



2015 was a special year for the Miami Alumnae and Patroness Chapter. January 23rd marked 75 wonderful years since our installation as a Sigma Alpha Iota chapter. We celebrated our anniversary at our Annual Spring Reunion Luncheon where we had the honor of having National Vice President of Alumnae Chapters, Sue Bermann, in attendance. Our dear sister Meline Markarian regaled beautiful stories of friendship, love, and music through her years in SAI. After 67 years, Meline still keeps in contact with many sisters she has met through her years in S.A.I. "Anyhow," Meline said, "I want you to know what's really exciting about being in S.A.I.- it's one of the few groups that you will ever be a part of that will go on with you forever, as long as you want to go, it will go with you." She continued, "I have never affiliated out of the Miami Chapter. This is my chapter. It will always be my chapter." At our reunion, we also honored Friend of the Arts, Harry Pilafian who was initiated in 1997. Audrey Pilafian, a sister of over 50 years played, "The Lord's Prayer" on Cello to celebrate the life of her husband.

Our lovely chapter currently includes 8 resident Patronesses and 20 Alumnae; 5 of which are 60+ year members! The Miami Chapter has also been previously given the "Lambda A Province Alumnae Chapter Achievement Award" twice as well as the 1997 National Alumnae Chapter Achievement Award!" This year our new President Carrie DeLeon and Vice-President Ritual/Membership Jenny Diaz were our delegates for the 47th National Convention. They met some remarkable ladies who all share our love of music. All these sisters who all have in common music and the arts are the reason why Sigma Alpha Iota is irreplaceable and why 75 years of the Miami Alumnae and Patroness Chapter is just a fraction of the many years to come.

-Lindsay Mahia (Editor)

About Meline Markarian:

Music Education (Voice) was initiated into the Sigma Chi chapter in 1947.

Received: Sword of Honor

Diamond Sword of Honor

Rose of Honor

Rose of Dedication

Wreath of Achievement

Ring of Excellence

- "It was a pleasure and honor to have know Dr. Bertha Foster who started Sigma Alpha Iota in South Florida. She was the first dean of the School of Music and a very powerful source in the cultural development of Miami at that time."

- At the time "everything was segregated. You could not join a social sorority unless you were of the same faith." Sigma Alpha Iota and Phi Mu Alpha were the only professional groups on the campus that had both with no reservations."

- In fact it was early one morning that Pat Stenberg, the National President at the time, called and invited Melanie over for breakfast. During that breakfast Melanie and Pat created Flea-Flam.

- Along with her husband Berge who is a Friend of the Arts and another couple, they scouted all of Ashville to find the right home for National Headquarters.