

Washington College: in person

The College's oldest living alumna turned 102 on March 4 and, though her 81st class reunion is approaching, she remembers her college days as if they were yesterday. Becky grew up in Quaker Neck, walked to a one-room schoolhouse as a child, and drove a horse and buggy to high school in Chestertown. When she enrolled at Washington College, it opened a new world to her.

"I have so many treasured memories because it was all so new to me," she says. She recalls performing in dramatic productions, playing basketball, serving on the Student Council and traveling to Baltimore by boat (under chaperone, of course) for overnight trips. She recounts a funny story of getting caught sledding when she should have been in the library. But one memory she holds particularly dear is her first dance—and her first kiss. She wore her cousin's blue taffeta dress, pinned up her long hair and danced all evening. "The student ratio then included 100 boys to 30 girls," she says. "It was a delightful experience. I believe I did not make the honor roll that first semester, but it was great, great fun. I never missed a dance after that."

A history major, Owens went on to teach and later earned a master's degree. In retirement, she redirected her energies toward community service and became an advocate for the aging. In New Jersey, she helped develop senior centers where young children were a presence and later moved her advocacy work for seniors to Florida. She was the College's first female president of the Alumni Association.

"God has let me live this long for a purpose," she says. "I've met a lot of nice people."



REBECCA NEAL BROWN OWENS '25
An Advocate for the Aging