



150 Stories for 150 Years

This Improbable Journal Is Rooted in My Experience at Wilmington

Submitted By: David Bumbaugh '58
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I entered Wilmington in 1954 as a first-generation college student and part of the first generation in my family to complete high school. Having no financial support, I chose Wilmington because the work-study program allowed me to pay for my college education.

For the next four years, I worked three nights a week at the Randall factory and attended classes during the day. From the middle of my freshman year into my senior year, I edited the College paper, *Quaker Quips*, a four-page weekly tabloid printed in a local printshop and covering news and sports, along with editorials, student columns, advertising and comic strips. As editor, I needed to quickly learn about type faces and editorial practices, about how to organize a volunteer staff, meet deadlines and interact with the local printer. In those same years, I helped found a non-Greek men's social organization known as "The Jasons" (I don't remember why we named it that). I served on the staff of *The Wilmingtonian* yearbook and the Publications Committee and edited the literary magazine and served as student secretary to a faculty member. During my senior year, I also served as minister to the Universalist church in Blanchester.



At the end of my sophomore year, I married my high school sweetheart, Beverly Keplinger, who had transferred to Wilmington the previous fall. We graduated together in 1958. I received my BA cum laude with majors in English and history. In 1964, I graduated from Meadville Lombard Theological School, affiliated with the University of Chicago, and went on to a 40-year career as a Unitarian Universalist minister, serving congregations in Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Virginia, New York and New Jersey, as well as Ontario, Canada, and London, England. In 1999, I joined the faculty of Meadville Lombard as professor of ministry and taught Arts of Ministry there for 11 years. In 2010, Beverly and I retired to Bristol Village, a retirement community in Waverly, Ohio, where, after 61 years of marriage and four children, Beverly died in 2019.

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Over the years, I have published two books, contributed to several others, and written articles for publication in a variety of journals and reference works. Over the decades, Beverly and I were deeply involved in Civil Rights campaigns, anti-war activities, abortion rights, gay rights and a variety of other social justice issues. All of this improbable journal is rooted in my experience at Wilmington. There, my world was enlarged, I discovered unsuspected skills and abilities, I was challenged to think unconventionally, I was encouraged to enlarge my vision of the possible and the morally responsible. I remember those years at Wilmington with profound gratitude. Whatever I have accomplished over the decades is a consequence of the life-changing experience at a small Quaker college in southern Ohio.

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