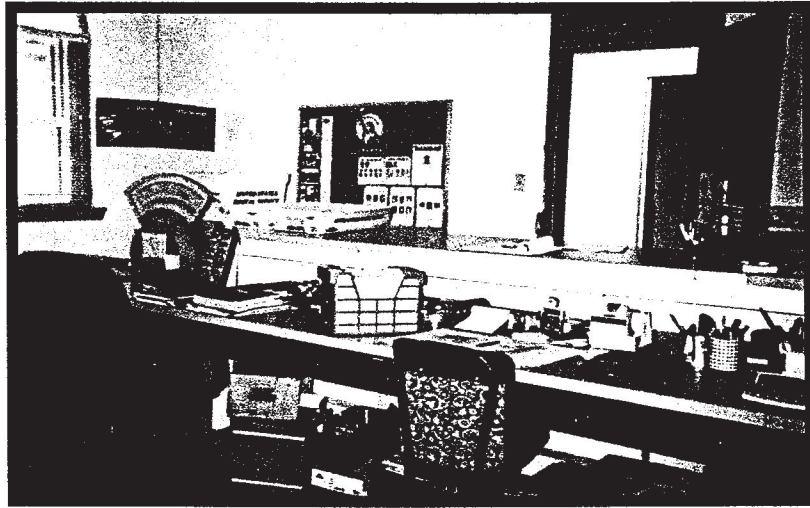




## Post Office Opened at Ripa

S. Carol Marie Wildt



For half a century, the U.S. Post Office Contract Station # 3 has operated at Ripa. After months of planning, the post office became a reality on July 1, 1953. The first pieces of mail to go through the newly established post office was a circular from Mother Evangela Wagner dated June 30, 1953, and the Notre Dame Review.

The Notre Dame Post Office was located on the first floor in the laundry wing of the motherhouse, next to the laundry folding and sorting room. Previously this room served as a trunk room. The post office has remained in this location during the past 50 years, except for the temporary move during the recent renovation of the south wing of the motherhouse.

Prior to the opening of the post office, all deliveries and pick-ups were made at the main entrance of the motherhouse. Oral history states that the postal carriers encouraged the establishment of a new site for pick-ups and deliveries. This was especially true for the weekly pick-up and delivery of the many metal boxes containing starched wimples for the mission sisters. It could get very tiring for the workers going up and down the front steps carrying these boxes.

In December 1952, Mother Evangela applied for a contract station at Ripa. Due to limited funds available for the operation of the postal service, the contract was not approved for operation until the following July. Succeeding provincial leaders have continued the agreement with the postal service.

In 1953, some of the other advantages to having postal service in the motherhouse included: two deliveries and three pick-ups daily; purchasing of precancelled, special delivery and air mail stamps; insuring mail, etc. without leaving the premises. Today, the post office offers all the services that any post office would provide.

The first sisters in charge of the post office were S. Leonis Fick and Elsinia Stiegler under the direction of S. Kathleen Murphy. Over the past 50 years, many sisters have ministered as directress of the post office. They have served not only the SSNDs on campus but also the lay employees and the public who have taken advantage of this facility.

[Sources: Ripa Chronicle, 1953; Notre Dame Review, June 1953; application form and correspondence of Mother Evangela Wagner]

