

Transcribed by Karen L. Schneider (Class of 2000) in October 1997.

Tape 1, Side 1

This is an interview with Joyce Wetherald Fairchild (Class of 1947) at her home in Barrington, Rhode Island, conducted by Susan J. Ferber on December 1, 1992.

Susan J. Ferber: This is Susan Ferber doing an interview with Joyce Wetherald Fairchild, the Christine Dunlap Farnham Oral History Project, on December 1, 1992. Did I get your name right?

Joyce Wetherald Fairchild: You do, indeed.

SJF: Okay, we'll go on then. Alright, just starting out with the first question - were there any experiences you had at Pembroke College, as a student, that made you want to become such an active alum? Can you tell us about some of these?

JWF: I thought about this a little and I think actually the reason for my sense of participation came from the fact that I had the Rhode Island Regional Scholarship to Pembroke which made the difference between my going to college and my not going to college. I was three years old when the stock market crash occurred and it impacted my father's business dramatically since he was an importer of jewelry and fine watches, and what-not. And, since I went to college only eleven years later, yes - no, fourteen years later - this still wasn't the kind of money that would have sent me to college. And so, my sense of, not obligation by will, gratitude made me anxious to do what I could.

SJF: Was there anything during your actual years at college, as a Regional scholar, that you were involved in?

JWF: I was involved in a lot at Pembroke. But, that was, there was no one activity there which I continued to be specifically interested in. I was, for instance, the President of Brown Brokers and was the Director of the 1947 show and I have always been interested in Brown Brokers, but not with a, you know, not by being on a Board of Advisors, or anything. I was very active in my class and during college, one other gal and I shared the Presidency of the class for four years. I was Freshman and Junior President and she was Sophomore and Senior President. But, those, there were a lot of activities, but no one that was the determining factor as much as receiving the scholarship.

SJF: How does your career or volunteer experiences prepare for Trusteeship?

JWF: [Sigh] I suppose Board Membership and Chairing one or two along the way, gave me the sense of the obligations of, of Board Membership. That there are, involved in it, certain obligations. And, if it means putting something else aside to honor those obligations, you do it. You don't NOT go to meetings, you don't NOT accept committee appointments - that kind of thing, I suppose, is what it did. I will tell you one interesting thing, though. It was not until I was a Trustee that I learned a great lesson which has stayed with me since, and that is Charlie Tillinghast was the Chancellor when I became a trustee. And, Charlie Tillinghast will start a meeting on time, if only Charlie Tillinghast is in the room. He, further, remembers exactly when everyone comes and could tell you to the second how late you were. And I, having grown up in a time when you would knock yourself out to get baby-sitters and get out of the house and get to a meeting in time only to have to wait for twenty minutes for the meeting to start, I finally began to be late to meetings because I could put the washing in the dryer, or something like that. And, rather than sitting around waiting for others, I began to arrive late. And, Charlie

taught me a great lesson and, ever since, whenever I have been in charge of a meeting, it has started on time even when no one else was there. If they're not there, that's their problem. And, if they ask questions that have already been answered, that's also their problem. And, it was a wonderful lesson - he was never overbearing about it. It was simply his sense that people are busy and, if they have made a point to be at his meeting at two, it's going to start at two. And, I'm very grateful to him for that.

SJF: It served you well in all your volunteer organizations.

JWF: Since then, yes. [both laugh]

SJF: Now that you've experienced the corporation, have you been involved in alumni groups, committees, and activities?

JWF: Some. I have never been a very active member of ALL of the clubs - the Rhode Island Club or the... But, I did work, for obvious reasons, quite happily on the Rhode Island Regional Scholarship Committee, when Pembroke still existed and that scholarship was still being awarded. And then, shortly after, sometime after the merger and with the arrival, I think, of Bob Reichley, there was - and the expansion of the student body into a national base, rather than what it had been, a fairly regional college and university - there was an attempt to expand alumni activities and I became, heaven only knows how, the first Chairman of SARC - the Student / Alumni Relations Committee. And, with Hugh Allison, who was the first staff person, devised many of the programs which I think are still in place.

SJF: Such as?

JWF: Oh, the Alumni, I'm not sure what they call it, the internships came out of our years. The file that says, if you move to Santa Fe, New Mexico, there is an alumnus or alumna there who will be glad to tell you who's a good dentist and who's a good doctor and where you should live if you have two kids in school and that kind of thing. It's a resource. That was devised. We did a lot with career nights so that people who were in specific fields of endeavor came to speak to kids who were possibly interested in that field of work.

SJF: Right.

JWF: That was kind of different.

SJF: Right, they're all valuable and, you're right, (inaudible)

JWF: We also did something that was quite fun and it may not still happen. One of the students, who was working with us, suggested that "Sophomore Slump" is not a myth, it's a reality. And, you've been the focus of a lot of attention in your freshman year and, in junior year, everyone wants to know what your concentration is and, in senior year, everybody wants to know what you're going to do when you graduate. But, sophomore year is sort of "Oh, hello again." And so, we did start having a sophomore Halloween party which was a great success because it was just for sophomores and it was held far enough into the semester so that the newness had worn off and the winter looked long. And, I don't know whether it is still done, but I thought that was a very savvy suggestion on the part of the student that the sophomores need - and I'm glad to hear you had a sophomore adviser.

SJF: I was the first year that there was a specific adviser just for sophomores...

JWF: That may have grown right out of that whole "awareness," given to us by a student that sophomores needed special handling.

SJF: Yes, there is a sophomore, a large sophomore class meeting early in the semester to think about concentrations or going abroad and things like that.

JWF: Good, good, that's great.

SJF: There has been a lot of attention in the last couple years.

JWF: Oh, it probably grew out of that Halloween party and pumpkin carving.

SJF: So, is that the...?

JWF: Yeah, that's the tea kettle.

SJF: I will...

[Tape recorder turned off and on.]

SJF: What was it like to run for the Brown Corporation? What kinds of appeals did you make to whom?

JWF: None. There was a very strict prohibition when I was elected to the Corporation. And, as far as I know, it still exists about any electioneering. They called one day and asked if I would like to have my name submitted as a candidate for the Corporation. And I laughed a lot and said, "Of course." Frankly, honestly, never dreamed that I would be elected. Pleased to have been asked to be a candidate, but certainly not thinking that I would be chosen. I think the advantage that I have and, it's very clear, it was geographical. As a Rhode Islander and with a lot of Rhode Island alums, the tendency, I guess, was to vote for someone whose name, at least, they've heard. And I think that was probably why I was elected.

SJF: Did you have a small paragraph on the ballot? Is that the only form of...?

JWF: I can't remember. I also - one of the things that I worked on was improving the ballot so that there would be greater participation. And, actually, I was Chair of the Nominee Committee one year so that this process came before me. I think when I ran, there was no picture and there was a simple paragraph about them. But, no, there was no electioneering at all. People received the ballot and said, "Oh, for goodness' sake. Look who's been nominated."

SJF: After the election, how did others, your friends, your classmates, perceive you being a trustee?

JWF: I think everyone was pleased- especially in a class the size of ours, you have to remember that because - one, it was Pembroke which had smaller classes. Two, it was wartime and that was the only time that there have been summer schools at Brown for students. These were accelerated college years so that some of the students who entered with us did not graduate with us. And, we were a class of about, by the time we graduated, somewhat over 100. And, so, I think my class is pleased that they are represented by a trustee. It isn't so much that I'm the one. It's just that there is a class of 1947 and, of course, Joe Dowling, now that we're a merged class, Joe Dowling is also class of 1947. And, I think Brian was class of - I mean we've had pretty good representation considering the size of our class.

SJF: You had mentioned...

JWF: Harold Brian.

SJF: You had mentioned about being a Pembroke during the wartime - do you want to elaborate on that now? I understand that with summer school you did three terms, I didn't realize that Pembroke students could also be part of it.

JWF: Oh, yes. And, they could accelerate, for instance, some of the, particularly the women who were majoring in a math field, were eagerly sought by industry, math and sciences. And, most of them went straight through - and my husband, who was in the ROTC, did the same thing, so that you did it in about two years and three quarters - it was very quick! And, the remarkable thing, I think, is that the loyalty of those wartime classes is as strong as it is because many of them spent less time, probably, in the college itself than we would normally spend. It was very interesting because, of course, war often breaks through barriers that existed and I think it was the first time in a couple of the former Brown dorms became converted to women's dorms. I think it was the first time that men have actually marched up, and they did march, because many of them were B -12 or ROTC, up to the Pembroke Campus because Alumnae Hall, at least, afforded one more large lecture room.

SJF: Right.

JWF: Our classes were merged - that was not a question, I mean, we had graduated from Pembroke, but my degree is from Brown University. Which is why the merger probably created fewer riffs than mergers at other schools which admitted women or men depending on which they had never admitted before. Because, you know, for years it had been to all intents and purposes, at least since my time, an integrated academic situation.

SJF: Were there any of your classes that weren't co-ed?

JWF: Gym. And, I can't remember, I think our biology class was just for women because I think, somewhere along the way, there was a discussion of the reproductive system which, in those days, was best discussed in a single sex unit. And, so. . .

SJF: So all the other ones were mixed.

JWF: Certainly, political science and English and history and sociology - yes.

SJF: So, there was still a significant population of men at Brown during the wartime.

JWF: Oh, yes, yeah. There were. Particularly in my senior year when the war was over and many of the men who had left to go into the service were back or, in some cases, men who never would have been to college were in college because of the Veterans' funds available, .

SJF: Was there any kind of change when that occurred? Did you feel it on the campus?

JWF: There was an older population - it was a very interesting time to be there because, in the sense that, I suppose that everybody would say that their college years can't be compared to anyone else's. But, there's no question that what was going on then, I mean, I remember that I was at - I'm trying to think now, where was, which was which - I think was having a class in Poet Technique and Criticism

of Poetry with Sharon Brown, when VE-Day occurred. And, the bells rang out and we tumbled out. I kind of think - these were momentous times, you see, that loomed larger almost than the academic concerns at the moment. But, there was a desire for, to hold on to the traditions and not to let them go by. There was a Junior Prom - most of the men were in uniform. There was a Senior Prom. There was Brown Brokers. There was - all of the campus activities went on. That's my first memory of Frank Newman who was later to become President of the University of Rhode Island and is now very active with Ted Sizer and educational efforts across the country. My first memory of Frank Newman is dancing as a suave in a Brown Brokers show called "Scuttlebutt." So, and we probably met people from, at least men, from further distances than we would have because the Army simply assigned people to Brown - to its B-12 or its Army / Air Force training, whatever, they didn't care where you were from you were sent to Brown

SJF: So, that they were taking classes at the same time as B-12?

JWF: Oh yes, oh yes. Yup.

SJF: I knew that was true of ROTC, I didn't realize.. .

JWF: Many of them were Brown men who had been enrolled in B-12 and were given dispensation to complete their career, their college and had some Navy courses thrown in. And, the RO unit was, of course, an officer training group. My husband was part of that; again, having grown up in Providence, he hoped to go to Worcester PolyTech, but the Navy sent him to Brown. And, he, I guess, was accelerated and he was an engineer and he went through it very rapidly. He was a member of the class of '45 who graduated in '44 with the class of '46.

SJF: Okay.

JWF: He graduated with '46 because he was an engineer, and he and two other men in the RO unit who were engineers were kept for one more semester. Because he was the class of '45.

SJF: Your class was '47.

JWF: Yes.

SJF: And you started in '43?

JWF: I went, I did four straight years working during the summer, because I needed to. But, also as an English major, nobody was in a hurry for me to finish.

SJF: Getting back to a Corporation question, [JWF: Sure.] what Corporation committees did you serve on and how did you get chosen?

JWF: Um, there, you can suggest that you would like to work on something. But, you're often simply appointed out of the, their knowledge of your background and whatnot. I was on Student Life, I was on a couple of special recreated Corporation committees. One, to look into the, um, internal disciplinary system which at that point was causing a lot of anguish for everyone, in that the students saw inadequate feelings in it and so did the administration. That was very interesting to do. And, then I was on a Corporation committee for the chaplain, see, which resulted in the creation of the Religious Affairs committee, which is a corporation committee which notifies the chaplain if anybody has concerns. And, I was the first chairperson of that, simply because I had been on a committee and I was on the Corporation and it was logical. And, I was on - I can't remember all that I was on.

I was never on the A and E, that's the - I'm trying to think it, I never can remember what letters stand for. But, in any rate, that's sort of the big executive committee and it's a very high-powered committee. But, there are all kinds of committees that you can put your name in for. And, I can't remember all that I was, all I was on. But, those were the ones that stick with my mind.

SJF: How do the committees function, get day to day work done, or week to week, year to year?

JWF: All depends when you are on a specially created committee with a - what's the word I'm looking for - with a specific assignment. Those are likely to be called together more frequently out of normal corporation time because you do have a time limit on it and they often meet at odd times at the university. And this is another reason I think why I was appointed to those committees. Because living in Providence, I could be there at no cost to myself. But, Corporation, the standing committees, such as the Student Life committee, more often meet at Corporation time - the day before, between the morning, the afternoon session and the evening affairs, so that people who travel great distances and are on standing committees can meet then.

SJF: Okay, so that's the three times during the year, then, that...

JWF: Right.

SJF: Was that different when you were...?

JWF: No. The one - oh, that was another thing I did serve on; I had forgotten that. But, on the, looking at the Corporation and making suggestions is another of the things that we did do on that committee was, was to extend the term of the trustee from five to six years, feeling that the first year is a learning year. And, so you need the five years, really, to serve in a fully knowledgeable sort of capacity. Fellows had been lifetime appointments. We changed that so that fellows are now, I think, it's an eleven year term. So, we made some changes in the structure of the Corporation. And, that was interesting too.

SJF: Were there a lot of complaints about that or were there generally...?

JWF: No, just a sense that - I think the answer to that is that, if you think back historically, people probably were elected or appointed to the Corporation as fairly senior people. I would suspect that if you looked back in history - and I have no way of being sure - but that prior, let's say prior to World War II or even a little, prior to maybe 1960, elections and appointments to the Corporation were of people, I would say, fifty years or older. And, certainly, the fellows would even possibly be a little older. That all changed, particularly after the Sixties, after the late Sixties, when the young graduates, feeling not represented by the older people, marshaled their forces and compelled the - actually I'm not sure the first ones were on the ballot or were write-in votes; I had forgotten how they handled it. But, as a result, some very young people were elected to the Corporation. And, once you are a trustee, you are a trustee forever, in terms of being invited to the Friday meeting, in terms of being invited to the social functions that involve the trustees, in terms of being expected as a trustee to make your contribution monetarily, appropriately. And, so, in the case of the fellows, if you've got, for instance, Nancy Buc, who is a marvelous person, was appointed as a fellow when there was some resignations. Now, Nancy is considerably younger than I am, and had there been a lifetime term for fellows, could have been a fellow forever. And, it's a little like the Supreme Court - you make substantial decisions and, probably, a turnover rate appropriate. This does not mean that Nancy cannot be reappointed as a fellow or a trustee.

SJF: Right.

JWF: In the future. But, you do have to step down, at least, temporarily.

SJF: Right, but in terms, at least to stay involved.

JWF: Oh yeah. With, at least, the more you get to know a university, I think, like Brown - I'm sure this is the point of view of anyone who has ever been a trustee. And, you know it, because the more you are involved with any organization, the more you recognize its worth and the more, the more it commands your efforts. So, you may not be as directly active on committees, as many committees as a trustee. But you still are willing to participate in any way that you can.

SJF: Are there things that you go back to

JWF: One of the things I love best, and I think every Corporation member does, and even though I'm an emerita, I always have made it clear, especially because I'm in Providence and even if it's not a reunion year for me, I'd be here. That, one of the great thrills is awarding the diplomas. As you know, they are departmental and it is such a kick to be able to give the diploma to the graduate. And, so I volunteer every year because generally they do need me. They call first on the active Corporation, but they frequently need emerita because people have other responsibilities not here, or something comes up at the last minute. That has to be wonderful - only once did I care and that was when a young woman who I knew well was graduating and I wanted to, if I could, award her her diploma. But, I've had Applied Math and Portuguese Studies and French and Religious Studies and just wonderful, small departments, where there's such a family feeling that it's a nice thing to be a part of.

SJF: I guess you'll be back in May then.

JWF: I assume so, unless, you know, I assume so.

SJF: Are there any committees that you - I know that the committee members don't necessarily have to be trustees - are there any of those that, that you stayed involved with?

JWF: Not really. I have very strong feelings. There are a couple of committees where they needed people, I would enjoy serving on them. But, I think that decisions for the future, especially the long future, should be made by people who are going to be involved in that future, probably more than I am. I'm not that old, but, and I don't mind, you know, but I really, I think we should all sit around from about the age of sixty-five and, and play we're not the rook. And, when Ab Lewis used to sit on a public bench, now this is rumor, I've got his biography and I haven't read it, so - but, and he was there for advice and counsel, if you sought it. But,

[End of Tape 1, Side 1.]

Tape 1, Side 2.

JWF: That's kind of fun and important. You have to be my age to realize that people my age do know something. And, that's not a criticism of the young because that was exactly a lesson that I needed to know. Each generation feels that it has the feel of a totally different set of issues and problems and even pregnant ladies of today don't think pregnancy is like the first women having children. Well, of course it is.

It's identical. But, and, but, we do have some knowledge and some wisdom, but it can't be inflicted. It has to be sought or someone like Harriet Sheridan, who is about my age, had earned enormous respect because people knew her, people knew what she had done. But, when you're a trustee, apart from the - and it is sometimes unfortunately a handful of people who vote for you. I don't know what percentage is now - you check this - vote for trustees, but it's pretty low, I think. But, still the depth of my knowledge, or the depth of my understanding, or the depth of my wisdom is a questionable issue. So, certainly, none committee should tend to defer with those of coolant wisdom, sometimes you cannot be so wise as you thought. But, which is another good reason, I think, for looking closely at the committee that you've chosen to serve on because I could deal with student life. I had worked with SARC; I had children, at that point, of a college age; I had been in touch with the Admissions Office where I worked, temporarily, I mean not temporarily, but part-time basis. I could deal with that. There were other things I couldn't and shouldn't have dealt with because I was not knowledgeable in them.

SJF: So that expertise is brought in by all the trustees or was that...?

JWF: I think so, yes. And, I think there's a fair attempt to assign them to areas - eager in which they have such an interest that they're willing to learn and on their own, in addition to sitting around. Or, bring previous knowledge to the committee.

SJF: It sounds like for Student Life you certainly have that theme.

JWF: Yeah, I think I did, as I say, not just because of my exposure through the Admissions Office and through SARC, but also because, at that time, I had five children all sort of, of that, generally, of that age.

SJF: Are any of them at Brown?

JWF: No, we lived in Providence - when you're born in Providence of parents who were born in Providence and you live approximately a mile from the campus, we felt that they needed to be away from Providence. I think you need some anonymity when you're at college, not constantly bumping in to people who have known you all your life.

SJF: Right.

JWF: So, no. None of them went - I hope one of my grandchildren goes to Brown.

SJF: Did you encounter any stereotyping or outright discrimination aimed at women on the Corporation?

JWF: No, I think by the time I came onto the Corporation, but you have to remember, was in the mid-Seventies; there was real awareness, thanks to the late-Sixties of, of avoiding that. I went, I recall once, it was very interesting and if you have time for this tale. Shortly after I became a trustee, there was a meeting at Cornell University to which women trustees of Corporations were invited and because I was new and because I could do it and because I thought it sounded interesting and exciting it was, I went to the session. Present at the session were two or three equal opportunity officers from several of the universities, it was the Ivy League. I remember the Ivy League, I think it was pretty much that group. And, this was a group in which there were three men, I think, representing equal opportunity officers and there were probably close to a hundred women. And what was interesting was to watch the changing posture and attitude of these three men as they became aware of their minority status within that group. Their original

confidence and certainty and sense of place, fell away until there was the very defensiveness that they had accused women of. And, that sense that you get when you are minority, and it was very interesting to watch the change in these personalities. And, hopefully, their awareness.

SJF: What did it take to figure this out?

JWF: Well, you can't help going to a conference like this without coming away being very pleased and proud of being a woman. There were some marvelous women in attendance. Bright and open-minded, not all like other women at all. But, a sense that, of the ability of women to handle the kind of assignment of being a trustee gives. Quite fun!

SJF: It must really have been quite a number, if you had 100 there, with all the Ivy League?

JWF: Then, don't forget we're from - I think there were four or five of us from - but, don't forget staff people, as well, from the colleges and whatnot. But, it was a very good experience.

SJF: Did you feel that the attitude of the men on the corporation changed a lot since you were students, were attending...?

JWF: No, see, again, it's hard for me because during the war - war makes equal, everybody became successful. And, they stopped asking, are you a man or are you a woman. If you were a good math student and confident scientist, you were needed. So, that, no, I, I - that's probably one of the interesting things in life. It took me a while to come to understand, totally, the women's movement, in that, I had been subjected in my own life, so little - harassment or even consideration or assumption that I couldn't do anything. I was the older of two girls and my father was perfectly certain that I could run the world if I had to. So, no, there was no, nothing. Course we also, at that time, and probably a decade and a half afterward, swallowed, especially if we didn't have any reason to challenge it, such as, being discriminated against or harassed or anything. We sort of expected the role, the role of, quote, "the role of women." You know, we loved getting dressed up and going to proms and all of the traditional female, quote, unquote, things. But, at the same time, because it was the war and because Brown and Pembroke have always, at least in my recollection, gotten along quite well. I was not the first woman director of Brown Brokers. - that had occurred before. So that, , no, I didn't, no I didn't get any discrimination during the college days.

SJF: Did you find there were other trustees, when you were on the committee, looking into your female perspective on the issues that were brought up?

JWF: I don't know whether they looked to us for female perspective, but I'm certain they heard it. And, the female perspective usually is interesting, I think. More focus on the individual than men tend to give. Because focusing on the individual complicates solutions. Things that are okay for a group are okay until you say, "Well, what about this?" And, I, you know, I suppose that's - I may be wrong. But, I think women tend to focus more on individuals.

SJF: Did you find that there was a significant issue with the women students at Brown after the merger?

JWF: There were a lot. Yes, certainly I was privy to the discussions about the Sarah Doyle Center and the mass guilt and reaction, "What do we need that for?" But, there was for a time, I think a real danger or a sensed danger that all of the

work that a lot of women who had been very concerned about women's education had done - and I knew some of those women - was going to be lost. I still think, personally, that Pembroke, as well as being a geographical location on the Brown campus, should be a name assigned to an academic unit - I would love to see the Pembroke School of Medicine, Brown University. I think that it needs, the name needs to be retained as an academic entity because most of the women who worked so hard to create Pembroke and to keep it alive and to expand it, were women who were concerned about the minds of women, not their social place. I would like it, I wish it would be assigned.

SJF: Now, it's only the Center for Teaching and Research which is several post-grads.

JWF: Well, I think that's a great place to have it, a very appropriate place for it, if that is its official name.

SJF: Yeah.

JWF: Because, it is these women who are concerned with young minds and, certainly, that is what the Center is concerned with. So, that would be great if, you know, that's the official "n", on the letterhead and so forth. That's wonderful!

SJF: The Pembroke Center for Teaching and Research on Women.

JWF: Good, then I withdraw my recommendation.

SJF: Well, I mean that certainly they (the university) could've used the name too.

JWF: I like, actually, I like the Center for the Teaching better because it's broader and all encompassing.

SJF: And, that there are post-Graduate researchers who come and do work there.

JWF: Right. I do know a little - I did not know that it was the Pembroke, but I'm delighted that it is.

SJF: Did you feel that it was your role at any point during the Corporation years to represent Pembroke College or any interest that might have been unique to it?

JWF: A number of us on the Trustees, women trustees, and I was not alone in this, pointed out, tried to point out when we felt women were not being appropriately assigned some committees we felt needed more women. Or, for one reason or another, women were considered unable to serve on that committee. And, we, we did make cross noises and bring about change and that was that. One of the things I will take credit for, and it's a small thing, but, when I first went on the Corporation, women were always listed as "Mrs. Daniel Fairchild." I suggested that I would prefer to be known as "Joyce Wetherald Fairchild" and if they wanted to put in parenthesis "Mrs. Daniel," that was fine because all the men trustees are called "John W. Jones" and then in parenthesis, if they have a wife, the wife's name is given. But, you know, what happened was that somebody on the Corporation who didn't know you very well would call and say "Mrs. Fairchild," not having the vaguest idea what my first name was, unless they recalled. And, now, if you look at the Corporation list, all women are listed in the way that I preferred.

SJF: Right, yes they are. That's something definitely to take credit for because I wouldn't have known when I was writing to you what to say.

JWF: I did suggest to John and I do think other women, other married women, seeing that, they would have chosen to do the same thing.

SJF: Is that when you would be in Corporation Committees that you would be referred by "Fairchild"?

JWF: There's a little list that they send out, as you know, the little gray list about Trustees and with their names and addresses and telephone numbers and that was where you were listed as "Mrs. W. Jones."

SJF: What do you think is the purpose of the Corporation?

JWF: Ooo, let me think about that.

SJF: Okay.

[Tape recorder turned off and on.]

JWF: Do you want to ask the question again? I've done some thinking.

SJF: What do you think is the purpose of the Corporation?

JWF: I think, one, the purpose of the Corporation is to have a body of knowledgeable people who understand the strengths and weaknesses of the university at any given time. Its needs. Its challenges. To help enhance its strengths. And, to strengthen, or correct its weaknesses. To look ahead, not be mired down in today's activities or events or status. But, to look ahead which has been done quite successfully by the Brown Corporation, trying to anticipate, rather than react. I think it's an assistant to the President and his staff. That does not mean to rubber stamp their decisions, but to always ask questions out of interest for the university, not merely to quibble. Two, to do their level best, to give the most of what Wriston said they were selected for: work, wealth, or wisdom. So, that in the nutshell is sort of what I think.

SJF: As far as anticipating things, is that being done through looking how different things on campus are functioning or taking student suggestions?

JWF: Well, there was both I think. That there was a real awareness a few years ago that Brown was burgeoning. And, the world was getting smaller and a couple of things happened. There was a committee headed by Tom Watson - I don't know if you remember the names of committee. What they did was look at what was best for Brown. What was the good size that could be encompassed in the geographic space they had, with the kind of faculty, numbers they could afford, and the student ratio and all of that kind of thing. And, that report resulted in the elimination of some areas of study. Consolidating some areas of study with one another. That was one thing that was done. And, I think that study's looked at whenever the pressures to increase the enrollment or that kind of thing, aren't too great. Another thing that was done, I think, and this is in terms of the shrinking world, certainly, I was blessed in having my tenure, the major part of it, under Howard Swearer. And, Howard's vision in the creation of international outreach, both the students and centers of understanding, I think were very important to Brown. So, those two examples of what I mean by, and certainly the other thing, the other component that can't be ignored is the incredible generosity of some of our wealthy alums, primarily trustees and fellows. And, I mean incredible contributions of money that they have made to this university so that it can meet the demands of the present and the future. And, I think, primarily, off the top of my head, and there are others but

I can name four or five, that I know on the present corporation who just have contributed sums that so far exceed what anyone would expect them to give that it's very impressive.

SJF: Yeah, things like the CIT, certainly, wouldn't be around if we hadn't had contributions like that.

JWF: Just amazing.

SJF: They have campaigns running now. Is that a Corporation activity or an entire university activity?

JWF: Everybody in the university is going to get involved. But, generally, what happens is, before you go out to your alum who you solicit, first of all you're going to make sure everybody on the Corporation, every single trustee, active or emerita, emeritus, and every fellow has pledged or given so that you can say to foundations and to the alumnae body, "This has come from this core group and it's been very impressive."

SJF: That's important before going out and asking anybody else.

JWF: Exactly, exactly.

SJF: How would you characterize your overall experience on the Corporation?

JWF: Fantastic. It's probably one of the most exciting, interesting, unexpected - maybe because it was unexpected - things I've ever done. But, when you walk into a Trustee meeting and seated around you are people who, frankly, prior to that time have been but names, it's a very heavy feeling. You really are coming into direct contact and working with people whom have been but names to you, and, of course, the ones who come to mind are Tom Watson and Charlie Tillinghast and, more recently - around those two, I think, loomed large because they were there when I came on the Corporation and very - it's also, as I said, a very remarkably dedicated group. I have encountered, and I may be naïve, but I have encountered very little selfishness on the Corporation. People, it has been my experience, have done things because they needed to be done for the university, not because they've been prestigious or famous - they were, but that's not why, primarily, they did it.

SJF: Certainly a lot of work to put in if that was their motive.

JWF: Exactly. And, most of these people, frankly, have all the prestige they can handle, for one.

SJF: When you were on the Corporation, did you find it being a very significant time factor in your day to day life?

JWF: No, no. I probably was in more direct contact because I'm in Providence and I'm sure if you're part of a national fund-raising or - that it's much more - I'm not good at fund-raising, so this has been one of the things I have not done as much of. But, that has to be your major activity because the needs are so great. But, it's, it's not, I think, for people who are the Chancellor or Vice-Chancellor or the secretary or whatnot, there are demands on you, this time, because they are the closest associates with the President, who obviously need to be or talk more often than the rest of us.

SJF: So, your small committees would talk about it on the phone or have meetings?

JWF: No, one, that's one, probably, one of the problems with a national slash international body. My prediction, you can play it back in ten years, my prediction is that within a short number of years, somehow, the universities will have a lot more telephone conferences with visibility of the conferees and when the picture telephone comes into being. Because, if you really are going to have representation of national or international alumnae, alumni people, you are going - one, the university can't afford to get them here. And, two, most people, or you would eliminate some people who you would like to involve if you ask them to get here three times a year. So that I think that - and certainly there were other bodies who, like the Alumnae Relations, you know, the whole body, that meets and needs to meet. And, I think you're going to find more and more telephone things where you may bring, things that you may bring to Philadelphia, a group from around there. Or you may bring to Atlanta, a group from around there. Or you may bring to Santa Fe, a group from around there. And, to San Francisco. Then, you all plug in, you're there together. But, you then plug in and have one large meeting, but nobody has to fly all those thousands of miles.

SJF: I see. So, that doesn't exist now at all with the smaller meetings that everyone talks across the country?

JWF: I think no. You see, your trustee group - I'm sure it does with Alumnae, but I know that people from the universities, professors, deans, the President, all kinds of staff, go to club meetings in their places rather than - but those are not the standing committees of the Corporation. So, I think, maybe once a year the Corporation meeting, possibly the February one which can be bum weather, will be a telephone meeting. All you think about...?

SJF: Tell Kim she must play this back in ten years if I'm not in Providence to listen to it. I was wondering because I thought that might exist now. It seems like with all the technology that it...

JWF: It's expensive. And, one of the things that I think needs to be done is that - just as fax offices existed, people had fax and still exist, you know, you or I can go in and fax a thing or Xerox a thing - I think that maybe people who go into business of having offices in various cities can bring people together in a telephone conference kind of thing. Just as there are conference centers now for large groups of people to come together in person, there will be conference centers - for instance, Boston would be a perfect place - it's not just Brown, it's loads and loads of universities and colleges and businesses who are planning the expense of moving their people around.

SJF: Did you leave any personal interest unsaid or undone when you finished your term? Things you still wanted to accomplish and your term had run out?

JWF: I suppose, not that - I have no agenda. No personal agenda. There were things that I achieved, some of which were my own idea, like changing my name, others which came about because of committee work that I did, that pleased me. But, I personally did not become a trustee and say, "This I will accomplish while I am Trustee." No, there are on-going concerns. I suppose having been at, connected as an active Trustee in one of the, I think...

[End of Tape 1, Side 2]

Tape 2, Side 1

JWF: That the same vision of these years continue. A refusal to become complacent. Always looking to see however well we're doing a thing, whether it can it be done better. That kind of thing.

SJF: Those can certainly be voiced. And...

JWF: As I say, once you're a Trustee, you're always a Trustee. You simply submit a letter of resignation. You are told the day you are sworn in that in five years, now six, you will write a letter of resignation as an active Trustee, but you are still considered a member of the Corporation.

SJF: What do you think makes a successful Trustee even more? I know you quoted the three things from the President.

JWF: I suppose there haven't been many unsuccessful Trustees because I would hope that the caliber of person who is either asked to stand for office or is appointed, is asked to consider appointment, would be a sophisticated enough person to understand what kinds of obligations he or she is accepting. As I say, I have been really pleased that I have met - I can't think of a single sole about whom I thought, "They're just doing this because it's something good to add to their obituary." I think they all thought, beforehand, about what it would entail and, therefore, are prepared to do what it entails.

SJF: In retrospect, what did you like most, or enjoy least, about being Trustee?

JWF: I enjoyed the whole experience. I think it's a rare opportunity, not just at Brown, but anywhere to serve. Particularly, a university or, I suppose, a major non-profit organization would be the same - the Metropolitan Museum or - would be equally exciting because there is a sense of, of doing something worth doing and something important in preserving or enriching an educational institution. And, that's why most of those people work so hard.

SJF: You had mentioned that, since serving as Trustee, you served at the Graduation ceremony. And, have you been more involved in any of the other nine networks or in the Brown Club of Rhode Island and Providence or in any other way?

JWF: Probably my emphasis, always apart from the university as a whole, has been with my class and that I still am active with my class in terms of its activities or reunions or efforts or whatever.

SJF: You have quite an active class.

JWF: No, we're not an active class. We're a small class, we're a close class. Interestingly, I think, as you get older, you have more time for, and things, you're freed from immediate daily concerns to either look back or look forward or around and the - you find that you're very pleased and proud with what has happened to the women you knew as friends in college. You take great pride in their successes. I have a classmate, who within the last few years, has become a painter of some note. And, we have so renewed a friendship through various and sundry happenings and I take great joy in them. And, yet, we didn't see one another for, probably, thirty-five years, except, maybe, at a reunion for an hour. But, there's a very interesting page in the Brown Alumni Monthly, the last page of this month's, talking about the friendships of college. And, it is a rare truth, or it's a truth that out of these four years, and four years in a lifetime is not a really long span of time, which you realize once you get older. There comes relationships or a special set of memories - I don't know what it is - or a sense of growing up together because

heaven only knows if you graduate as the same person that you were when you came in, Brown has, one of our admissions office appoints that has not done a very good job. That sense of growth, shared growth, stays with you through your life, I think. Not with everybody, but with a few people.

SJF: As a student, it certainly sounds like Pembroke had a significant impact. As a Trustee, did you find that there was a big impact on you through that position?

JWF: I think a re - well, it started really with my work with the Student / Alumnae Relations Committee. Whether renewed awareness of how important, very important our educational institutions are in this country, how much they mean to the well-being of this country, we really don't have much time to think about that when you're raising children, making a living, and doing all of those things that happen to most of us early after college. But, you stop to think about it, heaven only knows the agitation of the students and the way the Sixties was pure grief to many universities and institutions and still is an anathema to many alums. But, you know this agitation and this questioning and this refusal to accept, has to happen if this country is to survive. And, it happens often at educational institutions. And, if for no other reason - quite apart from educating the leaders of the future - quite apart, we need some places where questions can be asked safely.

SJF: Do you mean we act on things like the curriculum changes and the civil rights?

JWF: That, that - all of them, civil rights concerns. One cannot always approve of how it was done. But, in my view - and this is not going to be accepted by, necessarily, other trustees or anyone - but, in my view, it is better done badly than not done at all.

SJF: It certainly does institute change at Brown.

JWF: Well, not just at Brown, but in the society. You know, without the kinds of student contributions of protest to such things as Vietnam, civil rights, I can't say for sure the changes would be made, but they probably wouldn't have come about as rapidly.

SJF: Whether your children be of college age or around that, what was your household composed of when you served as a trustee?

JWF: I have to think aloud. By '75, my older children were in college or out of college. My two younger sons were at home and my mother was with us and I was working.

SJF: How did your time as a trustee impact those around you, I guess..?

JWF: Dan thinks it's the smartest thing I ever did because the spouse of the trustee enjoys immeasurably all the marvelous gatherings. And, because it is his alma mater too, he also enjoys knowing more about it and being more aware of it. So, it was very satisfying, I think to all of them. And, the boys were old enough so that - I can remember coming home with my Brown Bear and the citation that went with it. And, Dan stopped the boys as they came into the kitchen and said, "I want you to listen to this," and read them the citation which went with my Bear award and one or more of the boys said, "That's neat Mom, what's for supper?" So, you know.

SJF: But, the issue is, to say, they may have been thinking as older teenagers. Certainly, you weren't engrossed to being part of...

JWF: No, they were...

SJF: It was very commonplace to what was going on at Brown.

JWF: Right, and I probably understood the kids at Brown better because it was going on in the minds of my family, beginning back in the late Sixties and through the Seventies.

SJF: If you'd like, you can elaborate this point. I know I sort of cut off before in your experiences as a Pembroke student

JWF: It was very interesting. I was what they called then a "city girl." There were - the place was jammed with the regular Brown students and then all of the military personnel who were students as well. And, so, when you lived in the city, you had to live at home. I lived just off Hope Street on Larch Street. And, I got pretty good at putting my lipstick on, running between the house and the bus. And, the bus driver got use to seeing me - actually, I think it was a trolley then. The trolley driver got use to seeing me come, would sort of slow down as he passed the corner to see if I was galloping down the street. I was going to stay in the dorm, which is now [inaudible] and...

SJF: Andrews?

JWF: Andrews, when, in my senior year, but it wasn't completed in time and the place was still so full with returning veterans that anyone who lived, I think at that time and I may be exaggerating this, but I know it was within ten miles, it may have been within twenty miles of the campus, could not live on campus. They just needed the space. So, I stayed at home my four years.

SJF: You mentioned some of the activities you were involved in, were there significant drops in any of the organizations to participate in more war time activities?

JWF: No, we were just so mad at them. I can remember, one of the things I can, my dad, in addition to thinking I could do anything I set my mind to, was a terrible worry wart. And, I can remember being very late, I think the last trolley, probably, ran at 1:15, and you have to remember in those days, nobody had gas, nobody had cars, everybody rode the trolley. It was a wonderful social gathering place. But, I can remember coming home from a very late rehearsal, very late of the Brown Brokers and needing, of course, to go home on the trolley. And, I got on because it came, and I rode downtown with it and rode around back because it was easier than standing in the cold and I knew it was labeled Hope and I knew it was going to come down and go right back out Hope Street - you can't be sure of that anymore with the bus schedules. And, when I got on, when it stopped at the tunnel again coming back up Hope Street, there was my father. He made some lame excuse about, he had done, he did the make-up for Sock and Buskin for thirty-odd years and, so, he was frequently at the theater as well. And, he sort of "umphed" and said he had to go up because he had needed some stuff from his make-up kit, or something. Well, it wasn't until I got home that I realized that my worry wart father had been concerned and had gone down and up to the theater to find me to make sure I was alright.

SJF: You must, your family must have been quite involved in theater then?

JWF: My dad was. The other thing that happens, you know, when you're in college under those circumstances, and I realized it when we went to the

indoctrination - that's not the word - orientation of our youngest son, who went to the University of Rhode Island, and Frank Newman was President at that time and he came to speak to the parents and to the people who were going to be there in the fall. And, he said, explaining that this will be for many of your children the first time they have ever been away from home. And, there are tremendous adjustments. And, I realized I've never been required to make that adjustment because, no matter how tough the day at college might have been, in terms of exams that weren't as well handled as I thought, or any other problems that arise, I could always go home to an extraordinarily supportive, comforting, nurturing place. And, so it's a little scary for me to think that I had never been called upon to face, on my own, the kinds of things that you do face when you go away to college, because I was married three weeks after I graduated, and went from the nurture of a mother and father to that of a husband and family. Real scary!

SJF: Did you have a lot of friends who lived on campus?

JWF: Yes.

SJF: Did you see a lot of the things that they went through, as for being far away from home?

JWF: Oh yes, but, you know, the interesting thing is, maybe it was the war? I'm sure that the kinds of things - everybody was away from home, everybody was separated from everybody else. And, so, maybe when you were worried about whether your boyfriend or you fiancé or whatever was going to be killed, you worried less about some other things. So, it's even hard for me to compare the pressures. The one pressure I felt, extremely, was academic pressure because, in those days, in order to retain your scholarship, you had to stay in the top tenth of the class academically. And, that scholarship was very important to me, as I told you, and so that was a real press.

SJF: And, you still managed to do a lot of activities, so you must have handled it quite well.

JWF: But, so it's hard for me, as I say, to compare. I hope that Nancy Buc has been interviewed?

SJF: Not yet, she's volunteered to.

JWF: Good, good.

SJF: She's one of the ones who originally wanted to do this project, and, so, the questions that I spent time formulating were required to be for others to use too.

JWF: They're, I think they're good questions. And, I think you've given people freedom enough to touch on anything that isn't encompassed in a question. I'd be very, I'd love to hear when it, when Nancy's tape is made, it would be fun to compare our reactions because her position on the Board of Trustees, her age when applying to the Board of Trustees, everything about her life is so different from mine, that it would be fun to compare. That's one of the interesting comments I thought of and, when the question you asked about how you are viewed by the men on the Corporation, one of the interesting things is how you are viewed by the other women on the Corporation when you have, when you write on your thing that you're basic, that homemaking is an important component of your life, as opposed to important positions in academia or the professional world. There is still, there is still the tendency, an understandable tendency on the part of career women, to talk to other career women in a different way than they talk to those of us who have

worked, yes, and had interesting experiences, yes, but have not been focused as they have been.

SJF: Have you found that to be true of the, you certainly mentioned how proud you are of Nancy Buc, but is that true of other women on...?

JWF: I'm very proud of Nancy, but I suspect, and I'm very proud of Vicki Lederberg, I think these are women of incredible, and I've forgotten Jean's last name but she was a young trustee and...

SJF: Howard?

JWF: Yes, she's a wonderful person. I haven't seen her in years, but she is a delight. I haven't seen her, but Nancy and Vicki, understandably, view the world quite differently than I do. And, sometimes there is as great a gap between women of different life patterns as there is between the men and the women. And, this is totally understandable because you tend to assume a level of understanding on someone else's part before you can get into other issues.

SJF: That's something else I can think, try to formulate a question about.

JWF: I think it will occur, may occur more to those of us - I mean, have you interviewed Mrs. Blistein?

SJF: No, she is the only Corporation member who had an oral history interview, but it was more about student days, I'm not sure what she said, but she talked very little about when she was a trustee.

JWF: She was one of the early trustees. Bette Brown is another one. Have you interviewed Betty?

SJF: No, but the people who are next going to be interviewed are the ones in Boston.

JWF: Oh, okay. And, Ruth Wolf?

SJF: She certainly was very active in the last few years.

JWF: She's been active for years. And, I think any one of them should be interviewed because they were even earlier on the Corporation than I. They lived through some very tumultuous times. Angry years on campus. And, it would be interesting to listen to them. Bette's in Florida now, but Ruth is in Rhode Island. And, you've already got one, you say, for...

SJF: Mrs. Blistein.

JWF: For Sophie, yeah. It would be fun sometime to, have you ever done a group oral?

SJF: No, all the ones I have done have been individual.

JWF: That might be fun sometime, to get Ruth and Bette and Sophie and me, and if you don't want to be present, just turn us loose with a tape recorder because we all have a similarity in that we were all local. Bette was in a dorm, I think she, but I think Ruth, I don't know about Ruth, but certainly...

SJF: She, I believe, she came, she was in the city too.

JWF: Yeah, I think Sophie, Ruth, and I all commuted to college, certainly, most of the time. It'd be fun to turn us loose with a tape because, one, mind you, was far from the other. We all had very different interests, some overlap. So, our experiences, we have a different point of view.

SJF: That would be good. I'll see if I can find adjustments to require time. That means taking from one experience and thinking my next thing would be good. But, to have you all talking together...

JWF: Yes, you don't need to be present, I mean, you know we don't need to take your time, you're welcome. I think any one of us would gather the others at her house over a cup of tea or coffee to do this.

SJF: You know, I've sort of run through the questions, but is there anything I left out that you, I mean, feel should be added to what you've already mentioned?

JWF: Heavens, sure. Let me ask you, am I what you expected?

SJF: I'm not really sure what to expect with any of the people from the Brown Corporation who has this mystique [inaudible]. I highly unexpected you to respond so quickly, but that's one thing that was really a pleasant surprise because, when I wrote the letter, I was thinking, well, I don't know maybe people would put it aside on their desk or say I'm not giving her a call. In many ways, yes, because I had sort of, I had gone through your yearbook and looked at some of the activities you had been involved in. It's always interesting to me to look in the flesh rather than sort of reading, and every time I read something about one of the trustees in the bio file, it seems so lifeless, no matter what anybody does with it. Seems like, as you said, when you're looking at an obituary and you see all the list of things...

JWF: That's exactly one of the other reasons I did not itemize what I had done over the years because it means nothing. My interests will be, should be, I mean, will be clear. You know, if you have five kids, you're going to get involved with Brownies and Girl Scouts. And, if you have children in the public schools, you're going to get involved with education. I mean, you know, one thing leads to another. So.

SJF: I was very unsure of what the Corporation does and the more I tried to find out about that, the more I found them to be abstract reasons that I didn't really understand it. But, you put it in the perspective of giving so much of yourself, so when you turn to someone, you can say, "This is what we've done because we care so much about it, here." How much you love Brown and Pembroke, because I think a lot of the people I know who graduated recently, while enjoying their college years, they haven't had enough distance from it, and they're still out, trying to find a job and figure out what they're going to do. And, so it's time to turn back and maybe negatively because they can't find something right afterwards.

JWF: It's very scary, you know, what these four years mean in your life. My daughter, one of my daughters, went to Middlebury. She still lives in Vermont because she met a Middlebury classmate, they both love the country, if you look around, you will find that there are a lot of people who are still in Providence because they went to Brown and this is where the job - or they're in Providence or Newport or Boston or whatnot and they may have been from Indiana or Texas or whatever before. You find that if you go to a new city and, suddenly, you need contacts, the logical thing to do is to get in touch with the Brown - especially, lacking fraternities and sororities, it is, it has an amazing impact on you. Not just intellectually, although heaven knows, one hopes that there is, that your mind has

been stimulated and opened, that's the first concern. But, also, the other things that happen to you in four years. It is a decision to be conjured over when you decide what college is your first choice. It really is.

SJF: I think another thing that made me feel a lot better, you mentioned names I can, like Ted Sizer, he was my Freshman advisor.

JWF: Oh, really!

SJF: And, I'm one of his teaching assistants now. I was just out at the Coalition yesterday and meeting a lot of people there. And, when you mentioned Middlebury, my sister's there now. And, one of the things they've always said about Middlebury, I think in the opening speech is "look to your left, look to your right," instead of how many of you will drop out and things like that, they'll say what percentage will end up marrying each other. That's one thing I use to kid my sister about, you know. "You're going to a small school, you better be careful."

JWF: Well, I'll show you my family. You can turn that thing off.

[Tape recorder shut off.]

End of Tape 2, Side 1.