

**History 310: Public History
Spring 2004**

**Oral History Interview with Miriam (Friesen) Wiebe
by
Birgitta Dobson and Melissa Letkemann**

Summary of Interview

In this interview, conducted on February 16th 2004, Trinity Western Students Birgitta Dobson and Melissa Letkemann query Mrs. Miriam Wiebe (née Friesen) - one of the first seventeen students enrolled at Trinity Junior College in 1962 - about her early years, her time at Trinity Western University (then named Trinity Junior College), the early years and development of Trinity, and her pre-2004 continued association with the university.

In the first ten minutes of the interview, Mrs. Wiebe describes her and her father's association with the founding of Trinity Junior College.

For the next thirty minutes, the interview shifts to the beginning of Trinity Junior College: its construction and layout. Mrs. Wiebe continues in describing the Evangelical Free Church's association with, and support of, the school. She also provides detailed descriptions of many of the first professors and courses, as well as other members on staff at Trinity and their positions.

The remaining section of the interview deals with Miriam Wiebe's student experiences at Trinity. She describes her courses, her interactions with other students, Trinity policies and regulations, descriptions of the campus in the early years (1962 – 1963), special school events (such as the Halloween Party that first fall semester), school clubs, and one of her most memorable moments at Trinity Junior College.

In the remaining ten minutes of the interview, Miriam Wiebe discusses her recent association with Trinity Western University. She discusses her children's experience as they attended Trinity Western University, as well as her husband's current association with the school. Finally, Mrs. Wiebe provides a summary of her feelings of her experience of attending Trinity Western University.

Transcript of interview with Mimi (Miriam) Wiebe

Melissa Letkemann: Um, this is Melissa Letkemann and Birgitta Dobson and we are students at Trinity Western University. We are interviewing, um, Mrs. Miriam Wiebe on the topic of the experience of the very first students enrolled at Trinity Junior College. This interview is taking place in Group Study Four Room in the Library at Trinity

Western University on February 16th, 2004 as part of the History 310 Oral History Project. Okay. Um, one of the first questions we were just wondering, um, if you could just give us a bit of background knowledge, like, you know, your birthplace, where you were raised, that type of information.

Miriam Wiebe: I was born in Vancouver, Vancouver General Hospital, um, a long time ago (Letkemann laughs), uh, on March 3rd. I was the third oldest in a family, ah, which became a family of nine children. My, uh, parents lived in Vancouver at that time that we moved out to the Fraser Valley, I believe, during, the, my first week of life, so I didn't live in Vancouver for a long time. I grew up in a, in a -- quite a few of my years in a Evangelical Free Church.

Letkemann: Uh-huh.

Wiebe: and uh, I was familiar with the education that was available to E-free students in the U.S.A.

Letkemann: Uh-huh.

Wiebe: My, um, I don't know how much of that history you want at the outset here? Um, what else can I tell you?

Letkemann: (both talking at once)

Wiebe: Yes, as I said I was raised in the Evangelical Free Church.

Letkemann: Uh-huh.

Wiebe: Uh, my eldest sister went to Trinity University in Chicago.

Letkemann: Uh-huh.

Wiebe: And she graduated from that, four years in that university at-- the same week that I was graduating from high school, in Abbotsford. So we had the, uh, celebration in my family of some of us kids in the family, and my parents driving from Abbotsford to Chicago to celebrate her graduation, and that was like my graduation gift as well.

Letkemann: Oh, that sounds nice; ah, awesome. Um, okay, our next question was, um, when did you attend Trinity Junior College and for how long?

Wiebe: I was here for one year.

Letkemann: uh-huh.

Wiebe: Two semesters.

Letskemann: okay.

Wiebe: Uh, in, um, starting in the fall of 1962. It was the first year that Trinity, uh, was open to students.

Letskemann: Okay, ah, it was a new college at the time, and what made you decide to come to Trinity Junior College?

Wiebe: Well, I didn't really decide it. I think my father did. (both laugh), because, with having our sister in, uh, Chicago –

Letskemann: uh-huh.

Wiebe: -- and occasionally when dad went out East, he visited there, and so on. We were attending the Langley E Free Church at the time, and, uh, he started hearing that there were men and people in leadership, um, in the headquarters of the EfeeC, EFC, who were interested in education made available to western Canada. And, uh, dad was very, very, um, interested in that.

Letskemann: uh-huh.

Wiebe: thought it wasn't fair that I might wanna to go to Chicago as well. He thought it should be available for Canadian students. So he was working, he was one of the founding, uh, board members, uh, he was one of the people who investigated and actually, um, uh, together with David Enarson, who was our church pastor at that time, actually, uh, found this property and made the contacts with the owners of this land, to, uh, see whether it would be available for the University. So, basically, let's say I grew up with the idea.

Letskemann: Uh-huh.

Wiebe: And, uh, they worked on this, of course, for quite a few years before it became a reality. I was, uh, at the time engaged to uh, to uh, my, a boyfriend, um, whose father was in the construction business. And that construction company happened to be the company that was, uh, contracted to build the original chapel, and-- which would be the first classrooms.

Letskemann: Uh-hm.

Wiebe: and, so both my boyfriend and I were, involved in a family way of seeing the University get started. **[5 Minutes]**

Letskemann: Um, (both taking at once).

Wiebe: However, I didn't really think it was going to be in operation, as immediately as it was. And I um, graduation from high school, I uh, went to work right away in a bank, and I transferred up to Prince Rupert, which is very far from here --

Letkemann: uh-huh.

Wiebe: --up North--

Letkemann: uh-hm, uh-hm (talking at the same time).

Wiebe: --on the coast and, uh while I was there, for one year, I wanted to go to Bible school, or Bible College, at least for one year before I was gonna get married. So I applied to a, um, to Multnomah School of the Bible in Portland, Oregon, thought it was just far enough away from home --

Letkemann: (laughs)

Wiebe: --and, um, uh, with, you know it was a very good, solid, Bible-teaching school.

Letkemann: Uh-hm.

Wiebe: So I sent in my application, my fee; I was accepted, and when my dad found out this, he was like "You can't do that, we're starting Trinity." And I, I believe that, just in that spring they realized that maybe they could get this school going. And um, and they needed to get it going in order get some, some funds in. If they could get students and uh, registration fees, and, um, so on, if that-- it would be viable. So, he got really quite eager that his daughter --

Letkemann: (laughs)

Wiebe: -- could not drive right by this school and go the U.S. to another school. So, I was a good daughter (both laugh), I said "Okay" and withdrew from the, my, my hopes to go to Multnomah --

Letkemann: Uh-hm.

Wiebe: -- and agreed to come here. My other association would have been, uh, throughout the Evangelical Free Church family in the Fraser Valley here. Uh, the local churches, our youth groups, uh, were all very, um, very—I think very supportive of the idea. And were all, many of us, involved in some of the, uh, literal groundwork. We were here when they turned the first shovel of dirt, uh, as a big ceremony. Um, the only thing that was here then was the Seal Kap House, I think you call it now?

Letkemann: Uh-huh.

Wiebe: Which was the residence of the original owners. Uh, there was another small house nearby, and um, and a swimming pool on the lawn in between these two houses. The couple that took the position as custodian [Sam Reid] and his wife lived in the little house, and they were from our family congregation in Langley. And there was the big barn and some out buildings and then the new, uh, the construction had started on the Calvin Hanson Chapel, which was, which had classrooms attached to it. Um, the local churches, here, um, had a huge project weekend, or week probably, where they went to uh, up the coast to a village [Cheakamus], beyond Whistler where there was, where they had the, uh, contract to remove all the bunkhouses from uh, um, uh, I think maybe a logging site or something like that. And they could have the materials if they cleaned out, and um, demolished this camp. And I have pictures, uh, in this yearbook [**Please Note: Mrs. Wiebe was making reference to the very first Trinity Junior College Yearbook, 1962 – 1963 available in the Trinity Western University Archives**] of some of those events, of the moving company, the, the house moving company. Uh, the owners of which were also-- one of them served on the board with my dad, Mr. Enarson, and others. And so they made their equipment available and many, uh, people were involved in the project of moving all that construction material here, and out of that they built the little buildings which became our dormitories. And they were quite primitive.

Letkemann: (laughs)

Wiebe: One of my agreements with my dad was that I could, I would come to this school if I could live on campus. Now my family home was only maybe twenty miles away from here –

Letkemann: Uh-hmm.

Wiebe: – in Abbotsford. And dad was reluctant about that, but he agreed.

Letkemann: Uh-hmm.

Wiebe: So I got to live in the dorm and, uh, that's another story.

Letkemann: Alright, very interesting, that is great information. Um, so you had mentioned before that the purpose of your education, you just wanted a year of, just kind of religious studies before you got married or [Mrs. Wiebe nodding] okay [**10 Minutes**], um (both talking at the same time)

Wiebe: I would say that, um, before the plan to-- that I would get married soon--

Letkemann: Uh-hmm.

Wiebe: – I, my only, sort of dream career, would have been as a teacher.

Letkemann: Uh-huh.

Wiebe: And in those days we didn't think of all the options that are available, now there was like teacher, or nurse, or, or secretary (laughing) and there I was being a banker. But I, if I could go to school I would, would have pursued education.

Letkemann: Uh-huh.

Wiebe: So that was one of the, um uh, you know, some of the courses that I also took. Ah, just keeping that little dream in mind.

Letkemann: Oh, very nice. Um, were you able to use the information that you learned while you were at Trinity in your current employment or throughout your life?

Wiebe: Uh, not, not probably in my vocation, uh, as a clerk. And I came to really, really love, um, clerical work, and accounting and that type of thing. But I would say that always, um, to this day, I still have this little thought of, um, pursuing something maybe more in journalism and um, communications and, um, I studied um, uh. The courses that I took in that first semester, if I can remember right, I studied, I had an English course with, uh, Doctor Friesen, which was wonderful, I just loved that. I had, uh, a sociology course with Doctor Asa, which I also loved. Um, and I took an early education course, or, I should say not early, like, not like ECE, but um, probably the, uh, general, uh, introduction to ed-education with Mrs. Asa, uh, Doctor Asa's wife. Um, I took a class of Greek with Doctor Hanson, which, I loved also, very much. Um, and then there were some religious studies, I think Old Testament Survey, they might even still use the same textbook, because I see it coming home (laughs) from from, uh, more recent students. Um, and that was Dr. Mattson's. Uh, that was, well I won't assess that one. (both laugh). And uh, I think that's about it.

Letkemann: Great, okay. Um, you had mentioned that you came to Trinity, then like a year after graduation, was it? Or –

Wiebe: Yes.

Letkemann: Okay, was everyone around here roughly the same age? Or was there anyone that really, kind of stood out, or?

Wiebe: Most of us were, uh, recent high-school grads. There was –

Letkemann: Uh-huh.

Wiebe: – there were two students that were older than, you know, general, general age group. One, uh, one woman, was a nurse [Jean Nicholson], and I would say she might have been, um, maybe, ten years older than the rest of us. And she became our dorm mom. She lived on campus, and, uh she was a lady from England and she was just, uh, the best; just a hoot (Letkemann laughs) Great.

Wiebe: Um, and then there was one more senior student who commuted.

Letkemann: Uh-hmm.

Wiebe: Uh, a married woman.

Letkemann: All right, um, we know that there were chapel services held on campus. Um, can describe us, like perhaps, a typical service for us, or--

Wiebe: Uh, they would be similar to, uh, a mini-worship service that you might have, in uh, in your church. We started with singing, and um, uh, a devotional, prayer time, just uh, a brief message from one of the, usually one of the professors, um, and well attended. Yes, uh, oh, uh it was compulsory.

Letkemann: Okay

Wiebe: But it was still a very small congregation (both laugh). Most of the, professors would be, uh, in attendance, as well as all the students.

Letkemann: Okay. Um, was there any special chapel service that comes to your memory or—that you can think of?

Wiebe: Hmmm (pauses). I can't think of anything in particular.

Letkemann: Okay, um, can you just recall for us, some of the courses that were offered? I know that you had mentioned a couple. Were there other ones, other avenues –

Wiebe: oh yes.

Letkemann: – that students could chose from?

Wiebe: Um, there was, um, Doctor, um, Richard Walters, was here right from the start. He had a, a, one of the little, um, portables, I guess these days you'd call it that. Uh, one of the little buildings [**15 Minutes**] was his science lab. I didn't happen to pursue that (laughs). But many of the students did, and uh, uh, I believe there was chemistry, and I know there was a strong geology, uh, class, and they went on some great, uh trips, uh fieldtrips and so on. Um, I'm trying to think, I don't know if there was biology that first year. There was a psychology class, uh, there was a math class, which I likely would have taken except that first semester was uh, uh, a study in statistics and so on.

Letkemann: Uh-hm.

Wiebe: I wasn't that interested, so I, uh, passed it up. (Letkemann laughs). Uh, I, I've been trying to remember if in the second semester, I think Doctor Friesen taught a New Testament, uh, class, that I might have been in.

Letkemann: (laughs) Okay. Um, I know, um, you had mentioned a bit about registration, but how did registration take place then, to come to Trinity?

Wiebe: Quickly! (both laugh). Because it was quite on into the summer –

Letkemann: Uh-hm.

Wiebe: – before they really realized that they could be ready enough to start, and I would say that construction was certainly still going on, uh, of the Chapel. It was, uh, very new, when we got to have that very first service. But it was ready. Um, the Seal Kap House, um, the north end of it, the, there was a suite of bedrooms there, in that house, which were converted into business offices. And uh, Perry Havens, was the, um, uh, office administrator, bookkeeper, controller, and so on. His wife was the receptionist and secretary and clerk. And, so I, we came in—oh and the centre part of the building was our dining room. The south end of the building was the kitchen and service area and Doctor Hanson's office. And then you went out a little door, across the sidewalk, past the woodshed, to another little wee house, which was occupied by the librarian; Uh, uh, ae lovely lady that lived there. Um, and so, on registration day I believe we all were in the, uh, dining room, and uh, Mr. And Mrs. Havens, uh, administered all of that.

Letkemann: Uh-hm.

Wiebe: I, uh, believe the second semester, I took a job working in their offices, and worked with them, so I'm a little bit familiar with that end of the building.

Letkemann: Okay. So how did the other students then hear about Trinity, that it was opening, since it was such a quick time?

Wiebe: I think there were a number of us, um, who were daughters or sons of people on the board (both laugh). There was one gal who, Strombeck, Mary Strombeck, who came from Minnesota, I believe, and her father was on the uh, on the education board on a national level.

Letkemann: Uh-hm.

Wiebe: Uh, there were, like David Enarson's son Dwight, was here that in first year. Uh, um, there were, uh, several students from, say the Fraser Valley Evangelical Free Churches, and uh, several from Washington as well, who uh, who likely had heard about it just through the enthusiasm in um, um, in the region of the Evangelical Free Churches. I'm trying to think who else. I'm not actually sure how the nurse heard about it, but, when she did I'm sure they were glad to have a nurse on site.

Letkemann: Uh-hm.

Wiebe: So, um –

Letkemann: Um, do you happen to know if you could obtain a certificate or a degree after graduation from Trinity?

Wiebe: Yes, there was a certificate, and our understanding was that we could come and study here for the two years, and uh, the universities would recognize that, and you could transfer those credits, to uh, to uh universities; that was our understanding. I didn't finish my second years, and I did not pursue that myself, so I'm not sure how that all worked out.

Letkemann: Okay, um, I know you have mentioned a couple of the professors, but, uh, could you tell us a bit more about them; who they were, what they were like, possibly?

Wiebe: Can I refer to my yearbook? [**Please Note: Mrs. Wiebe was making reference to the very first Trinity Junior College Yearbook, 1962 – 1963 available in the Trinity Western University Archives.**]

Letkemann: Sure.

Wiebe: (laughs. sound of flipping pages). [**20 Minutes**] I'm, I've read some of the accounts that have been written, like Doctor Hanson's book, and so on, and I think there's a little more history there, of how these people came to be recruited.

Letkemann: Uh-hm.

Wiebe: And they did come from, um-- I believe the Asas came from California, or seems like maybe one of the mid-west states. Um, Doctor Walters came from Minnesota, um, Doctor Friesen grew up in this area, and, um, his family and his wife's family were in this area but he was teaching, in, in the Chicago area, in Illinois at the time. Um, and Doctor Mattson was somewhere out East as well, I believe, um. They were, I presume they were recruited through the Evangelical Free Church network, uh, from the headquarters in Minneapolis. Um, the Havens, came from Kansas.

Letkemann: Uh-hm.

Wiebe: we always heard about Kansas (both laugh). And the Jenstads, you'd probably know that name, uh, he, they came here as the cook and I believe, uh, the cook and the assistant. They were in, somewhere in the Kootenays, and they were uh, Scandinavian people who had this wonderful gift, of uh, uh cooking and baking. I believe they had a bakery and so on, and they were actually, obviously a big part of, uh, the campus, uh organization. Um (pause), that might be all that I can tell you about that.

Letkemann: Okay. Perfect. Um, we were wondering as students here, um what forms did the exams take? Written or oral, or that type of thing?

Wiebe: They were pretty much written, written exams. Uh, (pause) anything that, like, an oral exam would be, or like a casual quiz in the classroom. I didn't find it very different from high school.

Letskemann: Uh-hmm.

Wiebe: Actually.

Letskemann: Okay. Um, did the exams take place, um, the last class of the semester, or was there specific exams, do you happen to remember, like after all the classes had finished?

Wiebe: I believe that, I believe that there was some assembly after –

Letskemann: Uh-hmm

Wiebe: – the exam was finished, but it would have been at the end of the term. And there were midterms and that type of thing, of course.

Letskemann: Okay. Um, where did you, where did the students do their research or --

Wiebe: We had a small library actually, already that first year. And, um, if I remember right Mary Strombeck's father in, um, the East -- made a very generous, uh, donation of a lot of library books and materials.

Letskemann: Uh-hm.

Wiebe: Uh, of course the local public library, the Fraser Valley Regional Library was available to us. And, perhaps the professors took that into consideration, that maybe our availability to um, resources was a little bit limited.

Letskemann: Uh-hm. Did you find that you did have to travel a lot to do projects and papers and that thing?

Wiebe: I didn't, but you have to remember that I was just first year

Letskemann: Uh-hm.

Wiebe: And uh, perhaps the students in some of the other classes, from what I took, uh, may have done, but I didn't.

Letskemann: (laugh) Did you find that the resources that were on campus were helpful?

Wiebe: Yes.

Letskemann: Okay. Um, um, you had mentioned that you were a resident student. That was--

Wiebe: Uh-hm.

Letskemann: We were just wondering, just kind of, if you can just give us a general impression of what it was like to stay on campus, and your experience of that?

Wiebe: Well, I told you about the little buildings.

Letskemann: Uh-hm.

Wiebe: Um, they were, they were really (laughs) simple. Ah, like, just plywood walls and floors and painted, and uh, like the washroom was just like a plywood counter-top with the sinks dropped into it. Um, I believe there were four bedrooms and we shared, like two of us in a room; had a roommate. And we had a little, uh, social room, and just across, [25 Minutes] uh down a little short walkway it was connected to the boys' dorm. So there was one dorm for guys and one for girls. I think there were more guys than girls, if I remember right. And um, typical antics back and forth (both laugh). Um, we had a curfew and we had a sign in sheet, uh. We had to be in by 11:30 [p.m.] And uh, sometimes we just kind of, squeezed in (laughed) and just in time, uh, Jean, the nurse, our hou-our dorm mom, she was actually, I think-- supervised both the guys' and girls' dorms, and she had, she was in one of the rooms in our building. Um, she didn't have to share a room with anybody (Letskemann laughs). We, we had desks in our room, and uh, and a dresser and a bed, which-- and typically, uh one of us would like to study late at night and sleep in in the morning, and I was the opposite, I could get up at four o'clock in the morn-, do everything between four and seven and while my roommate was sleeping I tried to sleep while she did her studying (both laugh) in the evening. Uh, we had, oh in the Seal Kap House, uh, there was also, uh, a big Social Room with ping-pong tables and a fireplace, and that kind thing. I think there was a very close, uh community of students. And our interaction and our care of each other, and a lot, lot of fun, a lot, a lot of really sincere times, prayer times and that type of thing. It was good.

Letskemann: Excellent. Um, is there a specific memory that stands out in your mind?

Wiebe: There is actually (both laugh). I don't know why this popped into my, into my head, but one of the fellows in the class was from Vi-Victoria and he (clears her throat) acquired a motorcycle because it was easy to go back and forth to Victoria on his bike on the ferry (clears throat). And, uh, he, when he would go home, maybe once a month, he would, he would usually come back on Sunday evening, and um, and this little building that was the woodshed in between the uh, main house and the librarian's house, had a bit of a lean-to. So it was agreed that that's where George [Ney] could park his bike. And so he would come roaring in on Sunday evenings and just drive straight into this end of the woodshed, and uh, one night he came into there with his bike, it wasn't late, and there was a skunk in there. And so (laughs) the skunk was surprised (Letskemann laughs) and defended himself, and poor George, he practically thought he'd have to bury his

motorcycle; like he literally buried his clothes, and we just never let him forget that and, and I mean that scent lurked for a very long time in his poor motorcycle--

Letskemann: Oh no (laughs)

Wiebe: --and it was very close to the Dinning Room, so, that was, yeah, that was probably one of the memorable student life events. But we had, uh, regular, uh, situations where the guys against the girls were always trying to throw each other into the swimming pool and that type of thing, and um, uh, we had, um-- We all had assigned duties as students, just volunteer work, and one my tasks, was um, taking shifts in the Kitchen. And I know that Dwight Enarson and I, uh, had the job of doing breakfast. And so the Jenstads didn't come in until we were done breakfast. And then they worked right through till the end of the supper and clean up, which, someone was always assigned to help them as well, but Dwight and I would come out early, uh, from the dorms and, get pancakes and all those things going in the morning, and making breakfast. And, uh, that, that was a good memory too. **[paused tape and resumed interview]**

Letskemann: Okay, um, I'm just going to jump to another question. So, did you enjoy the food at the cafeteria? I know that's one of the big things on campus.

Wiebe: I think it was a lot better then, because it was home-cooked meals by these people, and you know, they were serving maybe thirty people, something like that, so it was wonderful. The baking was, Mr. Jenstad would decorate these wonderful cakes, and, yes, it was good.

Letskemann: That's awesome. Okay, um, can you perhaps recall how much it cost to attend to Tri-Trinity Junior College?

Wiebe: I tried to find out or, find something **[30 Minutes]** in my files, but I, at the time, of course, it was huge. But I, I'm guessing it was, uh, under three thousand dollars.

Letskemann: Okay. So, it was more expensive, than, than other colleges or universities would have been?

Wiebe: No, no, I think probably, it was probably less than the University of British Columbia. Um, but not much less.

Letskemann: Okay, perfect, thank-you. **[Side A finished; turned to Side B; silence from 30:35 – 49 due to fast-forwarding to the beginning of Side B]**

Letskemann: Um, you were mentioning that the students were really well bonded and everything, um. Have you been able to keep in contact with any of the original students, or--

Wiebe: Some I'm still, uh, still communicating with, and we had a great reunion here in the spring of 1992, which would have been thirty years from when it started. And, uh,

several of the students from that first year, were in that, and, and numerous of the professors came out for that too, so it was good.

Letkemann: Um, was there any special events that the school or the students did for recreation?

Wiebe: The yearbook's helped me remember some that-- (Letkemann laughs) We did, uh, a Halloween party I remember, so that would have been just shortly after the school opened, six weeks or something like that. And it helped to generate the interest to get the barn, the Barnasium as you've heard that word probably, it was our, that became our gymnasium. So they cleaned out the entire, uh, main level of this huge dairy barn. And, uh, there are some pictures here [makes reference to yearbook], of painting the basketball court on the floors and so on, and we had the Halloween party in, in there. And so, of course with the hay, and whatever, that was a lot of fun, and a good time, and it was early in the, in the, in the year, so it, I think that was, uh, well you know a friendly time to get to know each other. Uh, I just wanted to go back and mention that, um, of the seventeen students that were enrolled, ten were, lived on campus, and seven commuted –

Letkemann: Okay, that's great.

Wiebe: – so, uh, I think even the commuters, uh, most of them, were very much a part of (unintelligible), you know they, they stayed in, connected with, uh, the ones that lived here.

Letkemann: Okay, were there any sports teams or clubs that were organized on campus or off?

Wiebe: I think basketball, they were already starting some, uh, intramural tournaments, uh, and so on, but not on, not on a university level. Maybe, an inter-church type of thing, in that very first year. Ev-everything just was, was developmental, right?

Letkemann: Uh-umm. Okay, um, at Trinity when we attend here now we sign something that's a Community Standards. Um, did you have to sign anything when you came here, certain regulations or?

Wiebe: I don't remember signing anything.

Letkemann: Uh-hm.

Wiebe: Um, but there must have been, um, something that we got at the outset about what the expectations were. And uh, there might have been some occasions for interviews, (laughs), something for—let me put it that way (laughs)

Letkemann: Okay. Um, speaking of that, were there any regulations of attending the school, like dances, or movies, or socials that were allowed or not allowed?

Wiebe: I don't remember that –

Letkemann: Okay.

Wiebe: – in writing. I think the, um, expectation was that-- I think perhaps, because most of us were, at that, in that year were either from Evangelical Free or, in, that, um, uh, habit, social habit, let's say--

Letkemann: Uh-hm.

Wiebe: -- that it was presumed that, you know, that we'd practice the same things that we had been taught socially. In those days, dancing wasn't an accepted form of, of um, social life, so, no there's-- That **[35 Minutes]** wasn't part of our, our, social behaviour at that time. Um, I don't remember there being any issues, or with anything like that.

Letkemann: Okay. Um, in our classes today, the subject of plagiarism is frequently brought up, especially due to the Internet and that type of thing. Do you happen to know if the school had any policy on that or if there were--

Wiebe: I don't know if there was a written policy about that.

Letkemann: Okay, um, do you happen to know if there was a student representative, or student council?

Wiebe: Yes we did.

Letkemann: Okay.

Wiebe: Yes, we formed, um, a council and Dale Winder was, um, the first student council president.

Letkemann: Uh-hm.

Wiebe: And we had a number of, of clubs and organizations. I believe there was a photography club, **[flipping through the pages of the yearbook mentioned above]** (unintelligible). Certainly there was uh, uh, I forget what they called it, something that went along with the, the, like the students from the geology class-- were doing projects and that type of thing. We had a yearbook committee. **[flipping through the pages of the yearbook mentioned above]**, and we ha--there was a lot of emphasis on the music--

Letkemann: Uh-hm.

Wiebe: Um, participation, and we, uh, I believe all the students were part of the choir, and Doctor Friesen and his wife, uh, directed the, the music. We had a lot of small groups and Mrs. Friesen was a wo-, was a wo-, and still is a wonderful pianist. And so she accompanied us, as well as, um-- Gloria Goertz was my roommate, and she was a

very gifted, uh, pianist, and so she, she also accompanied, and we did-- we toured. Um, some churches and we did some traveling and touring, and so on that first year, um presented concerts and stuff, and, that, that was a great thing. We had a quartet--

Letskemann: Uh-hm.

Wiebe: A guys' quartet that, uh, traveled, and represented the school, and um.

Letskemann: Do you remember some of the places that you traveled to?

Wiebe: I remember going to the Olympic Peninsula in Washington, and we sang in several of the churches in Seattle and, um, and in um, I think Port Townsend, and, uh, um, in that area over there, and some of the other towns there. Not Polisbough (??), but somewhere in that area. Um, probably all of the Evangelical Free Churches in the Fraser Valley, North Vancouver, Whiterock, etcetera.

Letskemann: Okay, um, I know that, when you were talking about regulations it was pretty much, just because of your upbringing there were certain expectations or whatever, but can you remember if there was any formal policy between members of the opposite sex, in terms of dating or socializing?

Wiebe: I don't, I don't remember what was in writing. And um, there, you know, there was always, you know, intrigue (both laugh), fraternizing, or whatever you call it, among the students, and uh, and uh, I think there were a couple of relationships that uh, began on campus, and were special.

Letskemann: Okay, um, I think we're getting down to the last questions. Um, one of our last ones was-- we understand that two of your children atten-attended Trinity?

Wiebe: Yes, uh, actually more than two.

Letskemann: Okay.

Wiebe: My husband and I are in a second marriage, and we each have two children. My daughter, uh, graduated from here in, uh, with a uh, Psychology, Bachelors of Arts in Psychology, and uh, uh. And my one stepson graduated, actually in the same program. Um, he married a girl who graduated from here all four years. And then my other stepson, um, had one year here, and then he went on to an Agriculture Program at another school, but his girlfriend went through the first year of the Nursing Program here, all four years and graduated with her degree in, uh Science, in Nursing. So that's actually one-two-three-four-five, of them, five of the six.

Letskemann: Oh wow. (laughs). Um. Did they attend here because of your experience or ties to the school or was it more, purely just their own-?

Wiebe: Um, [40 Minutes] I'd say my daughter, we influenced her to, um, try it here. Um, she had received some bursaries to, uh, a local college, community college, and she took her first year, and then she went away on a missions outreach trip. When she came back, she didn't have time to get quite, uh, the classes she wanted back in the community college, and she was frustrated because there, she was wanting to have that one particular class. So we said, Well, you know, she could come over to Trinity. She uh, so she was going back and forth, taking some classes in Abbotsford and some here, and very early on, she dashed out the door one day and stuck her head back in and said "By the way, if you're worried about your investment, uh, I really like it" (both laugh). And after that, she just, she loved Trinity. She finished up here. Um, Dan's one son, uh, who was dating a girl from high school, the nurse, she had already decided to come into the science program here, and because, um, because uh our son was pursuing agriculture, he started in first year of sciences here. So I think it was, his girlfriend had the bigger influence on him. And then, the uh, the other son, I don't think it was our influence, it was the influence um, uh, the uh, opportunity to come into the sports program here. He was an avid soccer player, and um, and was persuaded by, by some of his fellow soccer team, to come to school.

Letkemann: Okay. Well, I think that's about it. Birgitta, do you have anything you'd like to add or?

Birgitta Dobson: I was really interested when you said the dormitory life. Do you have any special memories of it (Letkemann laugh), like hanging out or small parties, or, like what would you guys do at night and (both talking at once)?

Wiebe: Well, we became very close, of course there were four, four students plus Jean, who was also a student, but uh, but our dorm mom and she was a bit older than us, but she was, as I said, just a lot, a lot of fun. Um, so with just, I guess we just had the three, three bedrooms then, not four. So it was close. I think that we became like sisters. With that few, we would sit around in, you know, in our pajamas, uh, if it was early morning or late at night, um, it was uh, it was very special. We did a lot of praying, uh, together, and um, my girlfriend, my roommate and I were both in, um, serious, um relationships with our boyfriends who were off campus, and so we had kind of that, um, um, similarity, or that um, common interest. And the other two girls, they were both American, and they were, they probably uh, got into more friendships with the guys on campus. But we were all like a family. Uh, so, it was good. Any my boyfriend and Gloria's boyfriend were often on campus as well, um, so they were included in the gang, just as if, well, almost like they were students as well. And we all went to the Inter-church, um, like in the Fraser Valley, the Evangelical Free Church Youth, would have rallies and concerts at some of the churches, that type of thing, so we, we would go as an entire family to participate in those kind of things, even if they weren't organized here on campus. Or the church youth, Inter-church Youth would congregate here and have some of their big events here on campus.

Dobson: So, would you stay here on weekends, or would you go home, 'cause you lived so close by?

Wiebe: I, I went home a lot of the time. Um, I was active in my church in Abbotsford, so Sundays I would always be home. When I was studying for exams, then I would try to stay on campus, just to, um, have more focused studying time. Um, but sometimes I went home during the week. **[45 Minutes]** Um, occasionally stayed at home over the night, overnight, and came to class in the morning. And let me just say, this is just point of interest that, um the freeway befo – the Number One Highway was, had just been built, and it was all paved, and it was ready – sections of it were ready, but not the entire thing, so it was not open to the public. And there were just, so-called barricades in places, but we could get onto the Freeway quite easily, exactly where you do at 232nd, and, um, get off at the other end at Mount Lehman, and so, those of us from Abbotsford, uh, to here would travel on that road. It was um, empty and straight. (Letkemann laughs) I'll try not to say more (laughs).

Dobson: I was thinking when you went home on the weekends, did you bring your laundry, and things with you? (Letkemann laughs)

Wiebe: Yes, yes. And I, oh I don't think there were laundry facilities on campus. I think the uh, you know, the kids that didn't have a home to go to, went-- they took trips into Langley to the laundromat.

Letkemann: All right. [To Dobson] Well, do you have any other questions, or?

Dobson: No.

Letkemann: Okay. Well, (unintelligible), I guess we're finished all the questions. Is there anything that you just wanna, just say, that you feel that you –

Wiebe: Um,

Letkemann: –that we didn't ask, that you want to address or anything?

Wiebe: I'm just looking through the pictures here. I could, um, I believe that the Jenstads, here's a picture of Mr. Jenstad. **[making reference to the above-mentioned yearbook]** He was the barber on campus, as well, and um, I believe that when they built, uh, I don't know if that building is still there-- when they built the big, uh, I think it was then the Student Union Building [possibly a reference to Douglas Hall] or something like that, and there was a big dining room in there, all the um, you know, the kitchen facilities and so on, the Jenstads were still on staff at that time, and I think that initially they, they ran that kitchen as well. Um, the um, enrollment increased very rapidly from one year to the next. I wish I knew what, um the numbers were in the second year. I, probably I would guess that it must have tripled at least, and um, just um, uh, duplicated itself rapidly one year from the next. My husband, now husband, uh, was a student here for one year, I believe in 66 – 67. And the um, the um, enrollment, at that time was probably in the hundreds, at least. He commuted, so he didn't live on campus, but um, uh, others of my family have been students here, and um, so that was interesting to us. I think that the first year, as far

as we were concerned, as students, got off to a great start. There was a great enthusiasm in the (coughs) pardon me, in the local churches. What interested me in the first, say five years of the school life, that students came from international, um, places and all over the U.S. and Canada, and we were like, How did they hear about this? You know, but um, I think it really, um spoke well of the, the foundation, and uh, just the good experience that we were having, that people seemed to want to come here. And so I think, obviously God's blessing was on it, and I'd just say, um, obviously my recollection was from the perception of a young person and a student, and I didn't know everything (laughs) that was going on behind the scenes. But perhaps, as, even as students, and certainly in our families here, uh, we were privy to a lot more than any of the other present students would be of what goes on behind the scenes. And I've enjoyed a, a great relationship with Trinity in the last, uh, in the last, say twelve years, that I've been back in this, uh, in this area. My husband and I have participated in, in numerous, um projects, with a, on a, on a board level, my husband particularly.

Letkemann: Uh-hm.

Wiebe: And so uh, we just really enjoy being included in the plans, and in the celebrations when new building are, and new programs are started here.

Letkemann: Okay. [To Dobson] So, is there anything you wanted to add, or?

Dobson: No.

Letkemann: Okay, I think that's it then.

Wiebe: Great.

Letkemann: Thank-you very much.

Wiebe: Thank-you.

INTERVIEW ENDS [50 minutes:07 seconds]

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