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## Alumna Reflects on Half-Century Pharmacy Career

Former drugstore owner remembers World War II, Hurricane Camille

OCTOBER 23, 2014 BY ERIN GARRETT

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Louise Chadwick Lynch

OXFORD, Miss. – Louise Chadwick Lynch remembers her uncle Cornelius Herlihy's pharmacy in Waveland as "a mystical place."

"As a young child, I couldn't go in the pharmacy itself where the prescriptions were filled," said Lynch, 91. "I always wondered what was written on that little paper. That piece of paper was so important."

Lynch soon learned the significance of those pieces of paper. After graduating from the

University of Mississippi **School of Pharmacy** in 1944, she eventually owned and operated Herlihy's store for 49 years, becoming a Waveland icon.

Ole Miss was a different place during World War II, when Lynch began pharmacy school. Living on campus, she woke up to morning reveille and heard taps in the evening, she said.

"When the war started, the number of students dropped drastically," she said. "Empty male dormitories were filled with soldiers who received special training at Ole Miss. We had maybe 18 pharmacy students when I was a freshman, and only two of us were women. By the time I graduated, there were only three males left in our class because of the draft."

Pharmacy students had a reputation on campus for being especially studious, Lynch said.

"There were no backpacks like today, and students didn't use cars for travel," she said. "We had to carry all the pharmacy textbooks we needed for the day because we couldn't get back to the dormitory for breaks. The books were quite heavy and cumbersome; the hills on campus seemed like mountains when carrying all the books. The curriculum was very tough."

Tougher still were the effects of the war on campus. The university would often post the names of students who were killed in action, Lynch said. Rationing was frequent, and items such as leather, sugar, gas and rubber tires were scarce.

In 1944, Ole Miss did not hold a graduation ceremony, so Lynch's diploma arrived by train.

Upon completing pharmacy school, Lynch and her husband, Harry Lynch, who graduated from the pharmacy school in 1941, took over Herlihy's Waveland Drugstore. Following her uncle's tradition, the store was a place for prominent locals to discuss the news, the first stop for mothers with their newborns and a place to get an exceptional soda, root beer float, milkshake or Coca-Cola.

"It was the first air-conditioned building in Waveland," Louise Lynch said. "I had two tables in the back with chairs and a soda fountain for a time. We made all our syrups from scratch. They were special – people still ask about our recipes."

The Lynches raised seven daughters in an apartment above the drugstore. After Harry Lynch died in 1963, the daughters helped their mom run the store. They stocked shelves, filled coin drink machines, made home deliveries and waited on customers, among other tasks. One daughter, Amy Lynch, said that the customers were "like a big family."

"We were interested in them, and they were interested in us," she said. "We probably spent as much time in the drugstore as we did in our home. In fact, the drugstore felt like an extension of our home. The well-being of townspeople and serving customers became an integral part of our lives."

"When we were growing up, our family talked about health and medicine around the dinner table. When my aunt and uncle, who also were pharmacists and drugstore owners in a neighboring community, came to visit on Sundays, the topic of discussion always veered to health, pros and cons of medical

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U.S. inflation roller coaster prompts fresh look at long-ignored money supply By Michael S. Derby NEW YORK – The amount of money sloshing around the U.S. economy shrank last year for the first time on record, a development that some economists believe bolsters the case for U.S. inflation pressures continuing to abate. The Federal Reserve's

treatments, and interactions of medicines. We were very fortunate to be exposed to these conversations.”

Subtle and not-so-subtle changes have ensued since Louise Lynch began her pharmacy career.

“Pharmacy was primarily a male profession when my mother began her career,” Amy Lynch said. “Most women at the time were homemakers. At first, the townspeople looked to my father for assistance, but gradually they realized that a woman pharmacist was as educated and as competent as a male. The war helped people recognize women’s roles in the workforce – a new breed of skilled professionals.”

In the 1940s and ’50s, compounding was an important part of pharmacy, Lynch said.

“It was a very time-consuming task that had to be done with precision,” she said. “The scale and weights were a pharmacist’s most prized possessions since they measured ingredients we used in compounding. It was a very exact science.”

Lynch was the go-to pharmacist for hundreds of patients. She would fill prescriptions at all hours of the night and often on holidays. She helped ease the pain of sea nettle bites, insect stings, infant teething and skin rashes. She offered credit without interest, often not knowing if the account would ever be paid.

Waveland Drug Store weathered a significant storm in 1969, when Hurricane Camille hit the Gulf Coast. Lynch participated in the relief effort by coordinating and distributing medicine brought in by state and federal agencies.

After the hurricane, the building remained, though the only thing left inside was a penny scale too heavy to be washed away. The drugstore gradually reopened, though the soda fountain closed and business slowed because a nearby medical clinic was destroyed.

Lynch decided it was time to close her doors in 1993. That year, the Waveland board of aldermen proclaimed Dec. 31 “Louise C. Lynch Day” to honor her extraordinary service to the community.

“I think pharmacy is a very good profession for a female,” Lynch said. “It was a wonderful time in my life.”



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