

## Making Hallahan Girls' High School a Historic Site

kathleen walsh [REDACTED]

Mon 2/15/2021 4:08 PM

To: Allyson Mehley <Allyson.Mehley@Phila.gov>

Cc: friendsofhallahan@gaill.com <friendsofhallahan@gaill.com>

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To: Committee on Historic Designation

I am writing to let you know how much the Hallahan Catholic Girls' High School means to me and it should be made a historic building and should never be sold or demolished.

The Hallahan Girls' High School made me feel like The Little Engine That Could. There was and still is a voice inside my heart saying keep going and do not give up no matter how difficult it gets. There was so much encouragement at Hallahan on how to overcome those obstacles that you have to face in school and life in general. Especially, in Religious class. Some of the subjects were very hard and I had to rely on the Chapel on the third floor of the Cathedral Building to say a lot of prayers to God about not letting me fail any of those tests after receiving a couple of those failure warnings. I was always in the Chapel on the third floor of the Cathedral Building praying before taking those tests. I would study but kept praying just in case the studying was not enough. Going back to the Chapel on the third floor of the Cathedral Building this is a place where miracles take place because I did not get any red F's on my report for the whole four years at Hallahan. I would say that is a miracle.

Another main feature at Hallahan is the bridge separating the Hallahan Building from the Cathedral Building. This bridge is a life saver. I know for myself, I looked forward to crossing over it everyday. It was a pleasure. On some days, I probably ran over because I was running late for a class or wanted to pray at the chapel.

Please Committee on Historic Designation do not destroy or sell Hallahan, but make our Hallahan Girls' High School an HISTORIC SITE.

Thank you,

Kathleen Walsh, Class of 1962

[REDACTED]

## Save Hallahan

Eileen Erikson [REDACTED]

Mon 2/15/2021 2:09 PM

To: Allyson Mehley <Allyson.Mehley@Phila.gov>

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Please save our historical building

Sent from my iPhone

## Preservation of the John W. Hallahan HS Building

Vicki Giunta [REDACTED]

Sun 2/14/2021 7:46 PM

To: Allyson Mehley <Allyson.Mehley@Phila.gov>

Cc: friendsofHallahan@gmail.com <friendsofHallahan@gmail.com>

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**Dear Ms. Mehley,**

**The education of girls has not always been a given in the male-centric society which we are still trying to balance. This would be a perfect time and the John W. Hallahan Catholic Girls' High School building would be the perfect place to celebrate the beginnings of institutional education for young women. As an early proponent of general education for young women, Hallahan High School stood out throughout the City of Philadelphia and the nation by offering a spectrum of courses to educate the whole person: history, art, music, higher math, the sciences, English and foreign languages including Latin were available to the students. There were so many schools offering a limited selection of secretarial classes like typing and stenography. Hallahan offered college prep many years before that became the norm. Please designate the Hallahan building as Historic because of its importance in the educational history of women.**

**My mother graduated in 1935 from Hallahan and she had a life-long relationship with the school and the friends she made there.**

**Regards,**

**Vicki Giunta-Abbott**

## Hallahan High School Historic Designation

Luca, Dana L [REDACTED]

Sun 2/14/2021 6:07 PM

To: Allyson Mehley <Allyson.Mehley@Phila.gov>

Cc: friendsofhallahan@gmail.com <friendsofhallahan@gmail.com>

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Dear Allyson,

I'm writing to you today as a proud and faithful alumna of the John W. Hallahan Class of 1993. As a 3<sup>rd</sup> generation graduate, I was overcome with joy when I learned my niece Ava, a freshman this year, would carry the torch into a new generation. So, the news of the school's planned closing at the end of this school year has weighed heavy on me and my family.

When it came time for me to attend high school, it was never a question of where I'd go—Hallahan was in my blood. My mother and sister as well as aunts, cousins and close friends had already paved the way. Through them I was able to witness the enduring sisterhood and learn about the history and legacy of Hallahan High School. It's nothing short of incredible to have had the good fortune to attend the oldest Catholic all-girls high school, a place that is such an integral part of Philadelphia history. To be a part of a legacy that includes civic leaders, businesswomen, doctors, nurses, teachers, and more fills me with so much pride.

I am humbled to have walked the same halls as many great women leaders—perhaps not famous, but important leaders in their own communities, families, and places of employment. We are connected by a sisterhood and the four years we each spent at 19<sup>th</sup> and Wood. Some may consider it to be "just a building", but to me, it's much more than that. It's the thread that ties generations together. It was our home. It's where we spent our days learning in the classrooms, chatting by our lockers in the Pit, cheering on the basketball team in the gym, and laughing over cheese fries and milkshakes in the cafeteria.

I can think of no other institution more deserving of historical designation. After 130 years the sisterhood prevails, and we won't sit idly by and watch our home be taken away. For all the sisters that have gone before and for all those who follow, please consider our request.

Sincerely,

Dana Giangreco Luca, class of 1993

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## Why Should Hallahan's Building Be Designated as a Historical Building

Ashley McCarrie [REDACTED]

Sun 2/14/2021 2:20 PM

To: Allyson Mehley <Allyson.Mehley@Phila.gov>; friendsofhallahan@gmail.com <friendsofhallahan@gmail.com>

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Dear Ladies and Gentlemen of the Historic Building Designation Committee,

My name is Ashley McCarrie Naylor and I am a proud alumnae of John W. Hallahan Catholic Girls' High School. I am writing to you in the hopes that my letter, and the letters of my fellow Hallahan sisters, are read as we are trying to have our home designated a historical building. Philadelphia is rich in history in a multitude of ways but what has stood the test of time are the buildings, and the building that Hallahan resides in is NO different. The building is important, not only on the outside but on the inside, as well. When it was announced that Hallahan was slated for closure at the end of the 2020-21 school year, to say my heart broke would be understatement. However, my heartache grew to curiosity, confusion, and shock when it was also discovered that the building was not already a designated historical building. To simply put it, a building is not just bricks and mortar, it is the memories, students, and workers that form the history of a building, as well.

For over a century, young ladies from all over Philadelphia, the surrounding suburbs, and even New Jersey have walked those hallowed halls and called the school building their home away from home. As the first all-girls Catholic high school in the country, the history speaks for itself! From the iconic uniform, legendary mascot, and outstanding example set by Hallahan for all-girl Catholic high schools around the country, the history oozes through the pride, virtues, and traditions of the students, graduates, and most important, its buildings. Growing up in Philadelphia, everyone knows who the "Girls in Blue" are, have at least one family member that was a Hallahan sister, and can identify its location because of the recognizable building. In designating Hallahan a historical building, people from outside of Philadelphia and the surrounding areas can visit and immerse themselves in the history the building offers. A lot of people interested in different historical aspects will be able to find something that tickles their fancy at this building, inside or out.

Not only did Hallahan spearhead educating women through Catholic morals and values but Hallahan helped young ladies see there were more opportunities and possibilities in the world other than the home. By choosing to have the building centrally located, this allowed a diverse collection of young ladies from all walks of life to have the right to a quality education.

A top corner of the building can always be seen to help point you in the right direction, as you approach. As you stand outside and look at the building, the dates and names etched in the stones and the towering bricks and stones that intimidate and invite in all at once help allude to the history inside. When you enter the building, heavy doors contradict the light and welcoming stairs that pull you in. Walking into the school as a visitor, as a student, or as an alum, there's a feeling that envelops you. The feeling can only be compared to an immense sense of pride,

nostalgia, and tradition, which in my opinion are key characteristics a historical building must possess. Throughout the school's two buildings, there are exquisite stained glass pieces, especially in the recently renovated chapel. There is a gorgeous shrine to Mary and baby, Jesus, on the first floor of the Hallahan building. The Mouse Trap, or gym, is one of the few school gyms in Downtown Philadelphia that is below ground. The auditorium holds some wonderful art in the form of the organ and some metal art pieces that are hung on either side of the stage. The organ and piping are original and date back to the erection of the building.

I can't even begin to put into words what my time and memories at Hallahan mean to me. I, not only, met some of the strongest, smartest, most amazing women there but I was able to add to my own family history. My mom, numerous aunts, cousins, and extended family have all attended Hallahan. I was able to join their sisterhood and connect with them on another level.

By designating this building historical, not only would United States history, female history, and Catholic history be cemented but the memories, traditions, and sacrifices of all that attended and worked for Hallahan over the last 100+ years old would be preserved, as well.

Alma Mater Glorify!

Best,  
Ashley McCarrie Naylor  
Class of 2009

## SAVE HALLAHAN

Sun 2/14/2021 12:03 PM

To: Allyson Mehley <Allyson.Mehley@Phila.gov>

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Good day Ms. Mehley,

My name is Rosemarie (Cunningham) Rahill and I am a 1969 Graduate of John W. Hallahan Catholic Girls Highschool, and my sister Denise, is a graduate of the class of 1968, and my mother is a member of the class of 1949. My mother's 2 sisters and my father's 4 sisters are proud graduates, as well as 6 of my first cousins. It is obvious we are members of the great Hallahan family.

Hallahan is part of our family history both physically and emotionally. This great institution has ties that bind. Whenever the name of John W. Hallahan is mentioned, we immediately feel a sense of pride. We know we received a phenomenal education, that lead into many diverse careers. We are indebted to the wonderful faculty and staff at our beloved alma mater.

Our school is the first all-girls Catholic high school in the United States. The City of Philadelphia should take pride in the fact that it is the first city in the country to have a public high school and a Catholic high school dedicated to women. Hallahan if not just a building of brick and mortar, it is alive with our hearts and souls and deserves to be treated with dignity and respect.

When I think of what the future may hold for the school that is so near and dear to so many hearts, I immediately begin to shed a tear. Please don't let Hallahan become just another building razed and replaced with luxury condos.



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**Fwd: John W. Hallahan**

Elisha Markowski [REDACTED]

Sat 2/13/2021 9:52 PM

To: Allyson Mehley &lt;Allyson.Mehley@Phila.gov&gt;; friendsofhallahan@gmail.com &lt;friendsofhallahan@gmail.com&gt;

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----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Elisha Markowski** [REDACTED]

Date: Sat, Feb 13, 2021 at 9:46 PM

Subject: John W. Hallahan

To: [REDACTED]

Dear Allyson,

I hope I can find the right words to express the love I have for John W. Hallahan Catholic Girls' High School. This school is a part of history. It is history making to our city and our country. A structure like this, so prominent and beautiful to our city needs to be protected. You can see the care and love the people had envisioned when building this school. The ornate craftsmanship above the center doors is stunning. Dignitaries from far away knew that this building was special. They knew that it was history making, they felt compelled to go above and beyond to add to the beauty of this magnificent building. The cornerstone, a gift from Italy adds a wonderful touch to the history and the importance that this structure represents. In order for a building to have historical status it must meet certain requirements. Hallahan meets these requirements. The age of the building, and the importance it holds in history. Hallahan is the first in the country. That is history making. Let's protect the legacy that this building represents. This building is strong and built with character. It produced over 40,000 women who hold these traits. There are mistakes in life that can be corrected. If anything were to happen to this building the damage would be irreversible. Pope Pius X, is deceased. The cornerstone on the building that he blessed and sent can never be replaced. I am asking you to please hear our voices. Know that we love this school. This school represents the a first to our city, Philadelphia is known for it's firsts. Please don't change the landscape to our city. This school is what we as Philadelphians represent. Strong and built with character.

I thank you for your consideration in protecting the legacy of John W. Hallahan.

Sincerely,

Elisha Hanson Markowski

Class of 1990

#saveHallahan



**RE: Historical Designation for Hallahan**

bmg4000 [REDACTED]

Sat 2/13/2021 9:12 PM

To: Allyson Mehley &lt;Allyson.Mehley@Phila.gov&gt;

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Dear Ms. Mehley

I forgot to mention in my letter that in addition to my Mom Eleanor C Kearney McGraw and me, my niece Lauren McGraw is a 2000 graduate of Hallahan. She has a career as a Phlebotomist at Jefferson Hospital Methodist and she is a new mother.

Three generations of Hallahan ladies grace our family.

Thank you again for your consideration.

Bernardine McGraw Mann

Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone

----- Original message -----

From: bmg4000 [REDACTED]

Date: 2/13/21 5:11 PM (GMT-05:00)

To: Allyson.Mehley@phila.gov

Subject: Historical Designation for Hallahan

Good day Ms. Mehley

Both my mother Eleanor C Kearney and I attended Hallahan. I graduated in 1968.

My mother attended Hallahan from 1924 to 1927. She studied music and was member of the orchestra playing piano and organ. In 1928 the Archdiocese needed a graduating class for the new girls school West Catholic so several students, my mother among them were transferred to West for her last year in school. Ironically, she received her Hallahan class ring in junior year. Mom was disappointed by the move having spent three (3) happy and productive years at Hallahan.

Hallahan played a significant role in developing Mom's musical skills, she was awarded First Prize for Music and after graduating attended Zekwer-Hahn Music Conservatory. Music played a major role in Mom's life and Hallahan played a major role in developing her talent and confidence.

One of her early jobs was providing piano music for silent movies. A novelty especially for a

woman. Later she devoted herself to music for school events and church services. Eleanor traveled throughout Philadelphia to provide music for over 50 churches in the Philadelphia area, including the opening Mass for the annual St. Patrick's day parade.

I was blessed with following Mom to Hallahan 40 years later. During my time Hallahan was a United Nations....home to girls of varied races and ethnic backgrounds. I recall friendship and unity that shaped my Catholic values and perspectives.

From 1911 to 1928 to 1968 to 2021 Hallahan has been educating and nurturing young Catholic girls of Philadelphia to become the best women they can be.

Mary Hallahan McMichen took a bold, historic step to petition the Diocese of Philadelphia to develop high education for Catholic girl in America. Thankfully, she met a great ally in Bishop McDermott. Together they broke the mold.

It was unheard of to educate women and even more radical to educate Catholic women.

Catholic rights and Women's rights made a huge step forward when Hallahan was opened 1911. I truly believe Hallahan warrants Historic Designation.

Thank you

Bernardine McGraw Mann  
HH CI 68



Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone

## Historical Designation of John W Hallahan High School

Sat 2/13/2021 12:57 PM

To: Allyson Mehley <Allyson.Mehley@Phila.gov>

Cc: Friendsofhallahan@gmail.com <Friendsofhallahan@gmail.com>

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Ms. Mehley:

The beautiful, historical building located at 311 N. 19<sup>th</sup> Street, was built to educate Roman Catholic women, in the great city of Philadelphia. It was the first of its kind in the Country, it is known as John W. Hallahan Catholic Girls High School. Since 1911 the school has educated and graduated thousands of diverse and talented women. Now the plan is to close and sell the building.

I am a proud graduate of the Class of 1968. In fact, it is a time-honored family tradition, my Mother is a proud graduate of the Class of 1949, my sister is a proud graduate of the Class of 1969 and all of my aunts and female cousins have all graduated from Hallahan.

My very first "grown-up" job was through Hallahan. And the company that hired me told me they only hired from Hallahan because of the quality and education of its Alumnae. It is not only a valued and cherished part of our family's history and culture, but for many Philadelphians, as well.

One of the unique things about Philadelphia is the blend of old and new architecture throughout its neighborhoods. However, I feel that too many of the cherished and beautiful old buildings are being replaced for trendy new and shiny facades, thereby changing the look, culture and history of the city.

Please protect this beloved landmark and piece of pride and declare the building at 311 N.19<sup>th</sup> Street historical to keep it as part of the charm and tradition of Philadelphia.

Denise M. (Cunningham) Fullmer

Class of 1968

2/13/21



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[www.avast.com](http://www.avast.com)

## Historical Designation of John W. Hallahan High School

Angela West [REDACTED]

Fri 2/12/2021 3:52 PM

To: Allyson Mehley <Allyson.Mehley@Phila.gov>

Cc: Friendsofhallahan@gmail.com <Friendsofhallahan@gmail.com>

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Ms. Mehley:

I am a 1968 graduate of Hallahan High School. When I was accepted to the school in 1964, my family and I were so excited because we believed that this was an outstanding Catholic institution for the education of women. I have to agree. This school is the first Catholic High School for Girls in the United States. When I tell people where I went to high school, inevitably this is the next sentence that I say: It is the **first** Catholic girls high school in the United States...such an honor for me to be part of history.

I am so proud to be a "Hallahan girl." The education I received at Hallahan instilled values that have enabled me to achieve a college degree and guide me to this day.

How wonderful that this is the first institution for the education of Catholic girls and is located in the City of Brotherly Love.

I respectfully request that this architecture which served as the foundation for educating women be designated as an historical site as a tribute to all who have been and will be enriched by its tradition and benefited from its culture.

There are so few institutions in Philadelphia with such history and tradition that represent women.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Angela Baj West

Proud member of the Class of 1968

February 12, 2021

Allyson Mehley  
Historic Preservation Planner at Philadelphia Historical Commission

Dear Ms. Mehley,

I am writing you in full support of the proposed historical designation of John W. Hallahan High School. I grew up in the Fairmount section of Philadelphia during the 1960-1970s and attended St. Francis Xavier grade school and John W. Hallahan High School. For many female members of my family going to Hallahan represents a rite of passage as well as a family tradition. As a child I walked past Hallahan countless times with my mother and grandmother before I actually entered the doors of this hallowed school as a student. Conversations with my aunts, cousins, nieces and friends about their personal experiences are filled with pride and joy that only those that attended Hallahan would feel. Hallahan is an indelible part of our families, neighborhood, city and nation.

Everyone losses if Hallahan should close. The students, faculty, surrounding neighborhood and the City of Philadelphia. During these challenging times we need to restore faith and keep positive traditions alive. I support every effort to preserve Hallahan's glorious historical traditions and perhaps more importantly the crucial role it will play in the lives of so many future young Philadelphians. I respectfully request your assistance in helping us preserve John W. Hallahan School as it has helped so many of its current students and graduates lead happy and productive lives. It is truly part of the fabric of our great city and its citizens.

Sincerely,

Kathryn McBride-King 75

[REDACTED]

February 11, 2021

Dear Ms. Mehley,

I am writing on behalf of John W. Hallahan, Catholic High School for Girls. I want to extend my sincere gratitude for the acceptance of the application to the Historical Preservation Society. I know there are still other steps to be taken, but I wholeheartedly believe that Hallahan deserves this recognition as it is truly, an extraordinary institution, with a rich history in the City of Philadelphia.

I am sure you are aware that John W. Hallahan is the oldest Catholic Girls High School in the United States. It has been educating young women of all cultures for 120 years, contributing not only to the community that surrounds it, but to the country and beyond. Women have gone further because of Hallahan. Generations of women have attended Hallahan because of the values it was built on and continues to instill in all her students who attend today.

At a time when women were not considered to be a part of the majority, Mary McMichan saw the potential for this Catholic Girls High School. Her and her team of believers built this school to ensure that women had a fighting chance in this world. At a time when most traveled by locomotive, and automobiles were not the norm, the John W. Hallahan building was standing strong and should continue to stand strong for many years to come. The neighborhood around our beloved Hallahan has changed and modernized in many respects, but Hallahan shows that it still belongs. Hallahan is exactly where it belongs, in the heart of Philadelphia, where many other historical institutions stand. Hallahan is not just a physical building, she is a living, breathing institution. A place, where not only young women have come to love (and I cannot stress love enough), but has become a part of so many women, teachers, and staff from many, many generations.

My own family has been a part of John W. Hallahan for many years. My mother, Class of 1969, my aunts, Class of 1966 and 1970, my sisters, Class of 1990 and 1995, and myself the Class of 1993. My love for education started with Hallahan and continues in my career as a School Administrator. I hope that I can instill the same values in my students that Hallahan has in myself and many others.

I hope that you will continue to move forward with the approval of John W. Hallahan, Catholic Girls High School, in the Historical Preservation Society, it would be far overdue!

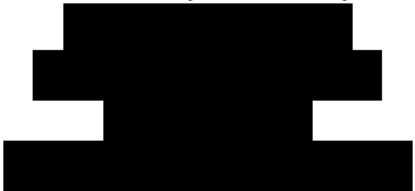
Sincerely,



Georgine Fronczak, M.Ed.

Class of 1993

Kimberly A. Kimrey



February 11, 2021

Philadelphia Historical Commission  
1515 Arch Street, 13<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Philadelphia, PA 19102

**RE: Historical Designation of John W. Hallahan Catholic Girls' High School**

To Whom It May Concern:

First, thank you for considering the application to make John W. Hallahan Catholic Girls' High School a historical site. Mary Hallahan McMichan was a visionary way before her time. When Mrs. McMichan decided that she wanted to create the FIRST All-Girls' Catholic High School in the United States, she was creating a legacy for tens of thousands of young women that would span over 100 years.

Hallahan sits in the center of Philadelphia, among some of the greatest buildings in our great City. Mary McMichan's dream was to give young women the chance for secondary Catholic education; and her dream came true. There are approximately 40,000 young women who have walked the hallowed halls of Hallahan. My mother-in-law is a graduate of the Class of 1953 and always spoke of her Hallahan days with fond memories. Her stories rubbed off on my daughter, who is currently a junior at Hallahan.

Jill had made her decision to attend Hallahan at the age 12, while in sixth grade. There was no other school for her. Each Spring and Fall Open House that was held from the time she was in sixth grade until eighth grade, she was there. She was soaking in the sisterhood of the people that walked before her and the history of the school. She couldn't get enough of the school and attended the academic summer camps in 2017. It was there that she met some of her best friends. Friendships that were forged in their love of Hallahan, a school that they hadn't even been accepted into at that point.

When it became her time to walk into Hallahan as a freshman in September 2018, she was more than prepared and ecstatic to follow in her grandmother's footsteps and make memories and a history for herself. She jumped right in and became so involved in Hallahan, that we say that she lives more at Hallahan than in our home. She is an athlete, a leader, an honor student; all of which wouldn't be possible without Hallahan. I believe that when you love what you do, all things come easy. With Jill, she thrives at Hallahan. She has such a love for the school, the people, and the history, that she has not missed a single day of school. She truly lives and breathes for Hallahan. She has found her faith, vision, and purpose while at Hallahan. Those are three things that are taught to the girls that enter the school.



Kimberly A. Kimrey



She took notice of the strong and historical women that grace the façade of Hallahan. Women that Mary McMichan believed were strong and empowering to women as a society and to the Catholic faith. These are women that have been engrained into my daughter's life. The details that went into the building of Hallahan in the early 1900s is something that is awe-inspiring. In today's society, we want to make everything new and modern, but I believe in preserving our history. A history forged by Mary McMichan and her vision.

Today we are striving to preserve her vision and the rich history of Hallahan. Her vision was to give young women the quality education they deserved, even before women were given the right to vote.

In Philadelphia, we take pride in being the City of FIRSTS. We are home to the birthplace of Independence, the first zoo, first medical school, first hospital, first library, first stock exchange, first all-boys' Catholic High School (Roman Catholic) and most importantly, the FIRST all-girls' Catholic High School in our country.

Please help us preserve the legacy of Mary Hallahan McMichan and her vision of Hallahan.

Sincerely,

Kimberly Kimrey



## Saving not just hallahan but my home

julia sautter [REDACTED]

Fri 2/12/2021 12:34 AM

To: Allyson Mehley <Allyson.Mehley@Phila.gov>

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Hello

My name is Julia sautter I'm a alumni of hallahan class of 2016 but not just me my mother,sister, both my aunts,cousins and even my great aunt all went to hallahan in there lives. Now most people can say hallahan was the best time of there there lives and it was for me also but not just 4 years. You see I live across of hallahan on that cobblestone street which most mistaken it for an ally yep good old carlton street since literally the day I came home from the hospital 23 years ago. I have caused trouble for the hallahan building even before I was student that building is my childhood I always felt safe because of it looking outside my window I would be looking at building waitingfor the day I'd graduated8th grade and go to hallahan, playing with my friends on the block because we had the room to run back and forth because nothing bad happened on carlton street because of the hallahan building, the teachers were my friends before my high school teachers. It was my second home never my high school and I couldn't be more proud to be living across the oldest all girls catholic high school in the country. But changing or even knocking it down the building wouldn't just fill me with disappointment but the generation of women in my family and others and it would be letting all women down. So please let's save this building my home.

## John W Hallahan High School

ziggy65463 [REDACTED]

Thu 2/11/2021 9:30 PM

To: Allyson Mehley <Allyson.Mehley@Phila.gov>

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Dear Ms. Mehley,

Thank you so very much for your assistance in helping the Friends of Hallahan with their quest to keep the doors of Hallahan open. The school is definitely a Historical Landmark in the city of Philadelphia but is truly a landmark in the hearts of every girl who enters as a freshman and graduates into becoming a woman. I am a proud graduate and pray that any girl who wishes to enter this beautiful tradition gets a chance to do so. Once again, thank you and you are truly appreciated.

Deborah A. Zaccagni Welte  
Class of '77

## Historical designation of John W. Hallahan building

Lillian Walker Shelton [REDACTED]

Thu 2/11/2021 6:13 PM

To: Allyson Mehley <Allyson.Mehley@Phila.gov>

Cc: Friends of Hallahan <hallahanbod@gmail.com>

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Dear Ms. Mehley:

I am respectfully submitting a request that you designate the John W. Hallahan building as a historical site.

I am an alumnae of Hallahan and member of the class of 1993. My mother also attended Hallahan and graduated in 1959.

Hallhan is not just a part of Philadelphia's History but it is also part of American history. Our school is the oldest Catholic Girl's High School in the United States. This history has been captured and built upon by my mother, my aunts and my cousins. The school is a legacy for myself and thousands of other women around the world.

Please consider designating the building as a historical site so Philadelphia and America's legacy can live on.

Thank you,

Lillian Walker Shelton

## John W Hallahan CGHS

Carol Bonewicz [REDACTED]

Thu 2/11/2021 5:05 PM

To: Allyson Mehley <Allyson.Mehley@Phila.gov>

Cc: friendsofhallahan@gmail.com <friendsofhallahan@gmail.com>

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Dear Ms. Mehley:

Thank you for accepting John W Hallahan Catholic Girls' High School's application for Historical Designation.

Hallahan was the first Diocesan All Girls Catholic High School in the country. It was opened to give girls from all backgrounds the opportunity to receive an education that is steeped in academics and faith. Sadly, our faith is being tested. Our beloved school is closing. Our school, which for many, is where we learned that the world is bigger and more diverse than our childhood neighborhoods.

The building itself is a testament to the strength of the women who came before. They paved the way for future generations by showing us that there is no obstacle that we can't overcome. The opportunities that were afforded to us because of them are countless. Knowing that I walked the same halls as these women is truly humbling.

These women, past and present, are my sisters and I am truly honored to be a part of the legacy that is Hallahan. The pride I feel for being a Hallahan Girl is immense. I hope that this is not the end of our story.

Sincerely,

Carol M Bonewicz-Carlin  
Class of 1993

## Designation of Hallahan as Historical

Jillian Burns [REDACTED]

Thu 2/11/2021 4:56 PM

To: Allyson Mehley <Allyson.Mehley@Phila.gov>; friendsofhallahan@gmail.com <friendsofhallahan@gmail.com>

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Dear Allyson,

Please seriously consider the designation of the John W Hallahan building as historical. It's more than just a building. It's home.

I am a 2002 graduate of J.W. Hallahan. I am the youngest of three girls. My sisters graduated in 1998 and 2000. My mom is a 1979 graduate. My grandmother graduated in the class of 1944. I have aunts and cousins who attended Hallahan. My niece is currently a junior, hoping to graduate from there next year. It breaks my heart to even think that this may not happen. Growing up, there was never a question as to which high school I would choose. It was embedded in my heart that Hallahan was the place to go.

While a sophomore there in 1999, I was diagnosed with bone cancer. At such an important time in my teenage years, I was faced with a life threatening illness. I can't even begin to describe the amount of support that came flooding from my classmates and other grade levels at Hallahan. The facility, staff, students. Everyone showed their support in one way or another. I was homeschooled for a year due to treatments and side effects but was welcomed with open arms to all school dances and activities. When I was able to come back my junior year, it was as if I never left. I was offered extra support to help me catch up and keep my grades in check, I never felt alone.

Those four years were something special. I made so many friends from all areas of the city, many of which I am still in touch with almost 2 decades later. I have been back to the school for various events, bingo, volleyball games, etc. Every time I step through those doors, I feel like I have never left. There is something about those halls and stairways. They hold stories. They hold the love of a sisterhood. They hold the history of the city. Those walls have seen major milestones in the history of our city. Hallahan is the only high school with Mickey Mouse as our mascot, with special written permission from Walt Disney himself!

I'm sure if you were to look at all the graduates, most have led successive lives and careers after graduation. I, myself, am an Oncology nurse and so very proud to say I graduated from Hallahan. Although I no longer live in the city, I still think of it as home. I would have loved to send my daughter there.

If the walls of Hallahan could talk, the stories they would tell!

Sincerely,

Jillian Wawrzynek Burns, class of 2002

## Why John W. Hallahan should be considered as a historical building

Melissa Bressi [REDACTED]

Thu 2/11/2021 4:42 PM

To: Allyson Mehley <Allyson.Mehley@Phila.gov>; Friends of Hallahan <friendsofhallahan@gmail.com>

Cc: samanthabressi13@gmail.com <samanthabressi13@gmail.com>

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Good afternoon Ms. Mehley,

My name is Melissa Milia-Bressi, and my daughter Samantha Bressi is an empowered, strong, intelligent female in her senior year at Hallahan.

This building, its location, and the history behind it were just some reasons my daughter chose John W. Hallahan for high school. This building is special and deserving of historical status because Hallahan is the oldest all-girls high school in the country, founded in 1911.

Bishop McDevitt and Mrs. Mary McMichan were the leaders in the founding five high schools. This paved the way for the building of Catholic Girls High School in 1911. The name was changed to John W Hallahan high school after the death of Mrs. McMichan, this was in honor of her brother.

In the late 1800s, The Archdiocese of Philadelphia began discussing a need to educate women of the Delaware Valley. Currently in Philadelphia it is the only all girls Catholic school left. It sits in a perfect location to help young women spread their wings and fly!

Experiencing the thrill of life in Center City, which remains the epicenter of the history of this nation, as well as the history of the city of brotherly love. Hallahan is rich in traditions that mean so much to so many, the most endeared is the fountain jump in Logan circle on the last day of school, starting way back in the 70's.

Close to 40,000 young women have earned diplomas from Hallahan and have dedicated their talents and lives to society as women of faith, purpose, and vision. It needs to stay exactly where it is, it has earned its place in history, in the city that many still call home.

Thank you in advance for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

Melissa L. Milia-Bressi and Samantha Bressi, class of 2021

Sent from my iPhone

## John W. Hallahan - Save our building!

Danielle Giangreco [REDACTED]

Thu 2/11/2021 4:30 PM

To: Allyson Mehley <Allyson.Mehley@Phila.gov>

Cc: Friends of Hallahan <friendsofhallahan@gmail.com>

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Hello,

I am a third generation graduate of John W. Hallahan, the first in my family to finish college. My grandmother as a graduate was top 10 in her class but because it was a mans' world when she graduated her father did not value a college education for a woman, therefore not letting my grandmother go on to continue her education.

My grandmother later in life developed alzheimer's, she would often forget what day it was or what my name was but if you mentioned Hallahan or sang the Alma Mater she could belt it out and remembered every single word of it. That time in her life at Hallahan was so special to her, she never, ever forgot it.

On top of my education I received at Hallahan I also was able to learn about cultural and racial diversity not taught to me in my grade school before. I can honestly admit I was sheltered from cultural diversity growing up, I went to a Catholic grade school in Philadelphia thats was probably 99% middle class white. When I went to Hallahan it was an eye opening experience. Hallahan brought in students from all different parts of the city that had the most diverse backgrounds. I was able to learn more about the real world going to Hallahan in Center City Philadelphia then I could have in books.

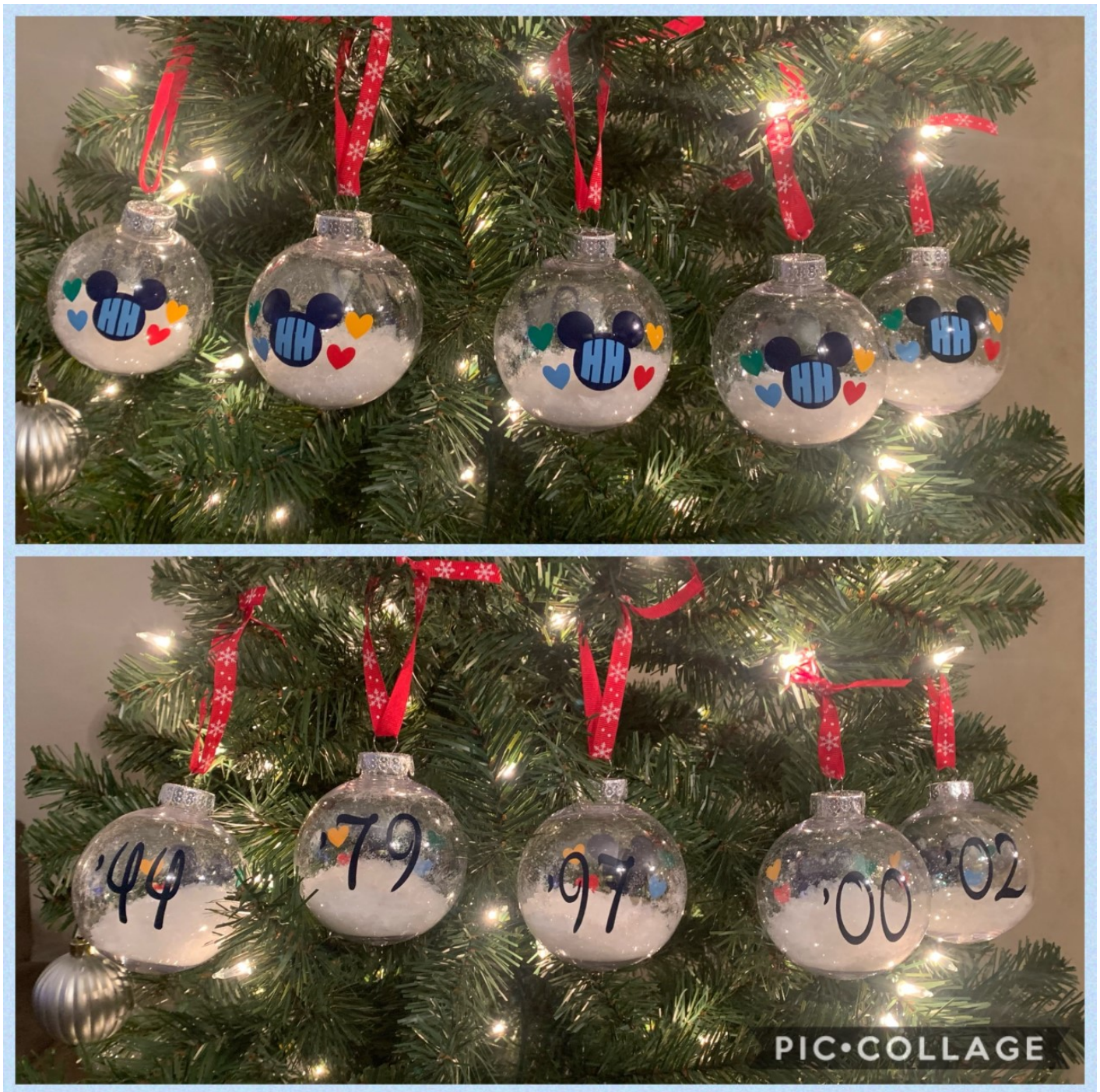
Tradition continued after my grandmother graduated in 1944, my mom then graduated in 1979, I along with my step-sister in 1997, my one sister in 2000, another sister in 2002 and we were hoping for my niece to graduate from Hallahan in 2022. Tradition was what made us each choose to go to Hallahan. We each heard the stories from my grandmother and mom, it was a not hard decision to make for each of us when we were in 8th grade.

You are not just closing down a school or a building, you are closing down a legacy built on traditions, values, women empowering women, cultural sensitivity and faith based environment only available at John W. Hallahan. It's not just about a building, it is what is on the inside of those walls.

And side note I played volleyball for 4 years at Hallahan, we had the best gym for it! It was called the "Mousetrap" for a reason. Many other schools we played against had large spacious gyms, ours was tiny and had a low ceiling but it was all ours and we used it to our advantage. The other teams dreaded playing us there and some came in not knowing how to play the ball off the pipes or the low ceiling. Best 4 years of my life. We may be tiny but we are mighty!



Danielle Wawrzynek Giangreco  
John W. Hallahan Class of 1997







## J.W. Hallahan High School

Ciglar, Rachel [REDACTED]

Thu 2/11/2021 3:51 PM

To: Allyson Mehley <Allyson.Mehley@Phila.gov>

Cc: friendsofhallahan@gmail.com <friendsofhallahan@gmail.com>

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Good Afternoon,

I wanted to share my opinion on Hallahan and why I believe it should be considered a Historical Designation. We all know that Hallahan is the oldest women's Catholic school and was funded by a woman who believed girls should have the advantages that boys did. Mary McMichan was a devout Catholic and she helped make it possible for girls to pursue their education. Does anything else scream our motto more than that? She was truly women of Faith, Purpose and Vision and so are the rest of us "Hallahan Girls".

There is so much history in this school from its start until now. We have many traditions like Hallahan Day and the Fountain Jump and everyone knows our famous mascot, Mickey Mouse. Hallahan is all those things and more. It's not just a building at 19th & Wood. It is a home for the endless number of women who have walked the halls of Hallahan. A place we are proud to say we are from and a place we continue to go back to. I personally have gone to career day and met with young women who are starting to think about college and careers. My cousin who is also a graduate is even the school nurse!

You see, I come from a family of women who have attended Hallahan and our stories have been passed down to one another. My mother who graduated from Hallahan in 1968 had the same history teacher I did in 1999. My older cousins had the same gym teacher (Ms. Biello) and now my youngest cousin is a student and we have shared the experience of knowing Sr. Ida who cares so much for us girls. This school is a part of who we all are.

I am proud to say I am part on the first graduating class of the 21st Century. My classmates and I graduated in June 2001. This was a big deal for us. It was also 100 years since the school was established. It is my hope you will make this a historical designation. There have been lifetimes of memories and a sisterhood made here.

Sincerely,

**Rachel Ciglar**

**Probation Officer II**

**General Supervision 2**

**3rd floor**

**Philadelphia, Pa 19106**

## Friends of Hallahan

Theresa Flick [REDACTED]

Thu 2/11/2021 3:24 PM

To: Allyson Mehley <Allyson.Mehley@Phila.gov>

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Hello,

Below please find the letter I sent to Friends of Hallahan a few weeks ago. You have my permission to share. Thank you!

My four years at Hallahan were invaluable. I not only grew in knowledge and faith, but as a person. This was my first experience making friends from outside of my neighborhood. We learned so much about ourselves and each other. Friends I've made since then mostly have terrible memories of their high school years. For me, that couldn't be further from the truth. I could not imagine having spent my high school years anywhere else. I am grateful for not only the incredible Catholic education I received, but the supportive environment I found there during the all too hectic teenage years. You don't realize the value of a sisterhood until you live it, and the sisterhood at Hallahan is like no other. It was amazing to see girls from so many backgrounds and neighborhoods work together in school and become lifelong friends. My sister is a sophomore and my heart breaks at the thought of her not being able to graduate from Hallahan. Even as a kid, she couldn't wait to go to Hallahan because she knows how much I loved it there. I hope and pray for all of those involved that this unfortunate situation works out in our favor. Once a Hallahan girl, always a Hallahan girl.

Theresa (Maiale) Flick, Class of 2010

## Historical designation for Hallahan high school building

jmlei [REDACTED]

Thu 2/11/2021 12:49 PM

To: Allyson Mehley <Allyson.Mehley@Phila.gov>

Cc: friendsofhallahan@gmail.com <friendsofhallahan@gmail.com>

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Good afternoon.

I am writing in reference to the application for historical designation of the Hallahan high school building at 19th and Wood Streets.

As a graduate of the Hallahan class of 1975, I urge you to approve the historical designation of our beloved high school building. This building opened in 1911 and houses the first Catholic Girls high school, not just in Philadelphia, but in the entire country. I passed the 1911 cornerstone every day I entered the building for the 4 years I attended Hallahan.

Since the Archdiocese of Philadelphia is planning on closing the high school at the end of this school year, it is urgent that this designation is approved so the building is not able to be torn down if sold. Our school has always been unique in center city and it would be an atrocity if it was destroyed. Our graduates have contributed to this city, state and country in more ways that can be counted. The building is well known and appreciated building in it's neighborhood. We need to keep the historical structure to appreciate the architectural features. The historical designation is necessary to preserve the history of this all girls school which has provided an excellent education and sisterly experience to thousands of Philadelphia's female residents. Hallahan's current students and thousands of alumnae are trying to save the school to keep Hallahan open, and, at the very least, hope to save the building from demolition or destruction.

I implore you to please approve this historical designation for John W. Hallahan Catholic Girls High School located at 19th and Wood Streets.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Josephine McCoy

Class of 1975  
[REDACTED]

Sent from my T-Mobile 4G LTE Device



## Historical Designation of John W. Hallahan

Christina Yancer [REDACTED]

Thu 2/11/2021 12:07 PM

To: Allyson Mehley <Allyson.Mehley@Phila.gov>

Cc: friendsofhallahan@gmail.com <friendsofhallahan@gmail.com>

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February 11, 2021

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Christina Dzielinski Yancer and I am a proud Alumna of the John W. Hallahan Class of 1993. More importantly, I am the parent of Paige Yancer, a current student, who is a member of the Class of 2022.

I am writing today to ask that you approve the application for historical designation of the oldest Catholic Girl's High School. Being the oldest all girls school in the country should alone count for something; however what one needs to recognize is that Hallahan is so much more than just a building. Hallahan High School is an icon in Philadelphia more specifically, Center City. Quite frankly, Philadelphia and Center City would not be what they are today without the contributions of the women from Hallahan.

Hallahan spans over four generations in my family not to mention countless other families throughout the city of Philadelphia. Starting as a freshman in 1965 my mother was the first woman in our family to walk the hallowed halls of Hallahan. Fast forwarding almost three decades later to 1989 and 1993 my mother instilled those same values learned from Hallahan's education into my sister and myself as we were both blessed to graduate into this amazing sisterhood. The sisterhood continues today, where my daughter is currently in the 11<sup>th</sup> grade at Hallahan and hoping to continue this family tradition and graduate from Hallahan as a member of the Class of 2022.

The institution of John W Hallahan has instilled in our entire sisterhood a strong sense of strength and determination. Attending the oldest all girls Catholic High School also instills a sense of pride. Putting into words this sense of pride is difficult, but the emotions that my family and I have when we speak about our times at Hallahan, our second family, our sisters, our second home, is easily seen through the laughs, tears, and fondness of the memories. These memories are even stronger watching my daughter flourish as a student at Hallahan. She is a member of Student Council, Student Ambassadors and most recently was accepted into both the Spanish Honor Society and the National Honor Society. She truly loves her school and honors the traditions that have been so long standing in our family. She spends time at Hallahan when she does not have to, that is true dedication to one's school.

Designating Hallahan as a historical site allows the thousands of women who have graduated from this wonderful school the opportunity to continue the traditions that have made such an impact on the sisterhood of Hallahan and the entire City of Philadelphia. My family is asking that you please approve the application for John W. Hallahan to be designated a historical landmark.

Alma Mater Glorify!

Judith Hughes Dzielinski, Class of 1969

Jennifer Dzielinski Klingenberg, Class of 1989

Christina Dzielinski Yancer, Class of 1993

Paige Yancer, Class of 2022

## Please ~ Save Hallahan

Eileen Lafferty [REDACTED]

Thu 2/11/2021 9:05 AM

To: Allyson Mehley <Allyson.Mehley@Phila.gov>

Cc: Friends of Hallahan <friendsofhallahan@gmail.com>

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Hello Ms. Mehley. I am a 1973 graduate of John W. Hallahan Catholic Girls High School. My four years at Hallahan were beyond memorable, and are the basis for the woman I am today. I have a strong faith foundation, unmatched work ethics along with a commitment to live my life modeled after my Christian values and traditions.

The school means so much to me that when I retired from the Montgomery County Office for Health and Human Services in 2016, I volunteered at Hallahan, tutoring and supporting students who academically and socially struggled. It was heartwarming to be back in my 1969 Latin classroom, but this time, on the other side of the desk, to encourage students to find the best in Hallahan, just as I did all those years ago.

Please, do all that you can to ensure that Hallahan is designated as a historical building in Philadelphia!! It will mean so much, to so many and ensure a brighter future for the women of this fine city.

May God bless and watch over you.

Eileen Lafferty '73  
[REDACTED]