An invitation to lovers of history and deacon lore

The Fund for the Diaconate has decided to change its History & Archives Committee to the *History & Archives Forum*. What's the difference?

The committee was an internal group, but the Forum will be open to all persons, ordained and lay, who are interested in the history of the deaconesses of The Episcopal Church. Also part of the Forum's mission is further research into the background of our organization, which was originally known as "The Retiring Fund For Deaconesses of The Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America," when it was founded in 1927.

Dn. Geri Swanson, a Fund board member and the biographer of Dss. Susan Trevor Knapp, is the coordinator of the Forum. One early member of the Forum is Dn. Daphne Noyes, who has a grant to research two of the first deaconesses, Adeline Blanchard Tyler and Caroline Guild. Another early member is Deacon Patricia Marks, creator of the website Sisters in Faith (https://sisters-in-faith.org), which collects information and pictures of the deaconesses.

The charge of the History & Archives Forum is "to research, collect, organize, and preserve information related to deaconesses, and of the Fund." There are no dues to being part of the Forum, and no set meetings. The coordinator will report on activities at the Fund's semi-annual board meetings.

Your role, as a member, would be to help uncover the lives of these remarkable women. That may mean doing research, going someplace near you to do research for someone else, taking pictures of grave sites or objects, or even just keeping your eyes and ears open for nuggets of information or the random memorial to a deaconess – like a window, a chalice, or some other item around your church and diocese.

Interested in helping? Please send a note to Deacon Geri Swanson with your contact information and interests, and you will be added to the joint file. Let's come together and tell the story.

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