

Janet Lanou 1917-2013 VT-FCGS Member # 109

We have lost another wonderful member of our society. Janet Lanou joined our society on May 3rd, 1997 and was member #109. Janet contributed 4 or 5 articles to our LINKS journal; and also completed her Four Family Chart of the Lanou, Michaud, Rousseau and Morin ancestries; and earned her "Filles du Roi" pin using her Rousseau lineage. From 2004 to 2009 she participated in the Diocese Publishing project. Because she had taught Latin and French in schools, she was very helpful on translating documents and she generated our English-Latin-French translation sheet that we use even today. I never knew about her early life. She started on the publishing the project when she was 87 years old and living at Cathedral Square in Burlington. Those were the days when we had packets of copies of the parish registers and we kept the database on floppy diskettes. I would deliver the packets and swap them for the last packet she had completed. We always took the time to chat a little, but the conversations were never about her. She had her own computer and was very skilled at using it. I knew that she was very intelligent and her mind was quick, and she was also a very gracious lady at all times. It was always a pleasure to visit and talk. However, now that I know more about her past life, due to the obituary information, I really regret not spending more time with her and talking about her life. In 2009, at age 92, her eyesight was getting worse and she had to quit our project. After that we communicated by email several times and lately the emails were not answered.



Janet's father, J. Ernest Lanou made the tin gold leafed rooster that has sat on top of the steeple at St Joseph Church in Burlington since 1887.

In her Rousseau lineage, Alphonse was a Marguillier or Warden of the church in 1887 and he is listed as a Godfather of the largest of the 3 bells in the steeple which weighs 4,457 pounds.

Goodbye to a great lady! God Bless You Janet!

Here is part of her obituary:

JANET GABRIELLE LANOU BURLINGTON - Janet Gabrielle Lanou, 95, died peacefully on June 5, 2013, at her home in Burlington following a period of declining health. She was born on July 15, 1917, in Burlington, the daughter of Joseph Ernest Lanou and Elizabeth Michaud. A bright, stylish and independent woman, she graduated from Burlington High School in 1934, and the University of Vermont in 1938 (Phi Beta Kappa).

Janet Gabrielle Lanou



Burlington, VT Literary-Scientific

Alpha Chi Omega; Classical Club; French Club;
John Dewey Club

UVM Ariel 1938

She received graduate degrees from Canisius College in 1954, and Hunter College in 1969. When a Daughter of the Heart of Mary, she taught French and Latin and served as principal of Nardin Academy, Buffalo, N.Y. She was later a longtime licensed social worker for the New York City Department of Social Services and the New York Veterans Affairs Medical Center. ... Janet relished all things about her three great cities - New York, Paris and Burlington. Directly descended from a founding Acadian, Pierre Lanoue, she was a disciplined devotee of French Canadian genealogy. She enjoyed the company of good friends and summer sunsets at the Lanou family's camp on Lake Champlain.

Janet Lanou, a French nun who changed my life: *(I found this on the Internet)*

Source: <http://artsyanecdotes.blogspot.com/2012/04/janet-lanou-french-nun-who-changed-my.html>

Posted by Bernadine De Mike_ on 16 April 2012



Her name was Janet Lanou and although a nun, was the classiest woman walking the halls of Nardin Academy. Lanou was Parisian and probably from a wealthy family as evident from her designer clothes, elegant shoes and elite manner. The *Daughters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary* were originally a secret society bred during the French Revolution who were permitted to wear ordinary clothes in order to minister to the sick and dying without being “guillotined” for their beliefs.

Janet Lanou stood out from the Irish nuns like an escargot in a dish of Irish stew, and so did her teaching techniques. The ladies at Nardin were the holiest of saints, and outstanding teachers, but Janet Lanou was the epitome of the learned college professor leading the students in a course destined for a PHD. She was thorough, highly detailed, and above all, passionate in her portrayal of Jesus Christ in the first year religion class, - one of the many elements that completely changed my life.

The first words I ever heard from this French sister were “Assayez-vous” as she motioned us to sit down and then “Levez-vous” miming us to rise where we were taught the “Ave” in French, “Je vous salue Marie” which I remember to this day.

Ah to be French, to be elegant, to know what Paris is like, to be as accomplished as this beautiful lady (and amazingly brilliant) was the reason I have emulated this holy “goddess” my entire life. Years later, when I heard she had left the order and was working as a counselor in a Veteran’s Hospital in New York, I called to say “hello” I barely rolled one word out of my mouth before she cut in with “I know who you are Bernadine (how she remembered my voice from thousands of former students I’ll never know).

The first step in becoming a “Lanou” clone was in studying French—to a degree where I could speak it fluently (not just grammar please). I then planned a visit to this magical place, which became a lifelong desire. I continued to study French my entire life, reading the French bible every day, joining the *Alliance Française* and taking class at Canisius college. It was an endless obsession. I think I even prayed to Janet Lanou (she must be in heaven right now) to help. My production of “Paris 1920” and the research involved with authentic people and places involved in that era even accelerated my ardent desire, however, work, family, finances have a way of holding up our dreams, -yet they never seem to go away. My children were actually sick of my repeated “Someday I’m going to Paris” wish and when able, one of my children made it happen.

... I “walked” with Janet Lanou across the bridges of the Seine, down the entire Champs Élysées, Through the hall of mirrors at Versailles, the palaces and museums, the enormous churches and parks., and reveled in it all, but thanks to the influence of Janet Lanou, a teacher and human being of great inspiration, I shared the heart of the people where she came from; people whose “quest for freedom” of the human spirit led to the event which changed the world, the *French Revolution*. It was there that the spirit of the *Daughters of Mary* was born to minister to downtrodden men and women. The Free spirit of the French changed the world. The spirit of Janet Lanou changed my life.