ankles," she said with a smile. "He was a very cordial person, and easy to talk to," she added.

Carroll was raised in Chicago's Brainerd neighborhood, within walking distance of Longwood Academy, where she attended high school, and her father's store, Carroll Hardware. "I worked in the store as little as possible," she explained, "just going in to ask for a quarter

and then walking to the dime store to read 50 comic books before buying one."

Reading became Carroll's lifelong interest; currently, one of her favorite books is *The Covenant of Water* by Abraham Verghese.

Carroll interviewed authors and celebrities for the Tribune's features department for close to 26 years. Among other favorites were the actress Helen Hayes and the heiress Gloria Vanderbilt. She also sepa-

rately interviewed Vanderbilt's husband Wyatt Cooper.

Vanderbilt took her "through the whole custody saga of her young life," said Carroll, referring to the 1934 legal and tabloid battle between Vanderbilt's mother and aunt over her guardianship.

Carroll asked Cooper, "Wasn't Gloria Vanderbilt kind of intimidating to you?" He responded, "No, once you got to know her, she wasn't a Vanderbilt. She was just someone you knew and liked,"

said Carroll.

During her early retirement, Carroll kept herself busy reading and watching sports. She likes football—"It's athletic ballet!" and dislikes boxing. "I don't see the point, two men or women punching each other." She continued to volunteer as alumnae association president of The Academy of Our Lady (Longwood Academy), a position she has held continuously since 1971.

"I decided to move to Mercy Circle because I wasn't coping well with my condo," said Carroll. "There was a flight of stairs. I had not fallen, but my family worried that I would," said Carroll. "I had been at Mercy Circle once. And I knew it was a lovely place. So I thought, 'This is the place for me,'" she added.

"Everyone is very friendly and cordial. Sister Marion Johnson and Sister Margaret Brennan have been especially solicitous," she said. "Getting settled has been overall a pleasant experience. I've met wonderful people. And, if I have an issue with anything, it's solved as quickly as humanly possible."

For more information or to schedule a private appointment at Mercy Circle, 3659 West 99th Street in the 19th Ward, please call 773-253-3600 or visit MercyCircle.org



Photo by Marc Monaghan



ALDERMAN MATT O'SHEA'S SENIOR CITIZEN HALLOWEEN PARTY

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