

2018-03-15_Mary Ann Mace-1

Colton Johnson

00:02

I'm Colton Johnson. I'll be interviewing Mary Ann Mace as a part of Vassar College Oral History Project. Mary Ann was a Vassar student and later on she was the wife of a Vassar faculty member, the late Dean Mace. I want to begin by asking you how you happened to come to Vassar as an undergraduate?

Mary Ann Mace

00:30

I came because I was at Madeira for the last two years of my undergraduate years. I mean, my high school years. I was there because my father was in the Army as a doctor, and I was sort of homeless. So I went to Madeira. I had an aunt in the area that I could go to for vacations, which was nice. But Madeira was all about Vassar. I think Miss Madeira had been a Vassar graduate. I wouldn't swear to that.

Colton Johnson

01:13

I don't know about that. I'll have to look it up.

Mary Ann Mace

01:15

I don't know that. She goes way back. And she was a very feisty old lady. and she was very much from Madeira so about four or five people from my class went from Madeira to Vassar. One who was my roommate because we had settled that rather than going out in the great world alone we decided we'd cling to one another.

Colton Johnson

01:47

Did you stay friends with your roommate?

Mary Ann Mace

01:50

Not, no. We really had totally different interests. She was very horsey. Madeira was very horsey, and I tried to live up to that and did ride and so on, but not very well.

Colton Johnson

02:06

What were some of the early professors that you remember and either dread or very much honor?

Mary Ann Mace

02:18

I very much honor my freshman English professor who changed my life. Her name was Connie Ellis. She was a bright, modern woman. And I had never been in any kind of schooling that went beyond Robert Burns. Madeira didn't go for anything modern in the English department. Very good school, very good training, but not modern. And the discovery of the whole modernity in literature was just dazzling to me. I mean, we read all the difficult poets, those impossible poets, Yates and Elliot and Auden etc. And we read James Joyce and we read well it just opened the whole world to me.

Colton Johnson

03:28

And all of that in the freshman course? Yes. That's wonderful.

Mary Ann Mace

03:32

105 I take it was I don't know if everybody had to take it or not but most people did. Yeah I think 105

Colton Johnson

03:40

105-106 was augmented by the time I got here with 130, which had older literature, but I had the feeling that 105 was the core course for many, many years.

Mary Ann Mace

03:50

Maybe we had that choice of 130 and 105, but I chose the modern, blessedly and was very lucky. I think every section did different things, but I was very lucky to have this remarkable woman who was not at Vassar for very many years, I don't think.

Colton Johnson

04:09

Didn't she become a trustee eventually?

Mary Ann Mace

04:11

I really don't know. I think she did. I don't know. It's quite possible. And so she was very, very important. Not that I took any more English because I was pre-medical. My father wanted me to be a doctor. And I guess I wanted to be a doctor because my father wanted me to be a doctor. So you had to choose something from each department. I chose English 105 from the arts department. And you had to choose a social science and a science and what else?

Colton Johnson

04:55

Probably a foreign language.

Mary Ann Mace

04:56

A foreign language. and I foolishly went on with French, which was, I had had French and never been terribly good at it, at school, all through high school. And French here just terrified me. There was this terrifying Madame who wore red rouge on her earlobes and I was terrified of her. And that was not a good idea. I wish to heaven I had started another language or maybe gone to classics, which eventually I got very interested. But foolishly it didn't occur to me that Latin was something you would study in college. I thought it was just something that school children were forced through.

Colton Johnson

05:48

I can understand how that would happen. And this was in the waning days of President McCracken?

Mary Ann Mace

05:57

Yes. He seemed very old and very dignified, but kind of lovely man. I didn't really get to know him at all. I think probably people who could sing went around and serenaded him. I just don't know. I couldn't carry a tune, so that was not for me. there were faculty members who played in the faculty student baseball game. I have a picture of it, but I can't find it. I have a picture of Gordon Post batting. That goes way back, doesn't it, Colton?

Colton Johnson

06:39

Gordon standing tall at the base.

Mary Ann Mace

06:41

Standing tall at the baseline, yes.

Colton Johnson

06:44

Well, let's see, McCracken retired about two-thirds of the way through, and Sarah Landing, the first woman president, came on.

Mary Ann Mace

06:56

Yes, and that was very exciting. She said her freshman year was that year, 46, 47, and that was my senior year. I went to Vassar in three years. I noticed that, yeah. under the four-year, three-year program, which was a wartime program designed to get you out quickly and so you'd be useful, I guess.

Colton Johnson

07:27

I've often wondered whether students who were in the war-arranged three-year program, did they stand out in any way, or was this just something that you might or might not know about your classmates or the people that you dined with?

Mary Ann Mace

07:49

That's a difficult question. We started together and remained friends, but my senior year, of course, we were the only ones who were seniors, and we were all moved to Main.

Colton Johnson

08:02

Did you make that declaration at the beginning? I think so. In your freshman year?

Mary Ann Mace

08:07

I think so. That's my guess. Yeah, and I don't know, but I thought it was a good idea. It was two regular terms of 15 months each, and then a 10, I mean, I've said that wrong, 15 weeks each, and then a 10 weeks summer session. The faculty hated it and got rid of it as soon as they possibly could after the war.

Colton Johnson

08:41

Were students excited, interested, or bewildered by the approach of a female president? I don't think there were very many female presidents.

Mary Ann Mace

08:57

No, I think it was very exciting. And she was a wonderful woman, very modern, very attractive, very Southern, just an absolutely charming woman really.

Colton Johnson

09:15

Did you get a sense that the place changed or at least that she was wishing the place would change when she brought her rather more modern approach to what was the classicism and the medievalism of McCracken?

Mary Ann Mace

09:32

I'm sure she wished it would change, and I suppose it did gradually, but she was just... I just had one year of her. And a lot of things went on as they'd always been. I mean, parietal rules, if that's the right word, rules about dormitory living, were very strict. You had to be in by 10:30. You had to sign in and out. There was what we were called the white angels, women who were hired to sit at the front desk inside the front door, and it was very straight. I got myself campused one time for staying out late in my freshman year.

Colton Johnson

10:21

Now it can be told.

Mary Ann Mace

10:23

Well, I wasn't humiliated by it because it was worthwhile. Connie Ellison had a group of students up at Alumni House talking to her, and I was one of them, and somehow it was just tempting to stay late and be late, and I was rather proud of being campused for a week.

Colton Johnson

10:42

Who spoke at your graduation? The commencement speaker. I don't mean to stump you with a question like that. I don't know at all, but I'll try to find out. Was commencement a big thing in your mind? Something that you realized, something had happened that would transform your later days?

Mary Ann Mace

11:06

Oh, my goodness. I have no idea who spoke at my commencement.

Colton Johnson

11:11

Whoever it was, I'm sure you didn't miss that much. If you don't remember, you remember very well.

Mary Ann Mace

11:17

I'm sure you can find out.

Colton Johnson

11:19

But you returned to Vassar after how many years?

Mary Ann Mace

11:24

I graduated in 1947. My husband and I came to Vassar in 1952.

Colton Johnson

11:31

And you were saying that you met at Columbia.

Mary Ann Mace

11:33

We met at Columbia as graduate students in an MA, a master's seminar under Marjorie Nicholson, who was a very dominating person then at Columbia. And my husband was a

veteran, four years older than I, so he was starting later than I was on this program, but he did it a lot faster than I did.

Colton Johnson

12:16

And you were married, and was Vassar Dean's first appointment? No.

Mary Ann Mace

12:25

He went back to his alma mater, Washington University in St. Louis, and they wanted him very much, and they wanted him to stay. And they couldn't understand why he would leave, as they said, a great university to go to a girls' school. And he told them he wanted to be near New York, that everything in New York was important to him.

Colton Johnson

12:49

He was engaged with the musical world then when I got to know him.

Mary Ann Mace

12:53

Yes, and so that was why he came to Vassar happily. It was very odd about his being hired. Do you want to hear something about how hiring was done in the English department in those days?

Colton Johnson

13:10

Well, I can go back a little ways myself, but not that far.

Mary Ann Mace

13:14

Yeah. There was no democracy in the English department. It was run by Helen Lockwood, who was this formidable socialist lady. Well, I don't know. Socialist is perhaps a bit extreme, but Fabian, Fabian lady. And by her counterpart, Barbara Swain, who was very aesthetic. Helen was not aesthetic, she was political and Barbara was very aesthetic. So they were not exactly kindred spirits but between them they ran the department. So Helen Lockwood decided that it would be very nice to have some of these nice boys who were coming back from the war in the English Department. The only man in the English Department then, no, there were a couple, Robert Brooks, Richard Brooks, and John Christie, who was not in the war because he was missing an arm. I remember that. But aside from that, it was very much a woman's empire.

Colton Johnson

14:32

Was that something that was true still when you returned across the faculty? Was that something that was more likely to run into in the English department or in the arts?

Mary Ann Mace

14:45

I think probably to run into in the English department, because I remember there was a head of the music department, Dickinson and John, and he was the one who oversaw the building of that marvelous music building that we have. And there was a head of the philosophy department who was Vernon Venable. There were some men on the faculty who had been too old I guess to be in the war.

Colton Johnson

15:21

Gordon Post must have been in residence by then, too.

Mary Ann Mace

15:25

In political science, yes.

Colton Johnson

15:29

You entered the ranks of the faculty at a time when the country was recovering.

Mary Ann Mace

15:41

Just, yeah, barely.

Colton Johnson

15:44

Do you think that affected a college as self-confident and established as this one was? Did you feel the post-war was affecting the teaching or the students or the campus engagements?

Mary Ann Mace

16:04

No, I think the college was very confident in its history and past, it seemed to me. There were many more things that affected my undergraduate time during the war. I don't know if you want to hear about that.

Colton Johnson

16:21

Sure. That would have been an element that affected the way you learned and the way your teachers taught.

Mary Ann Mace

16:28

Well, I was thinking more of practical things. It was a time of great austerity. And when I came to Vassar as an undergraduate, there was no help and you had to do your own work. They had a roster of duties. You cleaned the corridors or you waited on table. Everybody had a job to do.

So the most hated job was, well, a lot of, it's hard to get this in the right order, but a lot of young women lived as residents in the various dormitories. This was before the house fellow system. And the most hated job was to wait on, in the dining room, the faculty, because they sat around and talked instead of bolting their food and going away.

Colton Johnson

17:33

And that was obligatory across the student body?

Mary Ann Mace

17:36

Yes, yes, I'm sure.

Colton Johnson

17:39

So when you and Dean took up your place in the English department, that probably had begun to resolve? That was all gone, yes.

Mary Ann Mace

17:48

Oh yes. Things were back.

Colton Johnson

17:53

And had the place changed much? It hadn't been that many years I suppose since you were here as a student, but in the Blanding years, what do you think made a difference, if anything?

Mary Ann Mace

18:22

That's difficult because I just had one year in her years.

Colton Johnson

18:26

And she was still here when you returned.

Mary Ann Mace

18:29

Yes, definitely. She was an absolute charmer. She was very interested in engaging the faculty. She invited, when she had a visitor coming, she would look up to see who would be interested in meeting that person, and she would have a dinner party, a very elegant dinner party. Her sister, Miss Ellen, ran the catering and so on, And the most elegant thing about her dinners was that she had silver, what do you call those things, mint julep cups.

Colton Johnson

19:13

Oh, yeah.

Mary Ann Mace

19:14

For ice water. I was very impressed by that.

Colton Johnson

19:18

My wife and I, this is an interruption of interviewing you, but my wife and I once experienced the silver mint julep cups with Susan Turner across the street in Williams' house.

Mary Ann Mace

19:30

Oh, she had some of them, too.

Colton Johnson

19:32

Yes.

Mary Ann Mace

19:33

Of course, because she was from Kentucky, too. Yeah. So this was a Kentucky touch, but everything was done very elegantly. And if she had a famous musician come, people from the music department and my husband and me, we would come, too, because my husband was known to be even more interested in music than he was in English. No. He was interested in the combination of...

Colton Johnson

20:02

There's another thing that can be told now.

Mary Ann Mace

20:04

He was interested in the combination of poetry and music. That was what is.

Colton Johnson

20:09

I remember discussing those interests with him from time to time. He did a lot of research in various places I know in Europe because we used to talk about some of the things he discovered when he was on his sabbaticals. So the Vassar that you remember coming back to, you've outlined the way the President made visitors to the community available to students and faculty.

Mary Ann Mace

20:48

Yes.

Colton Johnson

20:50

And that differed somewhat from what you'd experienced as a student.

Mary Ann Mace

20:54

I hadn't known that at all, no.

Colton Johnson

20:56

Yeah, so it did seem changed in that way.

Mary Ann Mace

20:59

Yes, and it was wonderful because she got to know, she didn't just invite the top people, she invited people whose interests were engaged by whoever was visiting.

Colton Johnson

21:13

And then we move along to the Simpson days.

Mary Ann Mace

21:15

Yes.

Colton Johnson

21:16

Coming from the University of Chicago and Oxford before that, that's a little different than Ms. Blanding's background.

Mary Ann Mace

21:22

Yes. Of course, my husband had much more to do with him then in those days. Very little because those were the years of having children and raising them and so on. But we were house fellows in the house fellow system was developed, which was very serious in those days. They gave you one third time off and you were intended to run an intellectual, something of intellectual interest for the students.

Colton Johnson

21:56

That was an upshot of the Mellon study. Yes, yes. thought that the tenor of residential life should be more infused with some oversight and some development.

Mary Ann Mace

22:09

Yes, exactly. And we were the first house, we and a couple from the art department, Pete Brian, who was here not terribly long in the art department. He and his wife were, our apartments

were side by side in the wing of what was called then, curiously, North because people didn't like calling it Jewett. Somehow they thought that was excessive political correctness.

Colton Johnson

22:53

That's right. It had been called Jewett by then, officially. Jewett had left in 1864 in shame.

Mary Ann Mace

23:01

I didn't know that.

Colton Johnson

23:03

Yeah, he made the mistake of writing a memo to several of the trustees who disagreed with him, or who he wished to swing to the idea of opening the college when the Civil War, regardless of when the Civil War was done. He said that you shouldn't listen to Mr. Vassar because he grows every day more childlike and fickle. And then his nephews showed him the memo, and that's why Jewett was out.

Mary Ann Mace

23:34

Oh, I didn't know any of that.

Colton Johnson

23:36

But I didn't know when North ceased, but it was North when you were there.

Mary Ann Mace

23:42

Yes, but not for long.

Colton Johnson

23:45

No, that's right.

Mary Ann Mace

23:46

It got back its original name.

Colton Johnson

23:51

I came to Vassar in the second year of Alan Simpson's presidency not knowing that he hadn't been here for a decade not knowing anything about the place one can't escape the sense that Alan changed things do you agree?

Mary Ann Mace

24:10

I guess so my attention was pretty much elsewhere

Colton Johnson

24:15

Co-education, for example, was towards the end of Alan's first term of office. But you must have felt the implication of that through faculty conversations.

Mary Ann Mace

24:33

Oh yes, yes, yes, yes. And my husband was very much in favor of co-education. He was. Having experienced that for a year while he was on leave for a year at the University of York, which was a new university in England. And that was definitely co-education. And I may be mixing this up a little bit. I think that's right. And he was very definitely for co-education. I want to go back a second to my undergraduate years again, and that is our little experience with co-education and the veterans who came, who were not able to take Vassar degrees because we were licensed then only to give degrees to women, but who came and did all their coursework and were very obviously there. And that was what I wanted to show you the picture of, the prom. If you want to reach over there on my desk, you'll see it, if you'd like to see it.

Colton Johnson

25:47

All right, let me just pause this. So we have a picture of a group of, that's the one I picked. And you are outstanding not only because of your grace and elegance, but you're not smoking.

Mary Ann Mace

26:04

True. Everybody smoked in those days because it was considered cool, you know.

Colton Johnson

26:10

Yeah, yeah.

Mary Ann Mace

26:11

And during the war that had happened because cigarettes were unobtainable. So the cool thing was to get in line to get a pack of cigarettes and some unknown brand.

Colton Johnson

26:22

Your escort seems to be smoking too.

Mary Ann Mace

26:24

Yeah.

Colton Johnson

26:25

Do you remember who he is?

Mary Ann Mace

26:27

Yes, his name was Renee Cooper. Have you talked to any of these boys, these Gl's?

Colton Johnson

26:37

I have met one or two, but never with the attention.

Mary Ann Mace

26:41

That would be interesting from their point of view. There's this very nice guy, and I don't know if he's still alive, named Howard Wynn, who became head of the English department at Dutchess Community College.

Colton Johnson

26:56

Right, yeah, no I did meet him, but I just met him as Howard Wynn, I didn't know he'd been one of the veterans.

Mary Ann Mace

27:01

And his kids were friends of my kids, you know. And he would, I don't know if he's still alive, you can find out from the Alumni House.

Colton Johnson

27:13

I don't know either, I will.

Mary Ann Mace

27:14

That would make him, probably not, because that would make him even older than I am, which is as old as time.

Colton Johnson

27:20

Well, no. Well, the...

Mary Ann Mace

27:25

That's Bert. Bert. He was a local businessman here, Bert.

Colton Johnson

27:33

Oh, I know you mean. Bert Gold. That's the young Bert Gold.

Mary Ann Mace

27:37

Yeah.

Colton Johnson

27:37

I'll have to borrow this and make a copy of it.

Mary Ann Mace

27:40

My children are fascinated by this, as you can imagine.

Colton Johnson

27:44

Oh, yes, I can imagine. if we move along a little bit to

Mary Ann Mace

27:50

yes I'm sorry to have dragged that in because it's out of order

Colton Johnson

27:56

I want as much as you can remember because I think that's the important part of it to get back to change it would seem that the faculty would have been a little bit prepared for the idea of co-education because of the, the, uh, uh, veterans, the period.

Mary Ann Mace

28:19

I would hope so.

Colton Johnson

28:20

Veterans were there.

Mary Ann Mace

28:20

Because they contributed a lot in the times they were there.

Colton Johnson

28:24

Um, but Dean, when I came to Vassar, was not yet the chair of the, uh, English department. That was Caroline Mercer. But I know that he involved himself with a number of faculty committees and positions. And you must have seen the workings of the 1960s college from a different point of view since Dean was part of the administration of the department and part of

the administration of the faculty system. You probably weren't aware as a student of the way the faculty or by the governance engaged, but it seemed to me remarkable, having just been in a university setting, that the faculty really seemed to have a say and take charge of some of the real responsibilities of the college in those days.

Mary Ann Mace

29:35

Yes, definitely. And of course, I wasn't at any of the faculty meetings. I was just a faculty wife then. But I was in the... Let's see. I'm trying to think about the years. I went to... Let's see. In... Oh dear, this is hard. I was assistant to Betty Daniels when she was in the Dean of Studies office. Now, when would that be?

Colton Johnson

30:12

She was the first really functional Dean of Studies. It was a woman who had the title briefly and then went off to someplace else. And she returned from the Dean of Studies office, I would say, in the late 60s, early 70s. Okay. I remember hearing her talk about how the perspective of both students and the functioning of the faculty had changed in her sitting in that office, which I then sat in for a period of time, too. In fact, you and I were together in the Dean of Studies office. Weren't you advising study abroad students? Yes. When I was there?

Mary Ann Mace

30:53

Yes. I ran the junior year abroad program and later when we had it the 12 college exchange.

Colton Johnson

31:03

Was that junior year abroad program, it seems to be quite active. It certainly was when I knew more about it. Was that something that had evolved between the time when you were a student and the time you were?

Mary Ann Mace

31:17

I'm sure, yes.

Colton Johnson

31:19

Many students didn't go abroad even?

Mary Ann Mace

31:22

No, because it was wartime. No, now whether they did before the war, I have no idea. One of the things nice about McCracken, which I forgot to say, he was known to be a very kindly man, and he brought a Vassar woman, a Vassar girl, to Vassar from England.

Colton Johnson

31:48

Oh, yes. Christine. Christine.

Mary Ann Mace

31:52

Christine. And she was very active in vassar things after that and was our class correspondent and so on. And so he was known to be a very kind and generous man. I think she lived in the president's house during her undergraduate years.

Colton Johnson

32:17

I forgot that.

Mary Ann Mace

32:19

I'm leaving pieces out as I go along.

Colton Johnson

32:22

It's for others to put the pieces together. You used to put the pieces down. I remember running across an article, I think it was in the New York Times, that she came, Christine Vassar, came to New York for a special broadcast where certain students or certain young people who were living in the United States during the wartime had a chance to talk home and back and forth with their parents. Very nice. and she was telling about the good food, and her mother asked her to be sure she was drinking her milk.

Mary Ann Mace

32:59

I don't know who these Vassar people were in England and how close relatives of Matthew Vassar they were.

Colton Johnson

33:06

I think that was reasonably well established. Certainly, Christine has written about that experience, and I think she felt that actually there was a good family relationship there.

Mary Ann Mace

33:19

Another interesting person in my class, back again to old times, was one black girl. One black girl. It must have been hell for her.

Colton Johnson

33:31

What was her name? Do you remember?

Mary Ann Mace

33:32

I don't remember her name, but she was... The only thing that must have saved it for her was she was a beautiful singer. She had a beautiful voice, and she must have had all kinds of interesting relations with the music people. I don't remember her name.

Colton Johnson

33:49

If you do, let me know. I had one black student in my early days of teaching freshman English.

Mary Ann Mace

33:56

But that certainly changed.

Colton Johnson

33:58

It certainly did.

Mary Ann Mace

34:00

Under Simpson and others, an attempt to be more...

Colton Johnson

34:05

Yes, very much, I think. The transition to co-education, you say Dean was in favor of it and the college had experienced some of it. I was barely engaged with the college at large, just trying to teach my classes. Did you sense any, among faculty, faculty-wise, members of the faculty, women of the faculty, any resistance at that level of the college community to the notion of co-education?

Mary Ann Mace

34:52

I honestly don't know. There certainly was resistance later when Simpson wanted to move to Seattle. There was resistance of all kinds.

Colton Johnson

35:04

I think that made the either or probably more acceptable. Yes. Nearly as I could tell from the sidelines, the far sidelines, that was at some points in that conversation a real reality.

Mary Ann Mace

35:21

Yeah.

Colton Johnson

35:22

Yeah. Some of the questions that have been designed to speak to, to faculty members of more recent, uh, history than yours, um, seem a little, um, unnecessary to me, but you now look back, and are there things that you think are peculiarly Vassar. You came up from Madeira and didn't know much except that Ms. Madeira wanted you to do that. She said it was the best. It was the best. Yes. Have you ever doubted it was the best?

Mary Ann Mace

36:17

No, I think it was darn good and it was very good for me. There was something else I wanted to bring in and I honestly can't, it's escaped me. Okay, let's get back.

Colton Johnson

36:35

Let's pause a moment and we'll discuss it and then come back. So the thing you were trying to remember, at least one of them, has to do with the sense of community among the faculty in the days when you were a student and perhaps even in the earlier days when you and Dean were here, that seems not to be the same, not just this year, but in recent times.

Mary Ann Mace

37:02

Recent times, yes. Yes, they did. We mentioned the faculty student ball games and the faculty put on a show every year for the students. That was true after Dean and I came back. I don't think that was in, I don't remember that from my undergraduate years, but I do remember that from Dean's in my early years here.

Colton Johnson

37:31

Well, I was in on the revival of the faculty shows in 65 or 6 or 7. I think it was, to my mind, Alan and Mary, who were relatively new, but who were both of them working hard, I think, to transform some of the things they found to be weaker than they wanted them to be. They had come across the notion of a faculty show and asked some of the younger faculty to revise that, but that was a factor, a large factor, I think, even back in the 20s and 30s at Vassar, and then it had sort of drifted away. The faculty didn't seem to be involved or perhaps they weren't called on to. But the amount of housing for the faculty did increase during the Simpson years with the Watson houses and that sort of thing.

Mary Ann Mace

38:41

Yes, yes.

Colton Johnson

38:43

But you feel something was happening in this community of faculty that was dividing it again.

Mary Ann Mace

38:58

Yes, my friends who were a bit younger than I found the faculty, found the Simpsons very responsible for gathering faculty and so on. That didn't come down to us, I guess the older faculty. But that generation, slightly four year, the post World War II generation, tell me that the Simpsons had parties and things, but I didn't know about that.

Colton Johnson

39:38

Hmm. Food for thought on that, I think.

Mary Ann Mace

39:45

Do you want to...

Colton Johnson

39:48

Well, this has been very instructive and fun, but a couple of the questions maybe you'll want to think about and we can talk a little bit later or maybe not. Are there particular people, students, faculty, administrators, when you look back on, if not all the years, in the years when you and Dean were faculty and administrative people, certain people that sort of stand out and shine for you the way your English teacher did when you were a freshman?

Mary Ann Mace

40:33

Certainly Lynn and Margaret Bartlett, who eventually became our next door neighbors.

Colton Johnson

40:39

Yes, they were wonderful people.

Mary Ann Mace

40:42

And Lynn was quite involved in administrative things at various points, wasn't he?

Colton Johnson

40:47

He was, yeah.

Mary Ann Mace

40:48

And he loved that. He loved people. He just flourished if he had people around him.

Colton Johnson

40:56

Yeah, he did. I have a couple of hours of interview with him. Oh, wonderful. One of the great

stories that I remember about Lynn was when he had been secretary of the college and he admitted in conversation with me that he didn't really know what the secretary of the college did, but Simpson seemed urgent to get this going, and so he took it up, and he'd been in New York all day and talking with Mary Villard and trying to get together a capital campaign, and he came home just as the secretary of the college, but just weary, and he stretched out in their bed next door and took his shoes off and just lay down, and Anne, his daughter, walked by, pinched his great toe and said, Hmm, feet of clay.

Mary Ann Mace

41:45

Anne is remarkable. Anne is my goddaughter. She's had a wonderful career at the Washington Post. She's a super person, just a wonderful person.

Colton Johnson

41:59

Did you know the Posts very well?

Mary Ann Mace

42:00

No, I did not know the girls.

Colton Johnson

42:03

No, I mean Gordon Post and his wife.

Mary Ann Mace

42:06

Yeah, there were four daughters.

Colton Johnson

42:12

I'm trying to think of some of the others in the earliest days.

Mary Ann Mace

42:17

We were close to Jean Gier, Jean Humphreys as she was. The first year we came to Vassar, in '52, we sublet her apartment in...

Colton Johnson

42:33

Kendrick house?

Mary Ann Mace

42:34

No, this one right across the street here.

Colton Johnson

42:37

Williams.

Mary Ann Mace

42:37

Williams. And then after she came back from the leave and we went into house following in Jewett, We got to know her, and then when she married Ed, we got to know Jean, Ed Geer, we got to know both of them. And other people especially. I'll tell you somebody else important from my undergraduate years, just to flip back again, and that was, well it was a course. It was Music 140, which was my first, which Mr. Dr. Dickinson, and he taught this lecture course which took you from Madrigals to Sidis Sibelius and people like that. It was a remarkable course and for someone who knew nothing about music and had no training it couldn't have been a greater eye-opener. And now it doesn't exist anymore. Music is much more professional now. Concentration more on specialized things and professionalism and so on. And I gather it prospers very well. But for the ordinary undergraduate, like me, well, I wasn't an ordinary undergraduate, but for the non-musical undergraduate, it couldn't have been more of an eye-opener.

Colton Johnson

44:26

Well, to stay for a moment in the early days, and then we'll let it rest, and if you think of things and I think of things, we'll get back together. But you were a biology major.

Mary Ann Mace

44:37

Yeah. Or actually it was zoology in those days. There were two departments, three departments. There was zoology, plant science, and what was the third?

Colton Johnson

44:52

Physiology.

Speaker 3

44:53

Physiology, yeah. I think those became biology surprisingly lately. Yes, they did. There were separate... We'll pause for a moment.