

**00:00 Interview with Lois Ludwig, who graduated from PLC in 1944. The interview is taking place at the 50th reunion celebration at PLU on Oct. 7, 1994. My name is Janet Pritchard. This is tape number one.**

**Hi Lois. I wanted to talk a little about Harstad Hall. It turned 100 this October. One hundred years of offering classes and educating young men and women. What is your earliest memory of Harstad Hall?**

00:29 Well, Harstad Hall was 50 years old when we were here. It was the hub of all of our activities. We had dorms — the dormitories were on the 2nd floor and 3rd floor. The Dean of Men quarters was on one side of the building. Dean of Women was on the other side. Now, we did have Mrs. Kreidler, who seemed to be an Emeritus status; she was still sort of Dean of Women, but there was a second Dean of Women, or whatever, an assistant type of thing on the 2nd floor.

At that time already, the steps were pretty well worn. The plumbing always needed fixing. The lights were rather interesting and it was also room for classrooms, and maybe we were more up-to-date than we thought because it was coed — coeducational. The dining room was in the basement, where we had formal dinner table with table cloths. We sat down to dinner, but we always had to wait for Mrs. Kreidler to say prayer — she said the grace. And the faculty sat in the center; I mean those that were in the dorm and so on.

We had wonderful cooks. I can't remember their names, but we loved them. They were, I think, there almost the whole time I was there. And, we had waiters with white coats, white jackets. It was in the war, therefore, we had war conditions, which meant there was black paper over the windows so the Japanese wouldn't peek in. We had air-raids. We went to sleep with the drone of the airplanes from McChord Field, on 24-hour watch.

We had those sad moments when the fellas went off to war, and, of course, where they would have to report was Fort Lewis, not very far away. I think one of the most memorable was an impromptu choir concert, which we had. We'd heard the fellas — 3 of them or 4 — were going to be shipped out, therefore somehow we got transportation over to Fort Lewis. We all gathered in the top part of the balcony of — you know it still touches me — of old Fort Lewis chapel. You see, naturally, Uncle Sam waited until spring time when we had pretty well our concert in mind. With a pitch pipe, we practically sang the whole concert. And not knowing which ones would be returning.

I worked in the business office in the year of 42-43 also, down there. The registration office was there. First floor of Harstad Hall. And the Bookstore was across the way from the Business Office in a tiny room, and I even ran the Bookstore. And Mrs. Davis, Esther Davis, would come back and forth when I couldn't. When I was in class she'd have to man the Bookstore. She also was the business person, and we were in economic straits there. Not only were we in a war, but we were also in an economic situation that was very sad, and I guess I recognized it more because Mrs. Davis and I worked with red ink and black ink — had to file those bills — and she forced me to look two whole weeks for a 1 penny error on the old adding machine — there were no computers. We found it, so there was great rejoicing when we did.

The turn-around, we could see a glimmer of a turn-around in the last year, 43-44 because we helped. I mean, Dr. Eastvold came. We had this service for him. And then we could see there were things happening. And I like to feel that that era was the turning point of the whole history of Pacific Lutheran. Not just a cultural heritage, but it meant that all Lutheran backgrounds had to work together for survival. And in 1987 was the merging convention for the ELCA and I had my tag on. I was attending it — I was not a delegate — but I was looking over some books of Augsburg Press, and in comes the Columbia Broadcasting System and they said, “What do you think of the merger?” “Oh,” I said, “we’ve been merged for years.” Which I could say with real confidence because it was, actually I feel that Pacific Lutheran was really the preparatory place for that kind of work. And also, California Lutheran, likewise, but Pacific Lutheran was the first.

**06:21 What were the classrooms like in Harstad?**

06:28 Well, they were downstairs, first floor or whatever we had there.

**06:32 Or the basement. Was it basement or ...?**

06:34 Well most of them, a great many of them... Now, of course, we didn’t just meet there. There was a library — a new library. And then of course, it was a compact campus. We had the old brown church. We had Old Main, the new library and then the gym. The gym had a leak in the roof, so that we had to learn to do our exercises around the bucket and the drops. And we had also — oh, my what did we have, like a Carnival in the summer or the springtime. That was in the old gym. But when the fellas left, many of them, we didn’t have too much manpower so the girls rolled up their sleeves and we did all kinds of things.

**07:18 Oh, I bet you did.**

07:22 But, I think that what, and from a few of the excerpts I’ve read, the dorm life was something of a unity and to me it was a family spirit. Naturally we had to work together for many reasons, but there was that family spirit, and a loyal, dedicated faculty that radiated their Christianity.

**07:53 Tell me about the faculty. Who was your favorite professor?**

07:58 Oh, I name several, because there was Anna Anna Marn Nielsen, ‘course she was with education. There was Gracie Bloomquist. There was Dr. Pflueger and his religion classes, which, to me, were most meaningful, particularly when I went on to a secular university thereafter. It strengthened really from what I had in my own home, which... well, my father was a pastor and he was district president...but actually it reinforced — and my happiest days were here at Pacific Lutheran in recollection. And my sister ... we went through my little notebook and you see my heritage has been on the west coast and hers on the east coast. Finally we merged up back out here again, but I have always felt they were precious experiences. It’s interesting, because a lot of these people I haven’t seen. Just what you saw...and Katherine Nelson, I haven’t seen her in 50 years. Some I’ve been in contact with, but... I don’t know if Rhoda Lee is coming, but she was my roommate for 4 years, just like a sister and we had many many fine times together.

**09:30 Tell me a little bit more about the war years in Harstad Hall: the paper over the windows, the boys going off, the hardships...**

09:38 We had air-raid drills.

**09:40 What were those like?**

09:43 Well, you'd have a siren and you'd have to run... I've forgotten what we did for the air-raid sirens. Whether there was...I don't know. That one I can't give you and full details. I do know that we often had devotions on the stair steps, evening devotions. And the lights went out at 10. And there was compulsory chapel. People shudder at that now, but that's what we had. And yes, I'm quoting from Grace Blomquist, because her reflections are in our book, and she said, "Yes, and there was only one telephone," so, you know, we stood in line for a long time. And then with Mrs. Kreidler in the corner... there was a wide stairway. The farewells in the evening were well-monitored. When the time said — I've forgotten what time the lights went out — "The lights will be out in 5 min." Of course, we got a little longer on the weekends.

**10:53 Now, you had mentioned something earlier about the lights being very interesting. Tell me about the lights in Harstad Hall. Were they...**

10:59 Well, they hung from, it's like the old-fashioned —

**11:03 But the lights worked.**

11:05 Yeah. It was... I don't know why they turned... Well, I think it was economic factors, but also the fact because of war, and thirdly those were strict rules. And we had those even before Eastvold's time.

**11:24 Was it rules from some of the other presidents, or was it from the war?**

11:29 A combination of all those factors. Yeah. Well, the lights were out, so if you wanted to study early in the morning, you'd go into the john with one light hanging down.

**11:45 Did you do that often?**

11:46 Yes, because I was a morning person. Also at that time, we'd transoms, and if you wanted to hear something as we often did, you'd pass the word along by mouth and you could hear the transoms as they juggled open.

**12:05 Oh, what fun, how rich.**

12:11 Decorating our rooms was something interesting because —

**12:13 Tell me about that. What was yours decorated like? Who had the best decorated room?**

12:17 We never had a contest. We were lucky to have bedspreads and curtains. We also had those closets that were in a corner, so you had a rod and you always had to have a cloth hanging down for each separate closet. The rooms were more or less the same size, except for a few of the front rooms. Classrooms... I can't tell you much.

**12:49 What kind of stuff did you carry in the book store? Was it just paper and books?**

12:52 Just textbooks. A few pencils.

**12:56 No sweatshirts or anything like that?**

12:58 Oh, no. My goodness sakes, no. Sweatshirts and T-shirts are from a different era.

**13:05 So, just the text books. Pencils and paper?**

13:08 Necessities for writing materials, but that's about all I can remember. We were lucky to get the text books unpacked in time for school.

**13:18 Oh, I bet. I bet that was wonderful. So, you didn't know anything about Harstad Hall until you stepped onto campus as a student?**

13:27 That's right.

**13:28 What years did you go to school?**

13:31 '40-'44. Four years.

**13:32 So it was an interesting time for you.**

13:34 Yes. And of course, the fourth floor had pigeons.

**13:37 Oh, it did?**

13:39 And I just checked that, because with Virginia Seabler. I said, "Virginia, didn't we have pigeons on the fourth floor?" And she said, "Oh, yes, Lois. And remember the time we crawled up there to the turret?" See, we had compulsory chapel, and we did it during chapel and got caught. And it was announced heavily by Eastvold in the chapel service.

**14:07 Where was chapel held?**

14:09 In that little brown church that was on campus. And the faculty sat, kind of like a choir. Out to the left, and then the rest of the people came. It was always that we were so very heavily eyed.

**14:27 Thank you Lois. I appreciate your time.**