

Dartmouth College Oral History Project  
The War Years at Dartmouth  
Interview with Donald Barr '46  
By Mary Donin  
12/10/07

BARR: My father was hired by Dartmouth College to handle the investments and that was 1937 and that's when we moved up here from New York.

DONIN: How old were you?

BARR: Twelve or thirteen.

DONIN: Oh. So did you go to the Hanover public schools?

BARR: I did.

DONIN: So he was hired President Hopkins, I assume.

BARR: Oh yeah. Halsey Edgerton was the treasurer.

DONIN: Oh yes. So you were a town boy.

BARR: I was a town boy. [Laughter]

DONIN: Where were you living when you were a child here?

BARR: Strange as it seems, I lived not very far from here. Down the road at 27 Lyme Road.

DONIN: Is the house still there?

BARR: Oh yeah. It's the one with the pillars and the porch.

DONIN: Oh, that's a beautiful house. So you were able to walk to school then?

BARR: Walked and rode my bike. We did take a bus too, in the winter.

DONIN: A nice place to grow up as a child, I expect.

BARR: I thought it was perfect.

DONIN: Yeah. Your father walked to work. Didn't need a car.

BARR: No, he didn't.

DONIN: He drove.

BARR: Mom usually drove him.

DONIN: So when did you know that you were going to be going to—or when did you decide that you wanted to go to Dartmouth as your college?

BARR: I guess it was ingrained.

DONIN: Yes.

BARR: I went to Dartmouth, which would have been free to me, or I could have earned my way through any other school. [Laughs]

DONIN: Now did your dad go to Dartmouth?

BARR: Yes, he was the Class of 1918.

DONIN: Oh, I see. So there was no question where you were going to go. [Laughter] I see. Uh-huh. Well, you're not alone. A lot of people are like that. You were what's called a legacy then.

BARR: I guess. Yes.

DONIN: Did you have siblings who also went to Dartmouth?

BARR: I had a brother and a sister, and my brother went to Dartmouth. I don't know because he was two years younger. And when he went, I was not here. But he did go to Dartmouth for a year or less.

DONIN: Mm-hmm.

BARR: Maybe six months. He had a lung problem, asthma.

DONIN: Oh, so he didn't have to worry about the war then. He didn't have to leave.

BARR: Well, he was in the Army.

DONIN: Oh, was he?

BARR: Yes, thank God, because they paid for all his medical problems.

DONIN: Oh, yes. Uh-huh.

BARR: He had apparently a serious lung problem.

DONIN: Mm-hmm.

BARR: Bronchiactasis and I don't know what.

DONIN: So tell us about your memories of your first days at Dartmouth. What do you remember as a freshman?

BARR: As a freshman, okay. Again, I was different because that year I was admitted into the freshman class, I got a job in town working for the secondhand store, delivering furniture to the dorms. And I've forgotten the name of the fellow who ran it.

DONIN: Mm-hmm.

BARR: It was on Allen Street. My freshman year, the first few days was spent working.

DONIN: Very busy.

BARR: Very. So I didn't go on the freshman trip or anything like that, which I think they had then.

DONIN: Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm. Up to Moosilauke.

BARR: Yes.

DONIN: Mm-hmm. But you'd probably been to Moosilauke already anyway.

BARR: I never had.

DONIN: Really! Ah-ha.

BARR: No.

DONIN: Were you an outdoorsy kid when you came here?

BARR: We went hunting and things like that. But usually went on my own or with a friend of mine, Jack Gile.

DONIN: Oh, sure. Another familiar name.

BARR: Yes.

DONIN: Now do you have memories of matriculation, of the ceremony with Mr. [Ernest Martin] Hopkins signing your card?

BARR: No, I don't.

DONIN: Your enrollment card?

BARR: I think we were in Webster. I'm not sure. I don't remember signing anything.

DONIN: Do you remember the ceremony?

BARR: As I say, it was in Webster, I think. And I don't really remember it other than I was there with a lot of other boys.

DONIN: Right. So let's see, you enrolled....

BARR: September '42.

DONIN: 'Forty-two. And were the freshmen required at that point to wear the beanies and all that stuff?

BARR: Yes, they were. However, I usually skipped out.

DONIN: [Laughs] Some of the stories I've heard involve the freshmen having to help the upperclassmen move furniture into their dorms.

BARR: Yes, they would yell out the window: Come in and help move furniture or something like that.

DONIN: But you were doing that already anyway.

BARR: I was already doing that. So I really didn't get into that.

DONIN: Now what dormitory were you in as a freshman?

BARR: I was in Hitchcock, 310 Hitchcock.

DONIN: Do you remember your roommates?

BARR: Victor Gardner.

DONIN: Uh-huh! That's terrific!

BARR: He was from Nebraska.

DONIN: Uh-huh. So a local boy and a boy from Nebraska.

BARR: Yes.

DONIN: Roommates.

BARR: And he was kind of shy. I think I was, too.

DONIN: Mm-hmm. Any memorable professors in the beginning?

BARR: Not really, no. As a freshman I just remember my English professor, Ed Booth. He was also in my father's class, so I knew him a little better.

DONIN: Sure, sure. Now at that point, were you giving any thought to either enlisting or worrying about being drafted?

BARR: Oh, yes. Since I was in high school, I was thinking about what service and what I wanted to do.

DONIN: Were you 18 yet or not?

BARR: No.

DONIN: Were you waiting to turn 18, is that what the—

BARR: My birthday's September 8<sup>th</sup>, and I'd just turned 18, I guess, 1942. In '24 I was born.

DONIN: 'Twenty-four. Yes, so you were 18. Right, right. So did you finish your freshman year before you enlisted?

BARR: No, no. I was drafted in April of the next year. Well, I finished the first semester. And at that point I knew I was getting pretty close to the draft. But anyway, my good friends in high school, we had discussed what we wanted to do. And we decided to volunteer for the Airborne. Well, anyway, when I was drafted, it was April 1<sup>st</sup> roughly, '43. Went to Lebanon and got stripped down. [Laughs] Went through that process. Then took a train ride to Fort Devens.

DONIN: Oh, down in Massachusetts.

BARR: Yes.

DONIN: Uh-huh. And that's where you started your training.

BARR: Well, I wasn't training there, but they sent me for basic training down in Texas. I took a train ride there. Two days to Chicago and then two more days to Texas.

DONIN: Wow.

BARR: Abilene. That was it. Medical department training. I didn't want medical department; I wanted the airborne. But somehow they just rubberstamped it and I ended up down there. I had the feeling—I was pretty small actually; I still am. [Laughter] But I had the feeling they thought I couldn't handle it.

DONIN: The airborne?

BARR: Yes.

DONIN: Uh-huh. So what did you end up—what was your service then? Were you in the Medical Corps the whole time?

BARR: I was in the Medical—yes. They called it the Medical Department because the Corps was the officers, and I was definitely not; I was a private. But anyway, yes, I ended up as a medic. I tried to get out when I got to Europe. But that's another thing.

DONIN: Mm-hmm. So how long were you there?

BARR: Well, I was trying to figure out, and I don't really have good.... But basically I was there for basic training, which took about three months.

DONIN: Mm-hmm.

BARR: And then I was shipped to another part of Texas. They didn't really have anything to do for me at that point because there were too many of us in the service. We must have had 13 million people under arms.

DONIN; Golly!

BARR: It's unbelievable. [Laughs] So anyway, they sent me to a thing called ASTP, Army Specialized Training, and you went back to school.

DONIN: Mm-hmm.

BARR: And I went to North Texas State in Denton and spent about six months there.

DONIN: Mm-hmm. Taking regular undergraduate courses or—

BARR: Yes.

DONIN: Oh.

BARR: Yes.

DONIN: So you were sort of biding your time until....

BARR: That's all. What they were doing is parking me. [Laughs]

DONIN: Yes, yes. Now did you get credit for those courses when you came back to Dartmouth?

BARR: Some.

DONIN: Mm-hmm.

BARR: They asked for the transcript and exchanged them and things like that. So, yes.

DONIN: So when did you actually return to Dartmouth?

BARR: Nineteen forty-six.

DONIN: Ah hah! So you were gone for a good while.

BARR: Yes.

DONIN: And had you earned—you'd earned some credits. Other people have mentioned getting points for their service. Did you get points as well?

BARR: Oh, yes. Oh, yes.

DONIN: And the points were based on the kind of service you were in, is that right?

BARR: Well, the points were put up in order to discharge you on a fair basis.

DONIN: Mm-hmm.

BARR: They had so many people, they had to get rid of us. And they wondered how to do it. And so they thought up this point system: longevity, overseas longevity.

DONIN: Oh, I see. Uh-huh.

BARR: And awards. Things like that. I lucked out. I won some points. I was overseas about a year and a quarter.

DONIN: Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm.

BARR: And got wounded. That was worth some points. Things like that.

DONIN: So you were finally discharged and got back here in 1946.

BARR: Yes.

DONIN: You must have been glad to be home.

BARR: It was New Year's practically. Yes, I was happy.

DONIN: Yes, I bet.

BARR: Had a chance to march in the parade on Fifth Avenue.

DONIN: Did you?

BARR: Our division did. But I wanted no part of it at that time. So I was discharged and standing on the sidewalk when they walked by.

DONIN: Oh, that's great. What a good feeling, though, to be done, to be discharged.

BARR: Yes.

DONIN: So did you know you wanted to come right back to Dartmouth and just continue your schooling?

BARR: Oh, yes.

DONIN: Mm-hmm. Your family must have been delighted.

BARR: I guess they were.

DONIN: Yes. So you came back to Hanover. You must have felt like it was sort of a different place when you got back here.

BARR: I didn't really get that feeling. It was a different place. The fraternities were closed. Incidentally, during my freshman year, freshman were allowed into fraternities.

DONIN: Ah hah.

BARR: That happened just then at that point. Then I was invited to Tri Kap.

DONIN: And you joined?

BARR: Yes.

DONIN: Great.

BARR: So when I got back, we opened up the house because it had been closed apparently. And we painted it and so on.

DONIN: So this was under.... At this point now Mr. [Ernest Martin] Hopkins had retired, and it was Mr. [John Sloan] Dickey.

BARR: Yes.

DONIN: Mm-hmm. So tell me how it felt to be back here as a veteran.

BARR: Well, we were all veterans. [Laughs] I really didn't feel much different. I was just continuing my schooling. I had a different attitude. I knew more what I wanted to do. As a freshman I didn't.

DONIN: What did you major in?

BARR: Chemistry, zoology.

DONIN: Oh, wow. Do you think you were a better student when you came back than when you were a freshman?

BARR: Oh, I know I was.

DONIN: Mm-hmm.

BARR: Yes.

DONIN: More mature?

BARR: That.

DONIN: Hi! Are you Mrs. Barr?

MRS. BARR: Yes, I am.

DONIN: I'm Mary. It's nice to meet you.

MRS. BARR: Hi, Mary.

DONIN: I love your dog, Molly. She is a riot.

MRS. BARR: Yes, she is a riot. [Laughter]

BARR: She's growling at her.

MRS. BARR: Yes, she, you know, very much Daddy's dog.

DONIN: Oh, I see.

MRS. BARR: Very much so. I'm the only who gets the growls because I come sometimes, you know, and like to hug him. [Laughter] She's a good girl, though.

DONIN: Yes.

MRS. BARR: She's one of those designer mix. She's six years old. They didn't call it back then. I just happened to get her from Rhode Island, you know, Maltese, Bichon, and poodle.

DONIN: She's an amazing dog. Very sweet face. This business that she does with her paws just makes me laugh.

MRS. BARR: We have a Maltese here, and before her, we had a Bichon ourselves. And neither one of them do that. So I have a feeling that comes from the poodle.

DONIN: Oh....

MRS. BARR: Maybe when you think about it, you know, the ones they have in circuses or you see....

DONIN: Yes.

MRS. BARR: And they usually are poodles.

DONIN: They're performers. Yes.

MRS. BARR: Yes. So that must where she got it because we didn't teach it to her. She just all of a sudden.

DONIN: It's hilarious.

MRS. BARR: Well, I didn't want to disturb you. I figured he—

DONIN: He's doing great.

MRS. BARR: You can pick his brains. [Laughter]

DONIN: Yes, it's great. It's great.

BARR: Not much to pick anymore.

DONIN: Oh, no, you're doing great. Let's see where were you? You were coming back in '46. Oh, yes, you said you were a better student and more mature.

BARR: Yes.

DONIN: Yes. And did you still feel like you were a member of the Class of '46 even though you weren't going to graduate?

BARR: Yes. We all knew what we were going to be. They asked us which we wanted. You had a choice of '46 or '48, when I graduated really.

DONIN: Uh-huh. And you chose to stay with the '46.

BARR: Yes.

DONIN: Did most of your classmates choose to stay with their original class?

BARR: Oh, yes.

DONIN: Uh-huh.

BARR: I know of only about two or three, and some of them switched. I don't know why.

DONIN: They switched to '48?

BARR: Yes. Of whatever other year.

MRS. BARR: Or '47.

DONIN: Or whatever year you actually graduated. That was your choice.

MRS. BARR: 'Forty-eight.

DONIN: I see. I see. So of the class that was there...of the class that was there when you got back in '46, it was a mixture of lots of different years then, wasn't it?

BARR: Tremendous variety. Yes. Some of them had been out for ten years.

DONIN: Wow!

BARR: This was the exception.

DONIN: Right. And were there any sort of traditional undergrads coming in at that point?

BARR: Yes, they had a freshman class. But I mean it was mostly veterans returning.

DONIN: Right.

BARR: Because they all got out at once sort of.

DONIN: Yes, once the war was over.

BARR: I got out in January. I didn't start school again 'til I guess around June.

DONIN: Ah hah.

BARR: And I was on a speed-up basis. The college was open all year.

DONIN: Yes, and everything was accelerated, I gather.

BARR: That's right.

DONIN: The classes and...

BARR: That's what they called it, I think.

DONIN: Accelerated?

BARR: Yes.

DONIN: Yes. Well, I think, from what I understand, they were pretty overcrowded, and they were really trying to get you finished and out of here as fast as possible because not only did you have the students that were here as traditional undergraduates returning from their service, but my understanding is that a lot of the vets who came here as trainees in the V-12 program wanted to come back and finish their schooling.

BARR: Many of them did, yes. They fitted right in.

DONIN: Did they? That was my question. Were they sort of seen as different people because they didn't really....

BARR: No, not at all.

DONIN: Uh-huh. That's nice.

BARR: Because everybody was so used to moving around.

DONIN: Were they able to pledge fraternities and that sort of thing?

BARR: Oh, yes.

DONIN: So they really were sort of mainstreamed into the life of the college.

BARR: Yes. For instance I had a friend whom I met in the Army. I found out he went to Dartmouth.

DONIN: Oh!

BARR: I met him in Missouri in the early part of my enlistment. And he came up to me one day, and he said, "I understand you're from Dartmouth." And we formed a bond.

DONIN: You hadn't known him, though, when you were on campus as a freshman then.

BARR: Not at all because he wasn't there at the time I was there.

DONIN: Oh, I see. Was he a V-12, or he was a regular undergrad?

BARR: A regular student. Yes.

DONIN: Uh-huh. That's nice. So did he graduate ahead of you? Was he ahead of you?

BARR: No, he was behind me one year in '47.

DONIN: Oh, yes, Class of '47. Yes.

BARR: And I got him to volunteer for the airborne, too. There was a gang of us.

DONIN: Oh. It must have been hard to see some of them go—did some of them get into the airborne?

BARR: All of us got in, our group.

DONIN: Oh, your whole group.

BARR: And had another fellow from Brown, he was another friend.

DONIN: Uh-huh. That's great.

BARR: So we had about six guys.

DONIN: And you stayed in touch all through your service?

BARR: No. Mostly, yes. While I was in the United States, I'd say about a year I was in Texas. Not the best place in the world. [Laughs]

DONIN: Right.

BARR: It's not bad.

DONIN: That's when you were a student down there.

BARR: Yes. And there was one period of time for three months I was sent to a dental technicians' school.

DONIN: Oh, my goodness!

BARR: Right.

DONIN: They wanted to turn you into a dentist?

BARR: No. A dental assistant we'll call it.

DONIN: Right, right.

BARR: I learned how to clean teeth and fill teeth and make fillings.

DONIN: Did you actually have to do that when you were in the service?

BARR: Yes.

DONIN: Oh....

BARR: That was my final overseas in Germany.

- DONIN: Oh, I see.
- BARR: They found that in my records and said, "Oh, you're a dental technician. We'll get you a dentist; you work with him."
- DONIN: I see. So you really had no control over the assignment they gave you.
- BARR: Not completely.
- DONIN: No, no. So coming back to Dartmouth when you returned, did you get to take the Great Issues course that Mr. Dickey started?
- BARR: I sure did.
- DONIN: What was your— Did you enjoy it? Was it a good experience for you?
- BARR: It was a good experience. I didn't thoroughly enjoy it as I probably should have. I was more interested in sciences. This was really political science.
- DONIN: It was political science, yes, and history, I guess. Yes, yes. But everybody had to do it, didn't they?
- BARR: Everybody had to do it.
- DONIN: Did you have any courses that you particularly enjoyed?
- BARR: Oh, yes! I enjoyed most of them: chemistry, zoology. They don't have zoology anymore. They call it something else.
- DONIN: Is it part of biology now?
- BARR: Yes, I guess so. It would've been biology then in a way. Yes.
- DONIN: Right. I guess they shut that down, that department. I don't know when.
- BARR: They can't.
- DONIN: What's that?
- BARR: You know you couldn't shut up a department like that.
- DONIN: Well, zoology, what I mean is they swallowed up and they put it into biology. Because you're right. For a while there it was a separate individual department.
- BARR: Yes.
- DONIN: And I think in the fifties it was swallowed up into biology.

BARR: Yes. In high school they called it biology.

DONIN: Did they? Yes. Any professors—favorite professors—who taught those courses that you have memories of?

BARR: Oh, yes. Bill—oh, boy, he lived in Vermont. I can't think of it right this....

DONIN: That's all right. Sometimes people have particularly fond memories of a particular professor that they had.

BARR: Well, it's been so many—I took so many courses: comparative zoology, cat anatomy.

DONIN: Lots of them. Now, so what was your—was it dorm life, or did you live in the fraternity?

BARR: I lived in the fraternity house except for the last semester when I moved back home. I thought I could study better.

DONIN: Oh....

BARR: For my finals and stuff.

DONIN: That's probably a good idea.

BARR: Not particularly. [Laughter]

DONIN: No?

BARR: I'd been out too long. They wanted me out really. [Laughs]

DONIN: Right. [Laughs] Did you have a sense that you wanted to get through? I mean did you feel like you were in a hurry so that you could sort of move on with your life?

BARR: I guess I did.

DONIN: Mm-hmm. So you finished in the spring of '48, is that right?

BARR: Yes, that's when I— And I graduated when I finished, yes.

DONIN: Right. And was the graduation ceremony held on the lawn in front of Baker, or was it held up at the—

BARR: No, it was on the Bema.

DONIN: Oh, it was up on the Bema. Mm-hmm.

BARR: Actually it wasn't. Yes, it was. It was in the Bema, the graduation ceremony. But part of that we were rained out, so we had to go into Webster.

DONIN: Oh, yes.

BARR: And the speech was in Webster.

DONIN: Mm-hmm. President Dickey.

BARR: Well, it was a senator from South Carolina or something.

DONIN: Oh, who was the guest speaker.

BARR: Only think I remember was it was hotter than hell. [Laughs]

DONIN: It was hot—oh, yes. It always is.

BARR: And pouring.

DONIN: And pouring rain. So it was humid.

BARR: And pouring rain and boy! I fell asleep.

DONIN: Couldn't wait to have it over with, I'm sure. So what was the social life like for you when you got back here?

BARR: Well, it was all men.

DONIN: Was it all based in the fraternity?

BARR: Yes, it really was. Yes.

DONIN: Most of the socializing took place in your fraternities.

BARR: Yes.

DONIN: Did you participate in any sports, intramural or—

BARR: Yes, I participated in any intramural sport I could. I did do some hockey playing in the dorm when I lived there.

DONIN: In the dorm?

BARR: Well, for the dorm.

DONIN: Oh, for the dorm? So the dorms played against one another?

BARR: Yes.

DONIN: Played hockey games against one another? Oh, that sounds like fun.

BARR: It was. I don't know why they ever stopped. They seem to have.

DONIN: Huh! And there was—

BARR: The fraternities played.

DONIN: Yes, I don't know. Did they compete against each other?

BARR: Yes.

DONIN: Oh, that's fun. Where was the hockey rink in those days? It was an outdoor rink, wasn't it?

BARR: There was no---no, no, no. It was Davis.

DONIN: Was it?

BARR: Davis Rink where the basketball—what do you call that building now?

DONIN: Yes, where the Berry Gym is?

BARR: Berry Center. That took the place of the Davis—they tore the rink down. Oh, that was one of my favorite hangouts.

DONIN: The rink?

BARR: Yes.

DONIN: Yes.

BARR: Even as a kid in high school, college, as soon as the hockey season was over, we'd open all the windows and try to dry the place out. Because they used to have the fairs in there. And North Texas State—I mean North Texas State. North Country Fair.

DONIN: Oh, fun.

BARR: And the horse part used to be in the hockey rink.

DONIN: Amazing. They turned it into a, what do you call it? A rink. Not a rink.

BARR: Whatever you call it.

DONIN: A corral.

BARR: Yes, sort of. [Laughter] They had bars for horses to jump over.

DONIN: Oh, wow!

BARR: And they had a regular horse show.

DONIN: Uh-huh. I didn't know that. And in terms of the sort of—once the war ended, did they bring back all the traditions that Dartmouth is known for? You know whether it's Winter Carnival or Green Key Weekend.

BARR: Gradually. Green—

DONIN: Green Key, Homecoming in the fall.

BARR: I don't remember Homecoming being anything then.

DONIN: Mm-hmm.

BARR: Green Key I remembered more from high school because they had the bands. They used to put the bands in the top of the gymnasium. And they would have well-known—Tommy Dorsey and so on.

DONIN: Wow! Mm-hmm.

BARR: And they'd be at opposite ends of the gym upstairs on the top floor where they had gymnastics.

DONIN: Uh-huh.

BARR: And we used to take exams up there.

DONIN: Oh, yes.

BARR: But anyway, they turned it into a dance floor.

DONIN: That's great.

BARR: One band would play and then the other would play.

DONIN: Oh! That's fun.

BARR: Yes, and girls would come from all over.

DONIN: They'd be bused up and I guess arrive on the train?

BARR: They'd come in on the train and land in Norwich. We called that Lewiston then.

DONIN: Lewiston, that's right. Yes. Now when all these girls arrived on campus, where did they stay?

BARR: In the fraternities and dorms.

DONIN: Oh, you cleared out the dorms or fraternities.

BARR: Yes.

DONIN: And let them stay there. Mm-hmm.

BARR: Oh, yes, they had chaperones.

DONIN: And strict rules in those days.

BARR: Right.

DONIN: Did you ever do road trips to go to the girls' colleges?

BARR: No, I didn't.

DONIN: You didn't. But lots of people did, I guess.

BARR: When I got back, one of the fraternity brothers had a girl who was a nurse. And he had a job busing trays or doing something at the hospital. And after the first semester, I got a job there, too.

DONIN: Oh!

BARR: So I worked at the hospital and for my meals.

DONIN: So you got free food there.

BARR: I got free food there, and the GI Bill covered my other expenses. So as a result, I didn't travel for women. I knew some of the nurses.

DONIN: Oh, the nurses, sure, sure.

BARR: I used to go out with them.

DONIN: Now was there any like conflict between sort of the town and the college in terms of either social life?

BARR: No.

DONIN: Were you ever allowed in the dorms when you were still in high school? Not in the dorms—into the frats when you were in high school.

BARR: I went in only not for social purposes, for business purposes.

DONIN: The delivering the furniture and stuff?

BARR: Yes, but that was in the dorms anyway.

DONIN: Oh, I see.

BARR: And the fraternity houses, I went into the Kappa Zeta house once because they ran—I can't think of the name of the band.

DONIN: Oh.

BARR: And as a high school student, I was in charge of the social, and I arranged for the band, the Dartmouth Band, to play at our high school dance.

DONIN: Oh, that's fun. You were the social secretary of the high school.

BARR: Yes.

DONIN: Oh, great, great. And did Dartmouth boys like try to date the girls at the high school?

BARR: Yes.

DONIN: They did. And that was okay?

BARR: No.

DONIN: [Laughter] But there was no—

BARR: Definitely not okay. [Laughs]

DONIN: They were stealing your girls.

BARR: That's right. And I guess we could see why they would want to go out with a college student.

DONIN: Sure. I think now it's pretty much forbidden. I don't think the Dartmouth boys are allowed anywhere near the high school.

BARR: Well, they didn't go to the high school.

DONIN: Mm-hmm. But the girls invited....

BARR: Well, they'd meet on campus.

DONIN: Yes.

BARR: Today I see kids all over the place. You know they're sitting on the campus.

DONIN: Yes.

BARR: And there's more chance to mix.

DONIN: Yes.

BARR: Than there was then because the campus was strictly a place to play baseball, football, things like that. There wasn't any lounging around on the grass.

DONIN: No, not like today. Let's see. What have I not asked you about? Were you active in the Outing Club, the Dartmouth Outing Club?

BARR: No, but I wanted to—I mean I like that sort of thing. I remember in my application to Dartmouth I wrote that I would like to get into that. But I didn't.

DONIN: Is that because you didn't apply? Or you couldn't get in?

BARR: Oh, no. I just didn't take advantage of the opportunity.

DONIN: Right.

BARR: And the courses I took, a lot of labs and stuff like that, kept me really busy.

DONIN: Well, plus you had a job. So that filled up your days, too.

BARR: That was really busing trays in the morning.

DONIN: Mm-hmm.

BARR: It didn't take too much time. I would have been eating anyway.

DONIN: That's true. That's a good deal, to be able to bus the trays and then get a free meal. And this is of course when Mary Hitchcock was right here in town.

BARR: The old building, yes.

DONIN: Right, the old building. Yes. And you did that all your three years after you were back from the war?

BARR: Yes.

DONIN: Mm-hmm. A good job. Did most students that you were familiar with, did everybody have part-time jobs in those days?

BARR: No. The majority of students did not.

DONIN: Did not?

BARR: Because there aren't enough jobs even now.

DONIN: Right, right. And did you—I gather there were quite a number of married students who came.

BARR: Yes.

DONIN: A lot of the vets came back, and they were married.

BARR: Yes. Some of them were my friends. They lived in apartments around town, or they lived in Wigwam or—

DONIN: Sachem.

BARR: Yes.

DONIN: And I gather they retrofitted parts of Fayerweather as well.

BARR: I understand, but I don't remember that.

DONIN: You weren't in there, right. So the student body was sort of a mixture then of traditional single guys like you plus these married men.

BARR: There weren't many marrieds.

DONIN: No?

BARR: But I remember they just fitted in as veterans.

DONIN: Mm-hmm. So the veterans all mixed up with the regular—the non-veteran students in the classes?

BARR: Yes.

DONIN: So your classes were a combination of—

BARR: You know I don't think I really noticed the non-veterans. There weren't enough of them. Almost everybody was a veteran.

DONIN: Right. And how could you tell that? Did you still wear your uniforms?

BARR: No. Oh, no. I didn't tell it.

DONIN: You just knew it?

BARR: Instinctively, I guess.

DONIN: Yes.

BARR: Because the freshmen would have stood out as being quite a bit younger.

DONIN: Probably. That's right. And they might have been wearing those beanies, too.

BARR: [Laughs] They gave that up.

DONIN: Yes. I'm sure as fast as possible.

BARR: [Laughs] You weren't going to get veterans to wear a beanie.

DONIN: No. To be sure. So when you came back, you really started as a sophomore, right? I mean you had enough credits between what you'd done here before you left and what you did in Texas; you probably must have had enough to have the status of a sophomore.

BARR: That's right, now that I remember it. But I had completed my freshman year, according to the college. They gave me credit. I don't know how far along I was into the sophomore year. But they gave me so many credits to put me in a certain spot.

DONIN: Now, was your dad still working here when you got back from the war?

BARR: Oh, yes.

DONIN: How was that to be going to a place where your father was working? Was that funny? Did it feel weird?

BARR: No.

DONIN: No?

BARR: Because I didn't really have much to do with the family. They were out here, and I was in school.

DONIN: Right, right. You kept your family life separate from your school life, so to speak.

BARR: Entirely, yes.

DONIN: Uh-huh.

BARR: I'd once in a while bump into my dad around town. Or go into the ad building. He had an office in there.

DONIN: Oh, so he was in Parkhurst.

BARR: Yes.

DONIN: Uh-huh. Yes.

BARR: Yes, he was in the back. I don't know if the treasurer's office is still—I doubt it.

DONIN: I don't actually know where the treasurer's office is. That's terrible. I should know, but I don't.

BARR: I don't either.

DONIN: I know the dean of the college is there and the president is there obviously.

BARR: Yes.

DONIN: The treasurer could well be there. I don't know.

BARR: Well, the registrar and bursar and all used to be there, I don't know where any of those things are now.

DONIN: A lot more people in those offices today than there were back in those days. So I'm not sure everybody can fit in that building anymore.

BARR: Oh, they wouldn't. They couldn't.

DONIN: No.

BARR: I mean now the treasurer's office, I know they have a hundred people doing what my dad used to do. [Laughs]

DONIN: Yes. I bet. And he probably did it all by hand.

BARR: Yes.

DONIN: Today it's all computerized, so much of it anyway.

BARR: And it's farmed out.

DONIN: Yes, it is farmed out, some of it. That's right. So how did this sort of mixed-up experience you had, you know, coming and then leaving, and people coming in from different classes and all being thrown in here together, how did that affect your feeling of sort of class unity? Did you still feel a real sense of identity with the Class of '46?

BARR: Yes.

- DONIN: Even after you graduated?
- BARR: Yes.
- DONIN: Mm-hmm. That's nice.
- BARR: Still do.
- DONIN: Still do. That's good. I should think it takes a little bit more work, though, when, you know, it's so sort of broken up with all your different experiences. You know, each of you went off and had a different experience. Some didn't go off. I mean there were a small number of students who didn't go for medical reasons or whatever. But I should think it would take a little more effort to sort of maintain that class—that sense of class togetherness because of all the separation you had.
- BARR: I know what you're saying. I just thought of myself as a '46.
- DONIN: Yes. The first class graduating— I mean you didn't graduate then, but that was the first class to—
- BARR: There were only two, I understand, graduated in our proper year, '46.
- DONIN: Amazing.
- BARR: Walt Knickerbocker and I don't know the other.
- DONIN: The other one? Yes. And they were the first to graduate under John Dickey; that was the first graduating class. He came in the fall of '45. So that spring, '46, was his first graduation.
- BARR: I have no idea what went on then.
- DONIN: Yes. So that can be one of your claims to fame, Dickey's first graduating class. But there were so many of you not there.
- BARR: Yes.
- DONIN: I think there were some classes that didn't actually really do a graduation ceremony *per se*. Maybe it was earlier classes.
- BARR: That I don't know about because we did.
- DONIN: Mm-hmm.
- BARR: And we were mostly '46ers really. It was '48, but....
- DONIN: Right, right. But in '48 most of the graduating—

BARR: Was '46.

DONIN: Were '46, right. That's great.

BARR: I think we had about the largest class.

DONIN: Did you? In '48?

BARR: Well, as '46, they counted people who entered in June 1942 and September and then again they had a later group which were all '46. So I think we had about 800 or so.

DONIN: Wow! And you were coming in at different times.

BARR: Yes. They did enter at different times.

DONIN: I gather a group came in March and then another one came in June and then another one came in—

BARR: Could be. I don't know them all.

DONIN: Yes, yes. Well, it was a crazy, mixed-up time then.

BARR: And then the Navy group.

DONIN: And they came in '43, I think, the summer of '43, the V-12 began. That's my understanding.

BARR: Could be. I don't know.

DONIN: Because you were out of there by then.

BARR: I was out in April.

DONIN: Mm-hmm. So what are in your notes there? Anything else you want to share?

BARR: Well, my freshman year I went out for freshman hockey, which they had. And got a uniform, so I made the team, I guess.

DONIN: Great.

BARR: But that was the time when they had a great hockey team, freshmen coming in.

DONIN: Oh.

BARR: Rondo, Reilly, Harrison, and so on. But they played varsity. And Eddie Jeremiah, he was drafted about the first of the year, sometime in there. And they disbanded everything.

DONIN: Oh, gee!

BARR: So that ended my hockey career.

DONIN: That was the end of your career.

BARR: And I was too busy at school when I got back, trying to study. I wasn't the best of students, and I really had to work.

DONIN: Mm-hmm. So no time for hockey.

BARR: No.

DONIN: Those were the years when they really had good teams, too, I gather.

BARR: Oh, they were top in the country.

DONIN: Football and hockey and baseball.

BARR: Yes.

DONIN: And I gather when the V-12 came along and they started training....

BARR: A lot of them were—

DONIN: Were adults.

BARR: What?

DONIN: They were adults. They were a good bit older.

BARR: Yes. And not only that, some of them were football players or something else from another school.

DONIN: Right.

BARR: And they came to Dartmouth. So Dartmouth did have some good teams. [Laughs]

DONIN: It must have been funny, though, for those boys to have to play, you know, on the Dartmouth team, even though their real school was somewhere else.

BARR: Yes, well, many of them stayed. Decided they liked it. [Laughs]

DONIN: Yes, that's what I gather. That when they came back, they applied to come back to Dartmouth rather than to go back to their original school. Well, it's easy to see why.

BARR: A little anecdote: As I mentioned Jack Gile's name a little while ago. When I was shipped overseas, I went on the Queen Mary.

DONIN: Oh!

BARR: And I was on with about 7,000 other guys, E Deck, which is way down in the hold. But up on top near the boat deck or something, there was a stateroom with Winston Churchill.

DONIN: No kidding! Did you actually see him?

BARR: [Laughs] Oh, yes. He would wander around the boat.

DONIN: Really!

BARR: Particularly on the boat deck. And I was a medic at that point, and I had an armband. I'd put it around my arm and go up because I was a medic or something. I'd be on the boat deck with him.

DONIN: That's fantastic.

BARR: It was him and his daughter and about ten British Marines.

DONIN: That's amazing. You saw one of the great figures of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Wow! And in those days that trip took, what, a week?

BARR: Four days?

DONIN: Mm-hmm.

BARR: The Queen Mary went alone. She was so fast that they just—she went on her way. But this time we had an escort of four coasters. You could see them at the four corners of the Queen Mary, and we went in a straight line, no zigzagging around.

DONIN: No. They had precious cargo. So you landed in London.

BARR: No, we landed in Clyde.

DONIN: Oh, oh, oh. Of course, not close to London, yes. Right.

BARR: Southampton would've been a destination for the Queen Mary. About the first or second day I was on board, I was walking down what they called the promenade deck. And coming in the opposite direction, there's Jack Gile.

DONIN: Oh! You didn't know? Amazing. Now was he also a medic? No?

BARR: No, I don't know what he was.

DONIN: Yes.

BARR: He came and joined us in our evening poker game in the pool.

DONIN: [Laughs] He played in the pool?

BARR: Well, they'd boarded it all over. The pool was underneath the boards.

DONIN: Amazing. [Laughs] Good use of space. So what became of him during the war?

BARR: I don't know. He just went on his merry way. He wasn't in our group. So I have no idea.

DONIN: Right. That's great. Small world.

BARR: We would go hunting after that.

DONIN: Oh, nice.

BARR: He was also a fraternity brother.

DONIN: So he came back around the same time you did?

BARR: Roughly, yes.

DONIN: And so you guys were together in the fraternity. Mm-hmm. Do you stay in touch with a lot of your fraternity brothers? Did you after you graduated?

BARR: One, yes. No, I did not— He was the class behind me, Hamilton Chase.

DONIN: What's his name?

BARR: Hamilton Chase.

DONIN: Hamilton Chase.

BARR: He put the fraternity back together again after—

DONIN: After the war?

BARR: No, after the war of the fraternities, where they destroyed them all.

DONIN: Oh, dear.

BARR: That period in the eighties or whenever it was, seventies. They just tore the places apart.

DONIN: Physically they tore them apart?

BARR: Yes. Destroyed the furniture. There was no more furniture in the fraternity houses.

DONIN: The students did, you mean?

BARR: Yes.

DONIN: Oh, that was the sixties, wasn't it?

BARR: I don't know when it was.

DONIN: Yes.

BARR: It wasn't when I was there.

DONIN: No, for sure. For sure.

BARR: Yes, we had a nice fraternity. I mean the furniture was nice.

DONIN: Some of those places are pretty sad-looking now.

BARR: Oh, they're junk heaps. [Laughs]

DONIN: Yes, terrible.

BARR: And now they're talking about rebuilding them.

DONIN: Mmm. It'll cost a lot of money.

BARR: Oh, yes. They want a million or two million dollars.

DONIN: Crazy.

BARR: I don't know how they're going to get it.

DONIN: No, I don't either. I don't either. So what else have I not asked you about your time at Dartmouth during the forties? Let's see here. I think we've sort of covered it. Any other notes there that would stir up some more anecdotes? Have you got any more notes?

BARR: No. I was mostly going over chronologically what I did. I think they're notes that you—

DONIN: We've covered?

BARR: Yes.

DONIN: Oh, good.

BARR: Pretty much.

**[End of Interview]**