8-22-1974

Interview with Gray Taylor Grady

Gray Taylor Grady

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Abstract: In her August 22, 1974 with Freida Todd, Margaret Gray Grady recalls her time at Winthrop from 1935-1939. This interview was conducted for inclusion into the Louise Pettus Archives and Special Collections Oral History Program.

Keywords: Dorm life, clubs, student organizations, rules and regulations, physical education

Interview Session (August 22, 1974): Digital File

Time          Keywords

00:00:00     Start of Interview/Interviewer’s Introduction

00:00:30     Question: Your mother went to Winthrop? Answer: Yes. GG’s mother’s sister went to Winthrop too. GG’s mother took business courses. GG’s mother graduated in 1912 and became a teacher.

00:02:22     Question: Why Winthrop? Answer: GG went to Winthrop, because her mother went to Winthrop. GG didn’t even consider that it was an all-girls school.

00:03:08     Question: Where did you go to high school? Answer: Lexington High School in Lexington, SC. Life after Winthrop.

00:03:50     Question: How did you arrive? Answer: GG’s father took her. Lived in Roddey dormitory. Homesickness during senior year. Students didn’t go home on weekends. Exams after Christmas holiday.

00:07:10     Question: When did classes start? Answer: September. Term ended after Christmas. Second semester ended last of May.

00:07:40     Question: Dorm rivalries? Answer: No rivalries. Students assigned dorms. Lived in Roddey first two years, then Margaret Nance last two years.
Question: Dorms? Answer: Roddey, Breazeale, Old South, and North.


Question: Fire drills? Answer: Slides. Students were apprehensive at first. Fire drills happened at night.

Question: Check in or out of dorm? Answer: Students checked out. Students could go anywhere during the day. If students wanted to go leave campus, parents had to write a note to the dean.


Question: Cards or smoke? Answer: No. Radios not allowed either. Students were supposed to study. Not much for entertainment. Dates took place on campus.

Question: Men? Answer: Students could have dates on the weekend for a few hours. Students had to stay in the parlor. Gates shut on the weekends.

Question: Cars? Answer: No. GG can’t recall a girl owning a car. Trains were available. Buses too.


Question: Girls there for education? Answer: Strictly.

Question: How did the Great Depression influence Winthrop? Answer: Tuition was reasonable. GG wishes she had studied harder.

Question: Winthrop’s reputation? Answer: Winthrop had a great reputation. GG’s instructors. GG started off teaching, but preferred office work. Spanish, education, economics, physical education classes, etc.

Question: Ratio of students to faculty? Answer: Faculty was accessible. Suitable class size.

Question: Registration? Answer: Done by class. Registration happened in the basement of the library. GG shares a dream she had about having to go back to Winthrop.

Question: Uniforms? Answer: GG’s mother made her clothes. Students allowed to wear pastel blouses. Blue Line. “No competition.”

Question: Gym uniforms? Answer: Made out of cotton. “We even had a very tacky swimming suit.”
Question: Swimming required? Answer: It was required to graduate. Tap dancing. Hockey. Basketball.


[no question] Campus expansion. GG compares Winthrop’s growth to Clemson.

Question: Clemson boys came to Winthrop? Answer: Every weekend. “Clemson boys were very prevalent on campus.” Clemson boys did not eat in the dining hall.

Question: Seniors have privileges in the dining hall? Answer: GG cannot remember.

Question: What food was served? Answer: Winthrop farm. Vegetables, meats, and ice cream all came from the farm. Referring to McBryde, “She used a lot of congealed salads, which was good.”

Question: Thanksgiving dinner? Answer: GG recalls that Mrs. McBryde had a turkey dinner before students went home.

Question: Assemblies? Answer: Once a week.

Question: May queen? Answer: Yes. GG talks about the daisy chain. May court.

Question: Clubs? Answer: Social clubs. Not nationally affiliated, e.g. sororities.

Question: Service clubs? Answer: No. There were academic clubs. Chemistry club.

Question: Club prestige? Answer: There wasn’t a lot of emphasis of being involved in clubs.

Question: Church affiliated organizations? Answer: Wesley Methodist Church.


Question: Teaching courses? Answer: Prominent field, as well as Home Economics. Practice taught at the Winthrop Training School.

Question: Afraid to speak out in class? Answer: Yes. GG talks about being brought up in a strict household.

Question: Term papers? Answer: Doesn’t recall.
00:53:26 *Question:* Student caught cheating? *Answer:* GG never witnessed or heard of students cheating.

00:54:25 *Question:* Which department had the best reputation? *Answer:* “Music department was fantastic.” Walter Roberts. “All of it was good.”


00:56:55 *Question:* Besides swimming, were any other P.E. courses required? *Answer:* No. Students had to take a P.E. course every semester, though.

00:57:34 *Question:* General education courses? *Answer:* English, foreign language, math. Freshmen and sophomore years were the same.

00:58:35 *Question:* Could you substitute a general education course for another? *Answer:* No.

00:58:55 *Question:* Entrance exams? *Answer:* No. SATs.

00:59:35 *Question:* Weekends? *Answer:* Stayed on campus. Students could go home on two weekends.

01:00:55 *Question:* Dating rules? *Answer:* Men did not object to the rules. “Saved them a lot of money.”

01:01:40 *Question:* Evening classes? *Answer:* Most classes ended around 4pm. There were Saturday classes.


01:03:45 *Question:* McBryde open continuously? *Answer:* Just during meal times. No classes during meal time.

01:05:40 *Question:* House counselors? *Answer:* There were elected.

01:06:45 *Question:* President Phelps? *Answer:* Good educator. Mai Rutledge Smith was still working in the library. Accessible to the students. Dr. Kinard was the President Emeritus.

01:08:10 *Question:* Good contact between administration and students? *Answer:* Yes. Dean of Women especially.

01:09:25 *Question:* Relationship between Winthrop and Rock Hill? *Answer:* Rock Hill was always proud of Winthrop.

01:10:45 *Question:* Image of Winthrop in hometown? *Answer:* It was the school girls attended.
01:11:23  *Question:* Did a degree from Winthrop carry weight? *Answer:* Yes. GG speculates about Winthrop’s national reputation.

01:11:55  *Question:* Has Winthrop’s image changed? *Answer:* GG says a Winthrop degree is highly ranked. Coeducation did not bother GG.

01:13:05  *Question:* Is there a need for an all-girls school today? *Answer:* Smaller schools can still stay all female.

01:14:15  *Question:* Anything else? *Answer:* GG happy to have gone to Winthrop.

01:15:03  *End of interview*