

Oral History of Enid Wilson, class of 1943

Interviewee: Enid Wilson

Interviewer: Wendy Korwin, Pembroke Center Archivist

Date: December 4, 2012

Location: Enid and Doris Wilson's home in Wellesley, Massachusetts

Wendy Korwin: This is Wendy Korwin. I'm talking with Enid Wilson, class of 1943. It is Tuesday, December 4, 2014 and we are in her home in Wellesley, Massachusetts. Can you tell me a little about your background before coming to college, your family?

Enid Wilson: Background. Well, we lived in Brookline at that time because my father was at the Harvard School of Public Health as head of the Department of Vital Statistics He had been at MIT, where he'd been head of the Physics Department, head of the Math Department, and when the President of MIT had died he had been one of the administrative council members until they appointed a new president at MIT. And from MIT, he came to the newly formed Harvard School of Public Health. And during the summer of 1921, when I was a baby, they had a small farmhouse they'd bought up in New Hampshire. Effingham Falls or Ossipee, that area. And people at MIT remembered – we had a Model T Ford – remembered him going off to New Hampshire, mother and baby, Trapper who was an Airedale, and a goat they'd rented for milk, all in that Model T Ford. [laughs] Made quite an impression on people who had seen it, I think. I remember nothing about it, I will say that. I haven't gone back and looked at the few photographs that were taken at the time. I mean, there was a picture of the goat, and the dog. The dog was a large Airedale. Then, as I said, we lived in Brookline and I ended up going to the public schools in Brookline, which were good public schools. Well, the grammar schools and the high school, Brookline High School. If he had lived in Cambridge, because they did teach an advanced Economics course, you wouldn't have gone – you would have gone to a private school probably. [2:49]

Now, thinking about colleges, I had been interested in Swarthmore. Didn't visit it. We did visit Wheaton College in Norton. I think I was interested in maybe Cornell, maybe because Daddy knew people there. Because I had hay fever, Wheaton didn't seem like a very good idea, in the country, so I didn't do anything about that. My father was in favor – he like liked the idea of universities rather than colleges, so that's how I happened to go down to Pembroke. And Pembroke had its own admissions. It didn't go through the Brown admissions process. So I remember he and I were in Dean Morriss's office. And she was of course an impressive woman. And she was impressed by Daddy, too. And Eva Mooar, who was – she and Miss Rudd lived together. And Eva Mooar – I think her title might have – I was going to look up her title but it was Personnel, or what it was. But she was a very warm person. And actually happened to know one of my aunts. I don't know that any of these factored in. Anyhow, I was admitted. I do remember in those days, some colleges wanted modern languages and some wanted Latin. So I spent the summer studying – I think what I did, and this is what I can't be sure, but I think what I did was study Latin. And probably reviewing math because I wasn't great in math and I needed to take a supplementary test. Anyhow, I passed everything and was admitted to Pembroke. At that time, the college consisted of Pembroke Hall, Sayles Hall, Metcalf Hall and Miller Hall –

both of those dormitories, facing each other. And then, I think as on the same street as Pembroke Hall, was the cooperative house, which I think was called East House? Does that sound right?

Korwin: Mm hmm.

Wilson: There were – freshmen were generally scattered around those. There were more of us freshman in Metcalf than I think normally would have been, and that probably was true of Miller, also. And I know Angell House was further up, and the students came down to eat in the dormitory. Alumnae Hall I mentioned. So those – that was really the block, so to speak. It really was a two-street block, because the street ran – which now closes at the Sayles Gym – that ran through to...

Korwin: Down to Thayer?

Wilson: Thayer, right, thank you. I find myself blanking out [unclear] some of the time. Because the other dormitories were built afterwards, were after my time. They were there when I went down for reunions but that was it. So, and then the field house was, you know, several blocks down. So basically that was Pembroke College. We really didn't go on the Brown campus. We didn't use the Brown Hay – John Hay Library until World War II was more advanced and they combined. Because the professors gave the same courses at Pembroke, but they came up to Pembroke to give them. And we used the Pembroke library. It was a delightful little library up there on the top floor of Pembroke Hall. And we weren't encouraged really to go down to the Brown campus, I think.

And yes, you asked about dress restrictions. There were dress restrictions. I mean if you were going to wear slacks you'd roll them up under your skirt or something like that [laughter]. And I think when you went downtown, you were expected to wear hat and gloves. But that was not unusual. It was not unusual in Boston. If I went into Boston, I had had and gloves. So that wasn't so strange. We were not supposed to walk on Benefit Street because it was supposed to be sort of a red light district, at that time. So you crossed Benefit Street. And we often went downtown and uptown by going in the courthouse, and going down in the elevator. They probably still do that. I don't think the Rhode Island School of Design was built at that time though, so I don't think that was on the hill as you went down. [8:44]

Korwin: What kinds of occasions would take you downtown?

Wilson: Basically if you wanted to shop, or go to – well we had the movie up on – Avon – up on Thayer Street, but probably shop or lunch or something like that. When my parents stayed over night, they didn't stay downtown. They stayed at the Minden. The Minden is on – well it became an apartment hotel – it was really an apartment hotel – and, what's the street? M-I-N-D-E-N in any case. But if you went down Thayer you would turn left to go.

Korwin: Would it be like in Wayland Square?

Wilson: It wasn't as far as Wayland Square. It was before that, and it had a nice dining room, so my parents would stay there, and I'd eat in the dining room with them. And I think Dean Morriss

eventually had an apartment there after she retired. I think. And that was the only nearby place to stay, unless you were staying downtown at the Biltmore, which would have been basically the hotel downtown.

As for the social life, I didn't do much on the social life myself. Pembroke had its own organizations, sort of paralleling some of Brown's. So they had the Komians at Pembroke, and they had Sock and Buskin at Brown. But it had gotten to the point where, when they needed men for the roles in plays, they took men from Brown or from other colleges. And I think the same thing happened with Brown if they needed women for some roles. But the organizations didn't merge – Ben Brown was, you know, in both places, really. And Leslie Allen Jones, particularly at Sock and Buskin, he did scenery and different things like that. Janice Van der Water eventually was involved with drama. But women were required to take Speech at Pembroke. And I cannot think of the name of the man, whom I did not care for, who was a well known radio personality. He had a program where he had people talk and then he'd guess where they came from. And it was quite a popular radio program. If I looked at a Pembroke catalog I might be able to pick out his name. But we all had to make recordings and then listen to them and be told, you know, given exercises. I didn't recognize my voice [laughter] to be perfectly frank. But then, I didn't recognize other people's voices on the broadcasts, if that proves anything. [12:04]

With regard to physical activities, I think Pembroke probably had [laughter] more gym than most other women's colleges. And so we had quite a bit of gym. And we could choose – mostly we could choose what we took. We were supposed to be able to pass the swimming test to graduate from college, and I was afraid because I took the swimming lessons, but I never actually learned to swim. But fortunately, the fact that I had taken the swimming lessons, and tried – I [unintelligible] afraid I wasn't going to graduate because of swimming. But that was all right. I had at least tried, so that was it. And most of our activities actually took place at Pembroke I think – I know I did bowling, and I don't know whether the bowling alley was in Sayles. I can't remember where the bowling alley was but I know I bowled. I know I did archery. With swimming, you used the Brown pool, but you also used the Providence Plantations Club, and that's a much nicer venue, really. And of course you use the field house for other kinds of sports. What else?

Korwin: What else did you study while you were a student?

Wilson: Well, I was an English Lit major, which didn't lead to a lot of professions in those days, although a lot of people afterward who did English Lit did all kinds of things. So you took a prescribed set of courses – that was before the newer plan, of course – and I know my favorite of – actually, I had two professors I liked in English. Randall Stewart, a Southerner who did American Lit. I had Bradner, I had Noise in English lit, and eventually Professor Hastings, who was Shakespeare, basically. I think we did – well it was probably after we were going to the Brown campus that we met in Professor Hasting's office on the campus. Professor George in history – Professor George and Professor Armstrong both taught the History course at Pembroke. Two totally different personalities, but both, you know, were professors that were thought very highly of. Professor George was very polished, and Armstrong wasn't as polished but equally exciting in his way. [15:40]

Korwin: Would they mostly lecture in your classes?

Wilson: Yeah, mostly lecturing in classes. And I keep trying to remember where the classroom was. I mean, it was in Pembroke Hall, outside room – but I don't remember whether it was the room that used to be a library that we didn't know was a library, you know the one where we are holding our Pembroke meetings in. Anyhow, they were great lectures. Because Alumnae Hall, when it was used for, you know, for lectures, that was a very large hall. That was more for the religious – you know, the Tuesday religious, semi-religious services. Where the deans spoke...

Korwin: That was chapel, right?

Wilson: Chapel, yeah. Excuse me, you're right. Chapel. And when you were a senior you got to wear your robe during chapel.

Korwin: What kinds of things would they talk about during chapel?

Wilson: You know, I can't really remember. [laughter] That's the trouble. They weren't totally religious I think. And I'm trying to think whether there was also, like, another assembly like on a Thursday, and I can't remember. But somebody else may. Okay...

I think my main activity that I remember in college was the Komians. I didn't act. I did backstage stuff – you know, properties, that kind of thing. And we had some very good people. I think that I belonged to some kind of a club. And whether it had to do with Political Science, or something, I can't remember. I mean, Komians is what I strongly remember.

Oh, we were also supposed to try – the women were all supposed to try out for Glee Club. [laughter] Now, I can't sing, but we all had to try out for Mr. Denine [?] and I didn't get very far before I was stopped. So I wasn't in the Glee Club, although several of my college friends were in the Glee Club, but I wasn't gifted that way, so I wasn't in the Glee Club.

And then there was the program of dancing. I don't mean ballroom dancing, I mean... it led up to when they had the outdoor program and your May Queen was crowned. I was in the audience for that. I wasn't performing in it. But I think it was in connection with the May Day, if that sounds right. What else?

Korwin: Were there a lot of strong traditions at Pembroke at that time, like May Day, Ivy Day, the Masque?

Wilson: There probably were because Brownbrokers I think was also at Pembroke. It also was at Brown. But the strong traditions were probably you know, when the Dean would talk to the group. Dean Morriss.

Korwin: How did the students regard her?

Wilson: Well, she was referred to as Peggy Push [unclear]

Korwin: Peggy...?

Wilson: Peggy Push, I think. [laughter] Because it was Margaret Shrove Morriss. But she was a distinguished historian, and she ultimately became President of the American Association of University Women. And I understand that that impressed President Wriston quite a bit. I did get to know Dean Lewis, but that was after Dean Morriss had retired, and I did get to know – well, I remember Miss Spofford was one of the librarians. I can't remember any others. Miss Spofford is the one that I remember. I used to keep in touch with her, too.

Korwin: And did she influence you? You ultimately became a librarian yourself, right?

Wilson: Right. Well, being an English Lit major, I don't think I was really cut out for teaching. And so, you know, Library Science did interest me. And ultimately that what I did do. But, first of all, being an English major, when I graduated, I took a secretarial course, because in those days it was typing and shorthand. And I worked in the Kennedy School – the old – well, I worked in Littauer, which was Political Science and that kind of thing. And at that time, the war was on, and the library was down in the basement of the building, not on the first floor, which it ultimately was. And I was working for the man who was sort of an Acting Assistant Librarian because the Librarian was in the service. I mean, he was not a professional. He was a hardworking person but he wasn't a professional librarian, whereas Elmer Greider [spelled correctly?], who was in the service, was. So I was a – I worked in the library, recording serials and sorting things out, that kind of thing. I wasn't classifying or cataloguing or anything like that but I did do that, and serve at the reference desk. I mean, there was a desk there. People could ask questions and you could try to find the answers.

So that was it. After working downstairs in the library, there was a vacancy – one of the professors who had a seminar library in Littauer – so I worked in his seminar. I was his secretary but I also – with, you know, recording the notes that people were giving in their seminar reports. And keeping track of the seminar library. I didn't know that much about it. They had the Glidden classification so I did the best I could doing that, and got interested in certain areas that – the architecture, the city planning, that kind of, that kind of thing. And, I mean, I had dealings with Miss McNamara, who was a distinguished librarian at the Graduate School for Planning.

Korwin: Did you receive any or much career guidance while you were at Pembroke? Or did that all come afterward?

Wilson: A little bit. A little bit at Pembroke. I think Dean Mooar and I talked about it. And – but it was from working for Dr. Lamby that then, when he was taking sabbatical that's when I went to Simmons, and got the library degree. Then it was hard to find a job. I wanted to stay in Boston but there wasn't anything really for me. And that's why I ended up at University of Rhode Island for a year as a government documents librarian. [23:40]

Korwin: When was this?

Wilson: Ah, it would have been... both were contract things, because it was state, so that would have been the... it would have been a year's contract, which meant I began in '53... July '53

through June '54. And I could have renewed in June '54 but at that point I wanted to come back home. Mother hadn't been well for years and I really didn't want to be out of Boston. And so I came back and worked at Boston University, at that time in the School of Education library, and from there, I went to the Mugar Library which was the College of Arts and Sciences' library.

Korwin: Did you feel that Pembroke had prepared you well for the library career that you chose?

Wilson: Well, since they weren't really doing any careers at such, I think it would be only what you sort of learned from using the library, talking to the librarian. There was no such training as such, 'cause I don't know how much professional training there was in other fields. There was a School of Nursing that was a five-year program, so that some of the people in our class graduated a year after. They were class of '43 but they would graduate in '44. We were – the class of '43 was the first class to accelerate.

Korwin: What does that mean?

Wilson: Brown decided, the war years, it was decided that they would have a semester in the summer, so that would have been the summer of '42. That was the first acceleration. And those who wanted to go in the summer went in the summer. So our class had a February graduation, the regular June graduation, and there could have been a graduation later in the year for people who had the five-year program. So we didn't have the tradition of going through the gates that Brown had. Actually, since we graduated in February, they must have taken us down in buses or something, we met in the basement of the Baptist church. And of course at that time, everything was smaller, so your mother and father could sit in the Baptist church as well as the graduating class. But the business of marching down the hill, of going through the gates and tossing your cap or whatever wasn't our experience. And actually, it wasn't our experience – we weren't in the habit – at least I wasn't, and others weren't also – graduation was taking place on Memorial Day generally. And if you were working, it wasn't a good time to try to go down to Brown. So actually, it was a much later reunion before I ever walked down the hill. It might have even been like the fortieth or something, because we weren't accustomed to thinking in those terms. At least, I wasn't, and I don't know how many of the girls were. The men would have been. But the Baccalaureate was held in the Baptist church. I didn't get to it German measles was going through our dormitory and unfortunately I got it. [27:33] And you can get German measles more than once so it was my second time around with German measles so I never made Baccalaureate. I wanted to, but there was no way. I was afraid I wasn't going to make graduation. I was a little wobbly, but I made graduation. So that was the important thing. But any festivities afterwards I didn't have much – a great deal to do with. I mean I can remember that we went back to Pembroke I think and it was something there, but I think the Richardsons – Daddy was a friend of Richardson... Brown – I think they were going to do something like the country club they belonged to, but we didn't. That was it.

So when I came back up from Pembroke I started job training for an English Lit major [laughs]. Secretarial seemed to be the best bet at that point. And you asked about going downtown. Obviously when you moved into the dormitory you had the cot they gave you, the bureau, a desk with sides that you could use as a small bookcase on each side, and a bureau, and a chair to go

with the desk. I have no recollection of where we went shopping but I did get a couple of rugs, an armchair, a lamp, and a small two-shelf bookcase on which you could put a portable radio about this size [gestures]. But I don't know where. Probably went downtown. There was Shepherd's. I'm not sure Shepherd's had furniture. The Outlet [Company] would have had furniture. Cherry and Webb I don't think would have had furniture. So I have absolutely no recollection of that [laughter] at all. Because I didn't bring anything, any furniture, from home. I did bring, you know, bedspread, blanket, sheets, that kind of thing. But the rest of it is a blur, frankly. [30:01]

Korwin: Do you remember, was life in the dorm comfortable? Did you have fun there and have, like, a lot of your friends formed through the dorms?

Wilson: You didn't – you know there was a phone on each floor, and whoever had the room near the phone had to answer it really, or whoever, and then yell on for whoever had a phone call. That was the way it was. And you had, well, there probably must have been more than one bathroom facility. I was down near one end of it, so that was bathrooms like they have now, showers and the bathtubs and stuff. And there probably was one at the other end of the hall 'cause it was a fairly long hall. And the classes were mixed. It wasn't all freshmen on that floor, it was a mixture of everybody, which was good. And when it got more difficult during the war, they opened up some of the double rooms [unclear] larger rooms, so that two people would use it, and in many cases some of the city girls who'd been commuting did move into the spaces, so that you had city girls living in the dormitory as well as non-commuters. Actually, some of the city girls, well some of my girls, two of the girls who sang, one lived in Newport originally and one lived in Fall River. And the other one came from the middle west. I forget where the fourth one that I'm thinking of came from. I think somewhere in New England. So it was a mixture of classes.

Korwin: Was there any hazing of the younger students by the older students?

Wilson: I don't think there was really any hazing I was aware of. Did we have to wear anything special? I can't remember that. We may have had beanies of some kind. We all had gym longs and gym suits, brown colored gym suits. And the warm weather was really sort of fleece, so that the longs, the gym longs, were sort of what people use now for work out, those kind of things, at the end they were brown. But the jackets depended on the class. And our class color was yellow. So our jackets to wear in cold weather were yellow. There were others that were blue from other classes. I can't remember the other ones. I just know ours were yellow. And when we had a bad snowstorm Miss [laughs] Rudd was going around saying she knew we'd appreciated. Which we did, because unless you were a person who were a skier – and there were kids who went off to Dartmouth to ski or go to the parties at Dartmouth or Princeton or something like that – but basically I think most of us depended on the gym longs. And I used them long after graduation. And I used them at home. They were very useful when it was cold. So that was it. I don't think there was anything special – I don't remember about hazing. I mean you had senior sisters. You know freshmen had a senior sister, and it depended on the relationship, you know, how much you did with them. On the social activities in the dormitory, there always was a time when a professor would be invited to Sunday dinner, and then everybody got a chance to meet them and have coffee with them and the live-ins... but I didn't really take much participation in social

activity in the house. And of course we had the rules of signing in and signing out, which persisted I think for the whole time. [35:00]

Korwin: Were there lots of interactions between, you know, the Pembroke women and brown men?

Wilson: Yeah. They did have dances in the dormitory. I didn't participate in those. I never did like dancing actually. And of course some girls, because they were Providence people, knew men anyhow – would come to the dormitory. Some I think were definitely looking for husbands and one of our dormitory people lived in the first floor in Metcalf and I know she let a man into her room. She was expelled. She eventually came back to college and graduated. I may have been other things going on too that I didn't know about [laughs]. But I was lucky enough to have the same room all four years. I didn't have to keep changing around configuration or something like that. The only thing was that when Metcalf was turned over to I think the Navy, I think maybe it was medical or engineering of something like that, they used Metcalf. This was summertime. We moved into Miller. The Miller dorm was the exact opposite of the Metcalf dorm. So instead of going out my bedroom and turning left for the elevator or the bathroom or the stairs, I had to turn right. I jammed my hip I don't know how many times [laughs] because it was a different configuration. But, seamless [?].

Korwin: And they needed to use Metcalf because of the war?

Wilson: I was in Met – yeah. I didn't have to change dormitories. I assume that some of the people that lived in Angell probably did move down into Metcalf or Miller. I think East House – that was sort of their own little set-up. So I think because it was a cooperative they might have eaten there. Because the only other place to eat would have been in the basement of Alumnae Hall. The... I don't know what the café was called, I mean, but the dining area. There was a special small dining room the dean used to invite people to eat in. Generally fifty-year class or something like that. But the regular place – cafeteria – was always open, at the end of Pembroke Hall – of Alumnae Hall. The end nearest the dormitories. 'Cause the other end of Alumnae Hall you had the Alumnae secretary and a reception – you know, a reception room, and the small dining room that the dean used for things. And the toilets of course. I guess that's about it on that bottom floor. Because Pembroke Hall had the small bookstore and gift shop, and I'm not quite sure, you know, when you came in the back door, mailboxes are straight ahead but on one side was a store that you know you could get note paper, small items, jewelry, small gifts, that kind of thing. There must have been something on the left, whether that was the bookstore –

Korwin: Did students work the bookstore? [39:23]

Wilson: Probably. Probably there would have been some students working the bookstore, probably someone working the library, someone working the dining halls. We didn't have maid service, really. Well, somebody must have dusted and mopped, but a certain amount of the serving in the dining room was done by students who were hired to do it. That's how my best friend who no longer lives met her boyfriend. Minnie peered out the kitchen window and spotted him [laughs]. And eventually, it was a marriage. So... there were possibilities of students earning some kind of money.

Korwin: Can I ask what it was like being a student during the war, and what ways you felt World War II on campus?

Wilson: Well, the first thing was, I'd already been admitted. But before I'd actually gone down for good – it was the summer of '42 and I was in the country place in Norwell and the radio was on and Hitler had gone into Poland. So that was our first experience. And it seems to me that when you got to the college, what seemed to be on the radio more than anything else had to do with Finland. Because the Sibelius Symphony was generally on as a forenote to something about Finland. That's not that we didn't hear the other news too, but Poland ring a bell. It seemed Finland was mentioned more. And for war relief, some girls went down to the USO. USO. USO.

Korwin: USO.

Wilson: USO. Some of us took up knitting and I – they had this white yarn, fairly heavy, with which you made long socks for the sailors to wear. You know there'd be lanolin in them. Well I did socks except for the heel. I never mastered how to – so I'd always hand it over to somebody to do the heel, and then I'd [laughs] continue on with the rest of the thing. So I guess my war effort was doing the socks [laughs]. That at least is what I remember. What I've forgotten I can't tell you. So it was a different experience in a way, going in the summertime. We had different clothes and things you hadn't brought down for the school year. It was more informal.

Korwin: So were you part of the accelerated class that went through the summertime?

Wilson: Yes. There would – there could have been other classes also. But ours always stayed as '43. The people that might have been there who were accelerating who might have been ordinarily in the class of '45 might have been accelerating enough that they would be graduating in '44 or '45. We didn't have to decide what class do we want to belong to. But the people from other classes, depending on their rate of acceleration, had to decide which class they were going to belong to, which was confusing probably. I don't remember feeling deprived of anything. It seemed to me that there were – that some of the food we had were things that would have required high ration points. Now I can't remember what they were. I'm not thinking of meat as much. I don't know... they had pineapple quite often, and you know canned fruits required rations. They must have had ration books we had to turn over. I'm sure we must have had... and I can't remember where the infirmary was in in Pembroke. I was in it, God knows for the German measles, but I can't remember where it was situated, and whether there was a section of the dormitory that was that. So I can't help you on that. I don't think it was a separate building.

Korwin: And did you say about the way classes worked also changed during the war, because you'd go down—

Wilson: Yes because what happened was you know – the fact that you got into a class with a professor and the professor went off to war. So then they began to combine so that you went down to Brown and had your classes with the men. And I know I had know a seminar with Professor Hastings. And I know I had a Shakespeare class and there were men and women in

that. And I'm trying to think what else... course Komians just sort of faded out kind of and you know, I did work with properties with Sock and Buskin and eventually got the Sock and Buskin key that you got after so many years of working with Sock and Buskin. And the John Hay Library of course was enormous over what we were used to seeing, or dealing with, but we coped. [45:39]

Korwin: You said you didn't use it very much. Did that change?

Wilson: Well we didn't when we weren't actually merged with Brown – I mean not in '71 but the classes being held on the Brown campus – no were not really encouraged I think to use the John Hay Library. Well if you had to do some really scholarly research you would have had to for certain things, but you probably had to have permission for it. So it was more of a mystery really. 'Cause it wasn't really an undergraduate college – undergraduate library – such as when Rockefeller was built. And I don't know how much the John Hay gets used with Rockefeller being used. Because Rockefeller probably takes the bulk of the stuff

Korwin: Well the Rockefeller holds all the circulating book and the more current journals. And the Hay has the special collections and the rare books and the archives. So they have different purposes.

Wilson: Yes but if you had to do some deep research you'd probably have to go to the John Hay.

Korwin: Yeah, the Hay has documents that certainly the Rock doesn't, but you're right that I think the Rockefeller Library gets probably the most use from students and it has the most, sort of, open space for people to just work as well.

Wilson: Yeah, because computers were in then, anyhow. It was pen and pencil and ink. Typewriters.

Korwin: So do you know if after the war, did classes continue to be mixed in the way you've described? Or did it go back?

Wilson: Yeah I assume they continued to be mixed. I can't see why they wouldn't have been once they started to mix them. The [unclear] classes, besides the English classes and Armstrong and George, I liked Downing, Professor Downing in the Art Department, his art courses. I mean, you know, history of art, painting, that kind of thing. But if you wanted to go earlier, then you had to go to Professor Robinson in Classics because he's the one that covered Narcissus [?], Mycenae, the early Greek and Roman. So it was sort of divided, and he was an exciting speaker, too. He had a lot of football players in but they had to work hard, because he had standards they had to meet [laughs]. Yeah, those are some of the professors I particularly remember. None of – many of whom weren't in my field at all, but I don't know what – if they lost professors in the war or not. I don't know about that. But it was a difference once you got going to the Brown campus, because it was a much bigger space and you had to find your way around and that sort of thing, Well, course I said for swimming we did use the Brown pool, which I think doesn't exist. Or they replaced it, I think, or they built a theatre, or they did something. I mean I think there is a Brown pool, but I think it's either a new one –

Korwin: Yeah, there's a whole new center now. Was this one right on the quad?

Wilson: Must have been right on the quad.

Korwin: Did you enjoy the coeducational classes? Did you like going down to Brown?

Wilson: Yeah, I think I did, particularly if the subject was one that particularly interested me, or I was good in it. I know I was in a geology class that was coed because we had field trips that were coed. I guess that's about it.

Korwin: And how did you feel, finally, when the colleges merged and became fully coeducational?

Wilson: Well, mad. The thing is that a lot of people were really offended by it. The difficulty of it was, there was – when you had Alumnae Days, Pembroke had its own Alumnae Days, and I would go down to Alumnae Day on the Pembroke campus. I wasn't down to Alumnae Days on the Brown campus because, although we had a Brown degree, we weren't part of that routine. So Alumnae Days were at Pembroke. The thing is, the people at Brown knew something was going on. Or the people on the committees knew. But I would say the general populous didn't know, so it came as a real surprise, about the merger. And I remember writing Dean Piertel.. Pierrel... I haven't gotten it quite right, you know—

Korwin: Pierrel.

Wilson: Yeah, Pierrel, why this unseemly haste. Because they didn't give it any thought from the people of view of how the women might feel. And we had a very active Pembroke College Club in Boston. I was president twice and recording secretary when I got out of college. I think it was more active after college than in college. And some of the people felt very bitter about it. [52:00] And once they merged, we sort of died as the Pembroke College Club. You were invited to join Brown University – you know, the Brown University Club. And I did pay dues for some years. I guess it's now online you've got to register so I've got to ask somebody to send me the print out. So I did go to some of the Brown University Club things, but it didn't have the intimacy that the – because the Pembroke College Club met quite frequently often in people's homes, or sometimes for a major lunch when they had Dean Morriss or Dean Pierrel. I missed that one, I was sick. But Dean Morriss I did. And so we knew each other more, because we saw each other frequently. And luncheon meetings weren't the prices they are now. So the Pembroke Club also had a sort of second hand sale, rummage sale, they had – I didn't work on rummage sale myself, but a lot of people did and enjoyed doing it. But once they merged, we did have a meeting of the Pembroke Club with some new, you know, recent graduates who came up and talked. And we realized they were missing some things that we'd had. And one of the women of a 1930s class pointed out – she was a prophet in her own time in a way – because they were missing things, because you had women who had more status before, and the faculty, there wasn't much faculty status for women. Janice van de Water did go one with the Speech and work with Sock and Buskin, but you didn't get many high-up administrator people. Though they did one woman as a vice president. It was an administrative person whose name, I can think of it.

[Unclear]? Something like that. And then they began to I think open up room, you [unclear] more woman trustees and things like that. Elizabeth Goodale Kenyon ['39] was a woman trustee. She was a housemother for us when, in Metcalf. But that's been slow in coming everywhere. I think now, there are many more at Brown probably. Whether they've made the professorial rank, I don't know, or whether they're down as assistants or associates. But I think they've been trying to do more on that. And I think Nancy Buc will hold them to it [laughs].

Korwin: I'm sure she would.

Wilson: She is really something, isn't she? [laughs] Tells it as it is. But they're now finding that they've got women they can use. I'm sorry about Dean Simmons – or President Simmons deciding to retire. I think it's going to be a bit awkward being on campus when you were past president. [55:50]

Korwin: She might always feel welcome on campus.

Wilson: Hmm?

Korwin: I think she might always feel welcome on campus.

Wilson: Oh I would definitely think she would feel welcome on campus, there's no doubt about that. But still, when you've been the top dog, it's a little bit hard.

Korwin: And do you come back to campus frequently? How do you stay in touch with the Brown community?

Wilson: I haven't – I've gone down for the reunions. I haven't necessarily tried to go down in between. Because on the reunion time they generally try to have the classes – we used to have our own reunion lunch, and some of the classes who have merged the two groups have kept their own lunch as well as meeting with the men. But we've found that a lot of the women, if the men were having something, they wanted to go with their husbands rather than going to the Pembroke lunch. So the Pembroke lunch got smaller and then it was sort of not used at all, you know. Just the lunch with the men, and the women... the men seemed to be running it more than the women did. Anyhow, when they decided to – when they did merge, I think that the alumnae, you know, the Pembroke alumnae office, it was harder to get information from them, because they didn't have it, have access to it. Especially in fundraising they did have the access to the information. That's probably worked out better now, but it took a long time. But it was the public relations aspect that was so poor. They should have prepared people for the fact that this was happening. Presumably for financial reasons, as much as any, I think.

Korwin: Well as we wrap up here, I'm just going to thank you for –

Wilson: – Well, I feel as if I haven't given you very much information but –

Korwin: – letting me here to speak to you. Well, you've gone through a lot about your time, and your time afterwards, so I certainly appreciate being able to catch up with you.

Wilson: Well fine, well I'll fill out that questionnaire at points and make it legible.

Korwin: Thank you.

Wilson: Yeah.

[end of interview]