

# A Remembrance of Margaret Kelly

by

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Delivered at the National Board Annual Meeting, Philadelphia, April 27, 1990

Long before the National Board was founded, Margaret Kelly was already an important part of the life and history of the Woman's Medical College of Pennsylvania.

In 1953, when Gladys Daskam, assistant to the president, first conceived the idea of a National Board, Margaret Kelly became a prime supporter of this charter group of "Ambassadors of Good Will," each of whom had been appointed by the President.

I first met Margaret Kelly in the spring of 1953 when we were welcomed to Philadelphia and the college. I see her now and remember how impressed I was with her beauty, her intelligence, her ability to communicate.

Through the years, both before and after World War II, Margaret Kelly continued to serve the college. She was its longtime chairman for development, chairman of the Board of Corporators, vice president of the Board of Corporators, founder and president of the Auxiliary, and a member-at-large of the National Board.

The Kelly home and garden, just a few blocks from the college, was open to us frequently, for receptions, teas, and general hospitality. My favorite room, if there could be one, was the morning room.

The only charter board member younger than I was a beautiful girl named Grace Kelly, Margaret's daughter. Their relationship of mother and daughter was to benefit the College on many occasions.

One was the world premiere in 1955 of Grace's film, *To Catch a Thief*, in which she starred with Cary Grant. Margaret Kelly had arranged for the premiere to be held in Philadelphia with all proceeds going to the college from the showing and the supper-dance which followed. She also gave a boost to the new board by having the formal invitations printed to read as follows: "The National Board of The Woman's Medical College of Pennsylvania cordially invites you to attend . . . ."

In 1958, Mrs. Dwight D. Eisenhower, honorary chairman of the National Board, invited 40 members of the board to a reception at the White House. Margaret Kelly and Dr. Catherine MacFarlane, the renowned professor and pioneer in cancer research at the college, and I, joined together for the ride to the White House. I see us now at the sentry box at the East Gate, and I hear us once again, announcing our names to the sentry: "MacFarlane, Kelly and Smith."

After we entered and were awaiting the First Lady, Margaret Kelly revealed a facet of her personality which was new to me, her sense of humor. She stepped away for a moment and came back with a board member who said to me, "My name is Selma Smith." Astonished, I replied, "So is mine!" "Yes, I know," she went on, "and I'm from Ohio." "But that's where I was born," I answered. "Yes, I know," she said, pausing, "I am Selma Smith Burton, the wife of Harold Burton of Ohio, associate justice of the United States Supreme Court." "Oh!" I said with great relief and much interest. "How wonderful because I have business with your husband; I am to be admitted to practice before the Supreme Court tomorrow morning." "Good," she exclaimed, "I'll tell him tonight!" Margaret's eyes had never left my face, and she obviously enjoyed to the fullest every moment of this introduction she had carefully planned.

In 1967, Mrs. Kelly persuaded the Biddle family to set the world premiere of the biographical film *The Happiest Millionaire* in Hollywood with all proceeds to benefit the college. This full-scale Hollywood premiere was preceded by an intimate dinner for a few of us which she hosted. This gave us a chance to catch up on news of the college and her family.

In 1973, on the occasion of the National Board's 20th Anniversary Celebration in Washington, Margaret Kelly provided the board with a unique gift: the presence of Her Serene Highness, Princess Grace of Monaco. She was with us for the days of the meetings and social events, including a formal reception. One meeting took place at the Sulgrave Club, with sherry being hosted by board member Audrey Mars. I have a photograph here, taken at the club, of Margaret Kelly with her daughters Princess Grace and Lizanne LeVine, another valued National Board member.

In 1975, Margaret Kelly suffered the first of many strokes. I saw her once again after that time. She was still beautiful. And that is how I shall always remember her.