



Florence Cunnea (grandmother), Mary Jean Cunnea and her sister Dolly (future nurse)

Mary Jean Cunnea entered the Cadet Nurse program as soon as she turned 18, the minimum age required by the Public Health Service during World War II

Mary graduated from Aquinas Dominican High School in the South Shore neighborhood of Chicago, IL in 1943, but had to wait six months before turning 18 to enter the cadet program, the following January. During those six months she worked as a typist in an army recruiting facility in the Illinois Insurance building, across from the Board of Trade in downtown Chicago.

Mary Jean was the second of six children, entering St. Bernard's School of Nursing, affiliated with Loyola University, in February, 1944. During the war, St. Bernard's added a second class of student nurses, allowing both a September and a February class of graduates. All 21 students in Mary Jean's class were in the Cadet program. The nursing students were issued a Cadet uniform and pledged to uphold the stipulations of the Public Health Service.


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Form 300A
FEDERAL SECURITY AGENCY
U. S. PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE
DIVISION OF NURSE EDUCATION

SERIAL No. 18980

NAME OF CADET NURSE MARY JEAN CUNNEA (PRINT OR TYPE)
SIGNATURE OF CADET NURSE Mary Jean Cunnea
NAME OF SCHOOL ST. BERNARD'S UNIT
CITY CHICAGO 21
STATE ILLINOIS
DATE OF ADMISSION TO SCHOOL FEBRUARY 21, 1944
DATE OF ADMISSION TO CORPS FEBRUARY 21, 1944
DATE OF ISSUANCE OF THIS CARD MAR 3, 1944
SIGNATURE OF DIRECTOR OF SCHOOL OF NURSING [Signature]

DO NOT WRITE BELOW THIS LINE

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LOYOLA UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF NURSING ST. BERNARD'S UNIT CHICAGO 21 ILLINOIS

Along with Mary's commitment to serving as a Cadet Nurse, her father John W. also served his country in North Africa and Italy as an officer in the Merchant Marines.

She remembers traveling from Chicago to South Carolina by train with her mother Georgia and her then youngest sister Dolly, to bid farewell to their father as he embarked for overseas service. Mary said the trains were filled to capacity as many soldiers and families prepared for war obligations. All three of the family members shared a top bunk for the overnight journey.



Mary was the forerunner of her younger sisters' choice of occupations, four of the five Cunnea girls became nurses, however, only Mary Jean was a Cadet Nurse. She graduated nursing school in March 1947, and immediately began working at Jackson Park Hospital in their nursery. Before meeting her future husband, Peter Judge, a navy veteran of WWII, Mary also spent time as a private duty nurse, surgical nurse and insurance nurse. She raised a family of five children, returning to nursing after they were grown, and worked as an ENT nurse before retiring.

