

Transcript – Hope Ballinger Brown, '44

Narrator: Hope Bellinger Brown

Interviewer: Lee Vanicor

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Track 1

Lee Vanicor: [00:00] – [Lee Vanicor?], Brown Class of 1991, interviewing Hope Ballinger Brown, Pembroke Class of 1944, and it's May 11, 1988, and we're in the John Hay Library of Brown University.

LV: Mrs. Brown, can you tell me why you chose Pembroke?

Hope Bellinger Brown: Well, really, it was because my aunt was a graduate of Pembroke in the class of 1902, and it's mainly due to her influence that I came here.

LV: Can you tell me a little bit about your family background? Your mother's and father's education?

HBB: My mother was a graduate of – I guess it was technical or called Central now – High School in Providence [00:01:00] and she was a nurse; graduated from Rhode Island Hospital in 1912.

LV: And your father?

HBB: And my father was mostly a self-educated man. He ran away from home at the age of 9 or 10 and took care of himself pretty well from then on. He was a lieutenant in the First World War in the Navy, and in the Second World War he was drafted to be a captain of one of the ships that sailed the North Atlantic.

LV: Wow, OK. They're both from Rhode Island?

HBB: No, my mother was [00:02:00] born in Charles City, although she grew up in Rhode Island, and my father was born in Nebraska.

LV: OK. So, like why did you want to come to college? Did you –

HBB: Well, I wanted to be a nurse.

LV: You knew from the start that you wanted to be a nurse?

HBB: Oh, yeah. The five-year course was alive and well then in Pembroke, and we knew some women who had gone through the course. And my aunt wanted me to come here, so that's how I got here.

LV: OK. Were there any difficulties that you faced because you were a woman going to college or –

HBB: No, I don't think so.

LV: No? That's good. OK., Do [00:03:00] you remember much about your freshman year, your first roommate?

HBB: Well, I was a city girl, so I missed all the on-campus activities for the most part. We had our city room over at Alumnae Hall, and Pembroke Hall was our home base. Although, with the course we took, we were over at Brown as much as we were at Pembroke proper.

LV: What's the most memorable thing that happened in your years at Pembroke?

HBB: Well, I remember Miss Wilder's class in human anatomy most fondly.

[00:04:00] LV: Why is that?

HBB: Oh, well, it was the first time I ever got to dissect a real creature other than physiology lab. But we had cats that we dissected. I even took the bare bones home and buried them. Well, we enjoyed everything. I think if the Avon Theater hadn't been so accessible I might have done better in my studies.

LV: Was that the main social place?

HBB: Yeah and the drug store, Wayland Drug, there and...

LV: Where is Wayland Drug?

HBB: Well, it used to be right on the corner of [00:05:00] Thayer and Waterman. We used to have our breakfast there every morning after chemistry.

LV: It sounds like [Peaberry's] on Thayer Street has taken it's place probably. That's where a lot of kids go now. What were frats like? Were there sororities when you went –

HBB: No, no sororities. Fraternities, yes. Sigma Chi was right across from the chemistry lab, I think, or the biology lab.

LV: Was that the main frat?

HBB: No, I think Beta was the one that we were most associated with.

LV: I noticed as I was doing some research on the class of 1944 – I noticed that there were about a thousand undergraduates [00:06:00] at Brown, male undergraduates, and there were a hundred at Pembroke?

HBB: Yeah, about. I think there were 120 in our class all together. There were about 12 that started out in the nursing course. But only two that finished in the proper span. Some of them dropped out and went into another field, and some of them dropped out and went toward nursing, and some of them just lost interest in it all together.

LV: How many years were you a nurse?

HBB: I worked for 20 years at Rhode Island Hospital.

LV: One of the things [00:07:00] that the Christine Dunlap Farnham Archives Association wants information on is volunteer work that you have done, because I guess they're writing a book and they're going to devote a whole chapter to voluntary work that women have done.

HBB: Really, the only volunteer work that I've done has been I taught Sunday school in the summertime one time and I was a den mother to Cub Scouts, but other than that, I never had much time to do volunteer work. I hope to do some now that I've retired.

LV: Well, that's good. How were relations between males and females at the college? Did you [00:08:00] find that like men were jealous of women that did better, that excelled?

HBB: Well, I never had that problem myself. But, no... We got along very well. We had a lot of our classes with Brown boys – men, I should say. They always treated us equally, I think.

LV: That's good.

HBB: Yeah. I don't think they found us any great competition, really.

LV: What was it like going to school during the war? Did a lot of men leave and go to war?

HBB: Well, yeah, a lot of men left and went in the service and, of course, we accelerated. We went from September right through until a year later. We [00:09:00] got all fouled up with our nurses training. We were supposed to go, you know, the regular year to college and then six weeks in the summer to do training. And we did it the first year and we started our second year and 1941, December 7<sup>th</sup>, the Pearl Harbor and so, they immediately accelerated the course so that we went continued on and finish our third year of college, and then we went into the hospital permanently. So, we missed all of senior year activities up here. We never got to walk down the hill. In fact, I walked down when we had our 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary [00:10:00] and it was a thrill; it really was. And I was sorry that I didn't get to walk down the hill because I think it would have meant a lot to my aunt.

LV: I noticed you got married in December of '45?

HBB: I got married while I was in training. Yeah.

LV: Was there a lot of pressure back then to get married before you graduated?

HBB: Oh, no. We weren't supposed to. Especially in training we weren't supposed to get married before we graduated, but with the war and everything they loosened things up a lot.

LV: And your husband went to Providence College?

HBB: He went to PC, yeah.

LV: Do you remember anything about [00:11:00] May Day?

HBB: May Day? Yes. DJ Linton was our queen, and she still is one of the best looking girls in the class. Yeah, I remember that. I have some pictures of that. I should have brought them. Would you like them?

LV: Yes, anything you have at home that you can donate to the archives they'd love to have.

HBB: Yeah, I have some photos that you might like.

LV: That would be great.

HBB: May Day was a very exciting time.

LV: I had to ask you, I was going through your yearbook and I noticed that under your name it says, "Pembroke gal in white," and I wanted you to explain that.

HBB: Oh, well that's the nurse.

LV: Oh, OK. I wasn't sure. OK.

HBB: That's when they did wear white.

LV: OK.

[00:12:00] HBB: Now they just wear everything.

LV: Yeah, they – dark blues.

HBB: I don't like it. But, anyway. I think I was one of the last ones at the hospital to wear a hat.

LV: Really?

HBB: When I worked. That's the way we were trained.

LV: They also wrote, "If it doesn't set her all a-twitter Eddie will..."

HBB: Well, that's him.

LV: Aww, cute. How about Sophomore Masque? Remember anything about that?

HBB: I don't remember that at all.

LV: Or, how about Ivy Day?

HBB: I don't think I was around for that. Isn't that a senior celebration? I don't remember that at all.

LV: I'm not sure. I don't think they have it anymore.

HBB: No, I don't remember Ivy Day. [00:13:00] I remember the freshman get-acquainted dance. Do they still have that?

LV: Yeah, they do. The freshman dance; I went to that.

HBB: And I remember they had – I saw pictures of some of the fellas that were coming to Brown. You know, going into different sports and I was interested to see what they would look like in real life, you know. Then I met them at the freshman dance. Yeah, they were pretty nice.

LV: Yeah, I remember that, too.

HBB: Yeah.

LV: I didn't really meet anyone, but it was fun.

HBB: Well, my Ed is – I met him in high school.

LV: Oh, so you're high school sweethearts.

HBB: Oh, yeah.

LV: Still together.

HBB: All these years.

[00:14:00] LV: That's impressive. That's really good. So, Dean Morriss. She was the dean when you went to school. What was she like?

HBB: Very impressive.

LV: I heard she was kind of known as a cold, austere woman.

HBB: She was an elegant woman. Yes, very straight-laced, and she cut a commanding figure.

LV: Did you talk to her?

HBB: I – no. thank...no, thank you. I was glad I didn't have to. Bessie Rudd was a very impressive figure.

LV: Bessie Rudd? Now, she was...who was she?

HBB: She was physical education.

LV: She was a physical education teacher.

HBB: She was head of the department. She [00:15:00] was great. Wonderful.

LV: They had requirements you had to pass the swimming test before graduated?

HBB: Oh, we almost drowned in the pool laughing, but we did pass it. They don't do that anymore?

LV: No.

HBB: Oh, then they don't care?

LV: I know. I can't imagine because I can't swim very good.

HBB: We used to fool around. No wonder. I don't swim very well now, but we got across the pool anyway.

LV: And you had to take four years of phys ed?

HBB: Well, my chum, Betty Fuller Gifford and I used to cut phys ed so often we had to make it up at the hospital. We had to promise to fulfill our [00:16:00] requirements while we were there. We used to go and bowl in their terrible alleys, but we did. It was very easy to cut class.

LV: Yeah, it still is.

HBB: We used to play speed ball. Do they still play speed ball?

LV: I never [heard of it?]

HBB: Well, it was a good game.

LV: How do you play it?

HBB: It looks kind of like soccer and – it's kind of like soccer. A lot of running up and down the field.

LV: Was football big back then?

HBB: Sports – yes, football was very big then. I never got to any of the games. I knew quite a few of the players. Bob Margarita was one of our stars. I [00:17:00] think he was a quarterback. He was in our class. And Tony Rotelli was an upper classmate at the time. He was a doctor later. Now he's gone. I remember the night of the Copacabana fire in Boston when all the football players went up and helped to rescue people out of the burning nightclub, it was.

LV: Oh, really? Wow.

HBB: We did spend a lot of time on campus even though we were city girls because we had labs and everything to take the whole day up.

LV: Did you have a roommate or did you have a room to yourself?

[00:18:00] HBB: No, I lived at home.

LV: You lived at home? But I thought you said you spent your time –

HBB: Oh, at the hospital.

LV: In [alumni?], thought? You said you were –

HBB: Yeah, well, they had a city room upstairs; Alumnae Hall.

LV: What was the city room?

HBB: It was just a room where the city girls could get together.

LV: Oh, OK. I didn't know what you meant.

HBB: We lived at home.

LV: What are your feelings on the merger? When they merged Pembroke and Brown.



HBB: Well, our class has never really acknowledged it. We still keep our Pembroke class title.

LV: So, you kind of wished –

HBB: We resist.

LV: Still Pembroke, yeah.

HBB: I think it's too bad really that we are losing our identity.

LV: Yeah, I can understand that.

[00:19:00] HBB: But as the years go by it doesn't make so much difference. You're a Brown girl.

LV: Yup.

HBB: So am I.

LV: Yup. Were you ever enrolled in any math courses or algebra?

HBB: Yes.

LV: I heard that male professors that taught math courses, like, the male oriented courses, were sometimes chauvinistic like in the ways – like, they'd pay more attention to the guys in the class.

HBB: Oh, very possibly. We had a professor for math that was very nice. His name was Paul – I can't remember his [00:20:00] first name, but he used to give us special help when we needed it. And he was slightly handicapped himself. So, I guess he kind of appreciated our handicap of being girls in math. He was very nice to us.

LV: Who was your favorite teacher? Your anatomy teacher?

HBB: Miss Wilder was. She was great.

LV: She was anatomy?

HBB: Yeah, and Bessie Rudd, I'd have to say, too. Even though she hollered at me. Oh, dear. And towards the end of her life I had her for a patient in the hospital and we enjoyed talking over all the old times.

LV: It's so fascinating to look back because, I [00:21:00] mean, I was just looking at your yearbook and it just seems like since the class was small, it seems like everyone was so close. Everyone knew everyone else in the class, you know? Must have been really nice.

HBB: Do they still have Brownbrokers now?

LV: I think they do, but I haven't been to any of their shows, but I think they do.

HBB: Some of the girls I was most close with were associated with Brownbrokers. That was fun, too. We didn't participate, but we went and watched.

LV: A lot of the groups, like Sock and Buskin are still around. A few others.

HBB: They didn't have any dance groups when we were there.

LV: Oh.

HBB: You do now.

LV: Yeah. Yeah, we have at least two or three. That's the great thing about colleges. So many clubs and so many things to go to. Getting [00:22:00] back to before. Your small class – I come from a really small school. I come from upstate New York and it's a really rural area right in the middle of New York where there's nothing like – the nearest city is Binghamton, which is an hour and a half away and my graduating class from high school was 34. And I went to that school with those same people for 13 years, you know. It was K-12. I know what small classes are like. Any obstacles that you encountered? Personal or...?

HBB: On my way? No, just getting through the course. [00:23:00]

LV: How did your marriage affect your career as a nurse?

HBB: Well, let's see, I worked--When I was first married I worked down in Florida where my husband was stationed in the army and I really – you know, it was out of necessity, but when we

came back to Rhode Island he got a good job or fairly good job, and I didn't work again until my older son was graduating from high school. Then I took a refresher course and went back to work.

LV: How many children do you have?

HBB: Two. Two boys.

LV: So [00:24:00] you –

HBB: I stayed at home and was a mother for 17 years and then I went back to work.

LV: Did you have certain female role models when you were there? Karen Lamoree was telling us about you had certain female role models that taught you proper etiquette and I don't know...

HBB: Oh, I would say it would be my aunt.

LV: Yes. Really?

HBB: Oh, sure. She was a guidance teacher and an English teacher and came from a very strict [00:25:00] background.

LV: This doesn't really have anything to do with it, but I'm just curious – what religion are you?

HBB: Protestant. Presbyterian, right now. Brought up a Methodist.

LV: You taught Sunday school in a Presbyterian church?

HBB: Yeah.

LV: Were you involved in any other extracurricular activities?

HBB: I belonged to the Glee Club.

LV: Oh, how was that? Fun?

HBB: Oh, it was nice. I loved it.

LV: Were you an alto or a soprano?

HBB: I was an alto.

LV: Oh, my.

HBB: Mr. Denine was our – is he still here?

LV: Denine?

HBB: He married one of my [00:26:00] one of the girls in the class ahead of us. Walter. Walter Denine, I think his name was. He used to play the organ at Chapel and then he had the chorus.

LV: I'm not sure. I don't know. I don't think they still have a glee club, but they have a lot of different singing groups. They have a cappella groups –

HBB: Oh, yeah, I've heard of them. The Jabberwockies.

LV: Yeah, the Jabberwockies. They're great. Did you have defense courses? Were there –

HBB: Civil defense, you mean?

LV: Yeah. Civil defense. [00:27:00] courses when you went...

HBB: No, we had a lot of air raid alarms and drills and all that stuff, but they never gave us any instruction, just pull the shades down and be quiet.

LV: During your – I think it was your sophomore year – I was looking through old [BDHs?] and I read this thing that said seven minutes between classes.

HBB: Yeah.

LV: They had seven minutes - that was it between classes?

HBB: Yeah, just about. I had to trot from here to there.

LV: I know. If you have to go all the way, like, from someplace like Orwig to the other side of campus, that would be hard to do in seven minutes.

HBB: Well, of course we never [00:28:00] went any farther than – I guess the psychology building way over there.

LV: Did they have Orwig then?

HBB: I don't know.

LV: The music department on Benevolent Street?

HBB: No, I don't think so. No, I think it was on campus that we had...over there, One of those buildings.

LV: So you didn't find it too hard to...

HBB: No, we made it mostly.

LV: How were your grades? Was freshman year like a hard –

HBB: I'm not proud of them at all No, I'm not proud of them at all. The only thing I wonder at is that I passed the – you know that composition test they give you when we take the entrance exams?

LV: Yes.

HBB: I passed [00:29:00] that.

LV: English I?

HBB: Yeah.

LV: Oh, wow. So, that's –

HBB: I didn't have to take English comp. I had to take English literature from Chaucer up or Beowulf up.

LV: That was a requirement?

HBB: No, it wasn't. It was something they gave me. It wasn't a requirement it was forced upon I guess. Instead of.

LV: Yeah, because I know – I’m not sure exactly how they judge it, but I think by your SAT scores and by the composition that you submit in your application. Usually, about half the freshman class has to take English I. That’s what I’m doing this interview for, too.

HBB: I’m sure they’re wondered how I ever passed it, though. [00:30:00]

LV: Did you find that, like, freshman year was hard and then you got adjusted and your grades got a little better? Was it easier after freshman year, you think?

HBB: No, I don’t think so because the courses were changing so that, you know, chemistry and math and biology – we didn’t have to take physics – but it was all constantly changing and getting harder.

LV: Did you have special requirements or could you make your own?

HBB: Oh, no. We had a prescribed course we did have to take.

LV: Was every program like that or [00:31:00] was it just nursing?

HBB: I can say we’re all pretty well set with required courses.

LV: Do you know much about Brown’s curriculum now?

HBB: No.

LV: It’s very lenient. You just have to get a certain amount of credits. Right now it’s 28 and next year it’s going up to 30. But like, That means like now, I only have to take seven courses a year and I can even form my own major if I don’t like any of the ones in the course announcement book. It’s like, the regulations are really loose. That’s one of the things I like about –

HBB: Enjoy it while you may.

LV: Yeah, I know. Do [00:32:00] you think if you went to a different – how much of an influence has going to Pembroke had on your life, do you think?

HBB: I don’t know.

LV: Do you think it had a great influence on a lot of things that you did?

HBB: Yes, I think so, but I think when I was working in the hospital I rather downplayed it because I didn't want other nurses to feel funny about me. I know I could see a change in attitude in some of them when they found out I went to college. You [00:33:00] know? So, I downplayed it for the most part. Just a few people I worked with knew that I was a college graduate.

Track 2

HBB: – and I really didn't use it to my, you know, I didn't teach or advance up in the ranks of the hospital. I preferred to be an Indian, and I think that's what the trouble that nursing has got into. There are so many chiefs; there's not enough Indians. I'm afraid they're going to regret giving up their three-year courses now that hospital schools... Just don't get sick.

LV: I know now it's a lot better to become an RN like going to college sort of nursing school, right?

HBB: Well, there [00:01:00] aren't any nursing schools left. There's only two in Rhode Island.

LV: I have three aunts that are nurses and one of them has a husband and two kids and now she's finally going back to college to get a degree.

HBB: Well, I applaud those girls that go back to get a degree afterwards because it's a tough job really. Hard job.

LV: A really needed job.

HBB: Well, I liked to be a nurse.

LV: I thought about becoming a nurse, too. Still don't know yet. I guess I have time to decide.

HBB: Oh, yes. Plenty of time.

LV: Do you remember PAWS? Pembroke [00:02:00] Auxiliary War Service?

HBB: No. No, I don't remember the name. I remember sitting over in the infirmary – no – yes, the infirmary at Pembroke and rolling bandages. Now, if that was PAWS –

LV: It sounds like it.

HBB: – I'd remember it.

LV: Yeah, because they did a lot of services like that.

HBB: But.... That's all I remember there.

LV: Do you remember Eva Moore?

HBB: Oh, yes.

LV: What was she like? She was--

HBB: Oh very warm. Lovely person.

LV: She was the admissions director?

HBB: Yeah. Very [00:03:00] homey sort of person. Really charming.

LV: I noticed she was your honorary class member.

HBB: And Joseph Hunt was one of our class members, too. He was a psychology professor. And then another one was – I can't remember his name. I didn't have him for a professor anyway.

LV: Do you have one each year?

HBB: Well, when [00:04:00] we had official reunions we usually invited some of our "pets."

LV: How often did you have a reunion?

HBB: We have a reunion every year.

LV: Oh, you do?

HBB: Yeah.

LV: That's nice. How does that work?

HBB: We have a luncheon. Sometimes on campus. This year we're going to be with the class of '42...or'43. They're having their forty-fifth, so we're going to celebrate with them. We just have a luncheon and a business meeting.



LV: Who organizes it? Do all the graduating classes at Brown have reunions every year after a certain point?

HBB: No, it's just how you feel and we feel like we like to get together every year.

LV: That's nice. Do [00:05:00] you remember anything about the Brown-Pembroke Acquaintance Bureau?

HBB: No. No, we never had any facilities like that.

LV: No, I heard – this was in one of the old BDHs. It was in 1945, I believe. It was this bureau – it was like a blind dating service where people filled out cards to meet other people.

HBB: No. No. No. That was after my time. We were all on our own.

LV: Did you know anyone that was made to stay in a men's frat? Like, when the men went off to war? [00:06:00] Because I heard something about that, that when a lot of the guys went off to war, some of the women had to stay in the frats.

HBB: Oh, really? No, I don't remember that.

LV: Anything else that you want to share?

HBB: It's just – it's nice to come back and walk around the campus. Brings back a lot of memories – or feelings more than memories. You know?

LV: You almost feel like you're still going to college when you walk back.

HBB: Yeah, it doesn't seem so long ago at all. But [00:07:00] I know it's a lot different. It's a lot more demanding even though you have the unstructured classes or unstructured courses of study. It must be more demanding because you put the pressure on yourself.

LV: Yeah, it is. It is quite a lot of pressure, especially now – finals week.

HBB: Are you all done with your finals now?

LV: Yeah.

HBB: Oh, good.

LV: I just have to write two papers and be finished. I think out of like, Yale, Harvard, Brown, Princeton – I think Brown is one of the least pressured, least stressful – but there still is a lot of competition and [00:08:00] pressure to do a good job. But it's good; it's challenging.

HBB: Yeah, good. We were just leaves on the river of time.

LV: I'm sure your class had influence on –

HBB: We did have some Phi Beta Kappa in our class, I know. Shirley Messinger Round and Margaret Wilson.

LV: Can you spell Shirley Messinger?

HBB: M-E-S-S-I-N-G-E-R Round. R-O-U-N-D and Margaret Wilson. [00:09:00] You can look them up in the yearbook. Margaret's father was a professor of biology, and Shirley was very active in campus, Brownbrokers and everything. She was president of our class almost every year, I guess. Even as an alum we kept her as president.

LV: It's amazing. In high school I did almost every extracurricular activity [00:10:00] there was. But you know, since I've come to Brown, I'm in piano society and I was in the Brown band, but I didn't like it too much, so I got out of it. I'm part of the BCO. I go to Charlesgate once a week and talk to – two of these women are like my adopted grandparents. But other than that, it just seems like courses and – the social life takes up so much time. It's hard to participate in a lot of things. It really is.

HBB: Sure. I would think band would take an awful lot of time.

LV: Yeah. That was another reason. There's so much time that I had to put into it and I didn't feel I was getting enough out of it. You know, because sometimes we'd have football games like five or six hours away and that's like the whole weekend.

HBB: Sure. Well, you [00:11:00] were asking about sports. I think football's the only thing I remember. If they may have played basketball, I never heard of it.

LV: Basketball still isn't really that big.

HBB: Never heard of baseball. It was just football and –

LV: What about lacrosse?

HBB: No, they didn't...

LV: Rugby or...

HBB: No, I don't think they played those.

LV: Soccer?

HBB: I don't remember any soccer either. Just football. Do they still have the flagpole rush?

LV: I don't think so.

HBB: Freshmen men used to storm the flagpole. It was a greased pole and it would be all muddy around the bottom of it, and they'd [00:12:00] try and get up that greased pole to get the flag.

LV: Oh, that would have been so fun.

HBB: Talk about mud wrestling; terrible.

LV: It sounds like fun. They did that at the beginning of freshmen year?

HBB: I can't remember whether it was in the beginning or in the spring. I just remember tramping down there to watch them do that foolishness.

LV: The BDH was written all by Brown men, right? No Pembroke women were columnists?

HBB: Yeah, that's right.

LV: You can tell. The first page always has something to do with sports. You can tell it's written all by men.

HBB: What was the line? Some [00:13:00] slack that Brown men used to give Pembroke girls. "Are there any Pembroke girls in your class? Oh, yeah, a few, but no girls."

LV: That's awful. You know, Brown women still have to put up with that.

HBB: Do they?

LV: The joke this year was, the women at Brown are more masculine than the men.

HBB: Now, how would you take that?

LV: That can go both ways, actually. I think [00:14:00] Brown women have a certain air about them that, you know, the men can't get away with a lot with Brown women.

HBB: You know, that's good, I think.

LV: Did you have any counselors – you probably had a lot of academic counselors that helped you with your nursing program or no?

HBB: No, I can't remember consulting with anybody. The course was laid out for us. We took it. That was it. We had one or two electives every year and I didn't do well in my electives because I took things I thought I'd like and I didn't like them.

LV: That always happens.

HBB: Or else they were [15:00] too far over my head.

LV: Did they have S/NC courses? Just satisfactory/no credit or did you have to take everything for a grade?

HBB: We had marking. Letter marking, you know?

LV: Was it A, B, C, S, NC? You didn't have D's either?

HBB: Oh, yeah, we had D's, too.

LV: Now it's just A, B, C or NC. There aren't any D's. If you have a D, you can go either way. In a lot of courses – well, I think any course you can take S/NC, and some of them are mandatory S/NC, like English I is. It's just, they do that so you'll take courses that might be challenging and you think you probably won't be able to get an A or B in, but [00:16:00] you'd really like to take and learn something about. That's why they offer them.

HBB: Yeah, I took a music course that was way over my head, but I enjoyed the music.

LV: Was it music theory?

HBB: Well, it was the classics. You know, Beethoven, Bach, Rachmaninoff. Listening to try and identify the themes.

LV: I took Music40 this semester which was theory. If I hadn't played piano for eight and a half years, I don't think I would have been able to do well in the course because it really helps with music theory. Let's see if I have [00:17:00] anymore questions for you. Did you work at the Rhode Island Hospital while you were going to college, too? While you were going to Pembroke?

HBB: That's where we had our probationary period.

LV: That was like your –

HBB: Six weeks training. It was supposed to be six weeks in the summertime.

LV: So you had no problems with career opportunities because you knew you were going to work at Rhode Island Hospital after for awhile?

HBB: Yeah. The first year – I think there were 12 of us that went to probationary training and after that first period all but six of us dropped out. For different [00:18:00] reasons. Then there were four of us that really persevered. Then one of our girls died. She got polio in training. Then another one – I guess she was having too good a time. She kind of flunked out and she went back to finish college and then the two of us went on.

LV: Wow, so only two out of the 12? That's impressive that you stayed with it.

HBB: Had to, you know?

LV: That's good, though, that you knew exactly what you wanted to be. You knew you wanted to be a nurse. You could spend all [00:19:00] your time learning about it. I think it's good, like, if you want to just take courses that look interesting during freshman year, but I still am not sure what I want to do.

HBB: I understand a lot of people graduate from college and still don't know what they want to do.

LV: Yeah, I know.

HBB: Well, there's so many things that women can do now. You've got plenty of time to make up your mind.

LV: So just out of curiosity, what are your sons doing now? Did they go to college?

HBB: No, one started and then he was drafted and he went to Korea. When he came back he got married and they're both carpenters. They build houses. They build very nice houses.

[00:20:00] LV: That's good. They're both married or just one?

HBB: No, my older boy who got married right after he came back is divorced. The second one is married.

LV: Do they have children?

HBB: The older one has two boys.

LV: That's nice.

HBB: They keep us busy going to baseball games now.

LV: Well, unless there's anything else you want to add. Any other...

HBB: Well, let's see.

LV: Maybe you can tell me about life at Pembroke.

HBB: I think [00:21:00] if I had been not a city girl, my life at Pembroke would have been a little more into the campus life. But when I got to the hospital I was confined to barracks. It was more like being in a convent over there because we were severely restricted as to what we could do, where we could go, how late we could stay out.

LV: Really?

HBB: The girls now wouldn't believe it. It was just the way they did things.

LV: I guess it would be different then if you didn't have your nursing program because – I don't know about then, but now [00:22:00] you can stay out as late as you want. That was one of the

first things I started loving about college. Getting away from home. Not having a curfew. Would you have any advice for Brown students or women at Brown in general?

HBB: Take advantage of your opportunities to explore the world.

LV: Did they have foreign exchange programs during the war or not?

HBB: I don't think so.

LV: They probably wouldn't.

HBB: It [00:23:00] was a hurly-burly time. Classes got all mixed up. Some accelerated, some didn't. Some stayed back and dropped out and came back again. In one class you could have – in one reunioning class you could have three different levels of years in school.

LV: That must have been odd.

HBB: I really graduated in '45, but I'm a '44 girl.

LV: Well, I guess that's it. Thank you very much I appreciate it.

HBB: You're welcome.

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