THE WHEEL



Wheelock College Historic Alumni Newsletter

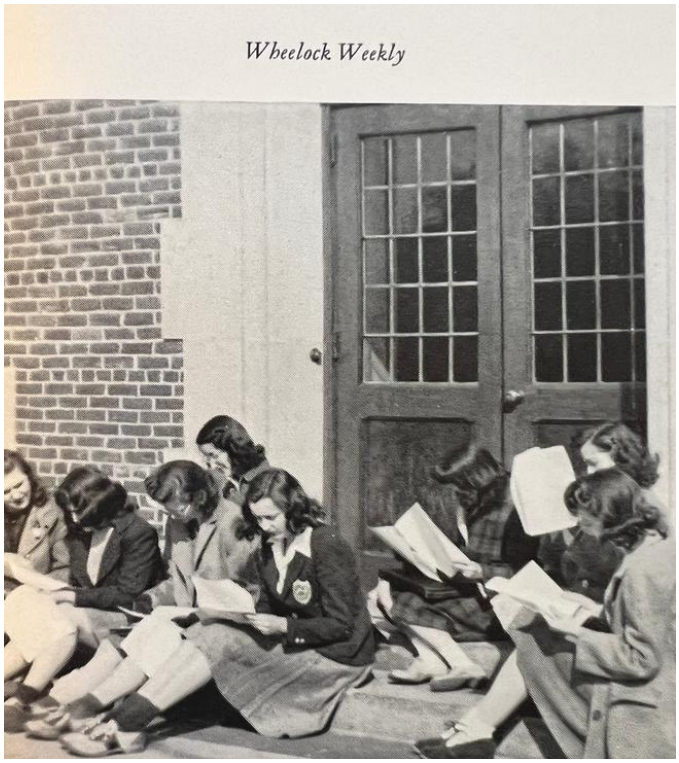
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ISSUE #1



THE HISTORIC WHEEL

WHEELOCK COLLEGE HISTORIC ALUMNI NEWSLETTER

Historic Wheelock College Alumni! Welcome back to the Wheel!

Wheelock College Alumni Newsletter
Issue One - Reconnecting Our Legacy.
Welcome back, Wheelock College Alumni.
After eight years of lost communication, my name is Christopher King, Class of 2003.
Two years ago, I made a promise to Miss Lucy Wheelock-to search for our archives, reconnect our alumni, and seek answers about the legacy we share.
This mission has not been easy. It has been long, challenging, and at times confusing.
Yet it has been carried forward with love, dedication, and deep respect for Wheelock College and the community it shaped. Much of this work has been done quietly, without recognition, guided only by commitment to truth, history, and connection.
This first issue marks a beginning. A return. A space to gather stories, preserve memories, and rebuild the bonds that once defined Wheelock-not just as a college, but as a family.
Thank you for being here. The journey continues.



'The merger has created a profound sense of loss for our historic alumni community. On all sides, many emotions remain unresolved. Alumni of the historic Boston University School of Education, alumni of historic Wheelock College, and our social workers whose professional roots feel displaced all carry pieces of this story.
In the middle of this history are the past eight years of BU Wheelock alumni—many of whom were never fully introduced to the legacy that came before them, and who may not realize that two deeply rooted alumni communities exist beyond their own experience.
This newsletter exists to acknowledge all of these voices. To name what was lost, honor what was built, and begin the work of understanding one another—not as competing histories, but as a shared educational legacy still seeking connection.'

Christopher King '03

In this newsletter you can expect:

- The Library and Froebel
- Wheelock Alumni Highlights
- Legacy Stories
- Reunion Reviews
- Opinion Pieces
- and MORE!



INDEPENDENT PUBLISHER AND CREATOR:
2003 ALUMNI:
CHRISTOPHER KING

IN OPENING.....

This newsletter began as a 10-page update and has now turned into a 40+ page thesis in my effort to share the basic information that I — and many others — feel the alumni community deserves to know and be aware of after the past four years. What started as a simple update gradually expanded as more information, memories, stories, archives, and conversations continued to surface. In many ways, this newsletter became a living record of everything that so many alumni have shared, experienced, questioned, preserved, and hoped would not be forgotten.

With that, this newsletter has taken me over a year to fully finish. At times it felt too long, then too short, and eventually I realized it was simply time to put it out into the world. Please understand that this is not the work of a publishing company, professional newsroom, or institutional office. It is imperfect, personal, and assembled piece by piece by me at my computer — often after every Wheelock-related event, phone call, meeting, visit, article, memory, discovery, or piece of news that crossed my path.

Many of us deeply miss the old Wheelock magazine and the feeling that our shared history, campus life, photographs, alumni milestones, traditions, and stories were being preserved in a dedicated and visible way. If you read publications connected to Boston University Wheelock College today, you may notice that historic updates, memories, and photographs from our original Wheelock College community and campus are often absent. In many ways, it can sometimes feel as though "everyone is Wheelock now" except the alumni who lived and built that original history together.

That feeling is part of why this project became so important to me.

Working with alumni has been one of the most rewarding and unexpectedly meaningful experiences of my connection to Wheelock. One of the greatest gifts has been the opportunity to meet people I likely never would have crossed paths with otherwise. As students, we often stay within our own graduating classes and immediate circles. Through alumni engagement, however, I've had the privilege of hearing stories and sharing conversations with graduates from the 1950s all the way through today's newest alumni.

Listening to those experiences has deepened my appreciation for the history, culture, and spirit that so many people carried with them from Wheelock into their lives and careers. Despite differences in generations, backgrounds, and life experiences, there is still a familiar thread that connects us all — a shared understanding of what Wheelock meant to us.

At the same time, this work has also brought challenges. One of the most difficult aspects has been navigating generational differences in communication styles and tone. In written communication especially, people who do not know me personally may sometimes interpret my personality or intentions differently than those who spent four years alongside me at Wheelock and know exactly how I speak, joke, and express myself. That middle ground can be difficult to maintain, particularly when my name or role becomes visible in group moderation, messaging, or broader alumni communications.

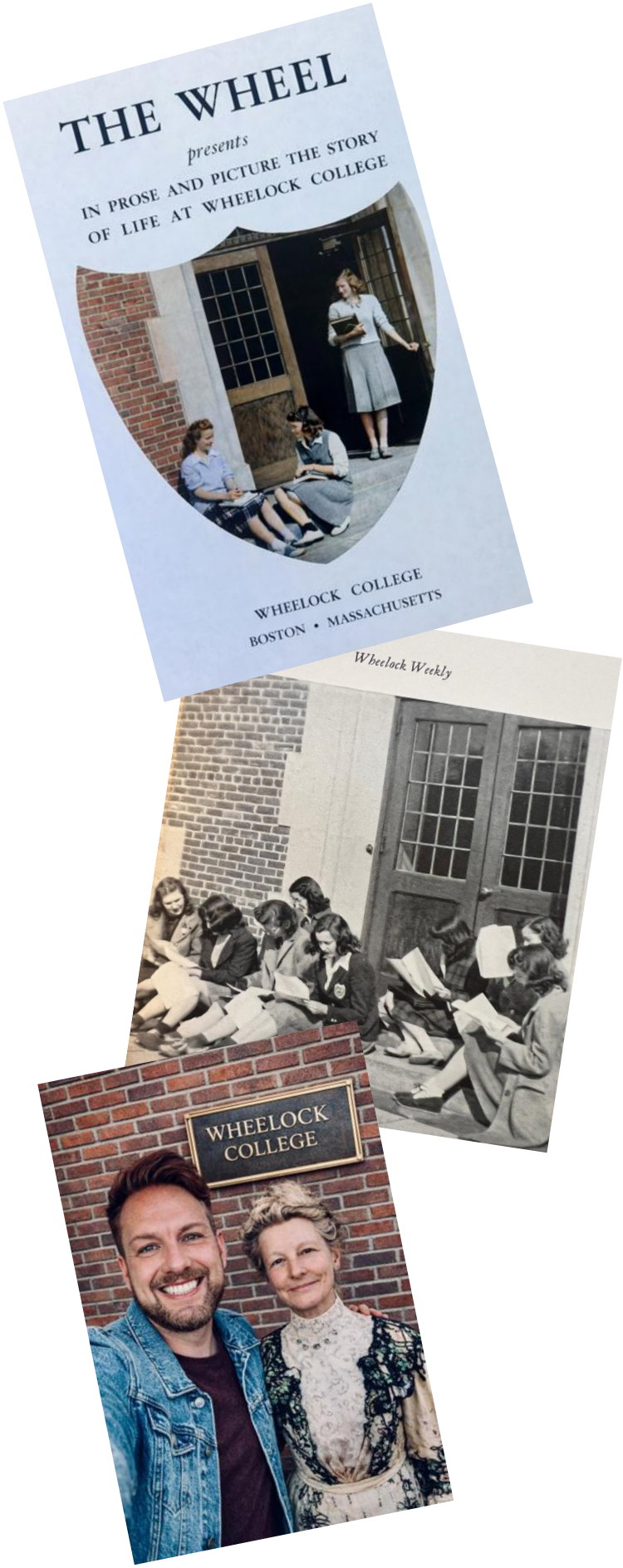
There is a unique vulnerability that comes with having your name in the foreground while also trying to represent a larger community thoughtfully and fairly. Like many alumni volunteers and leaders, I've learned that communication is not only about what is said, but how it is received by audiences with very different perspectives and expectations.

Another meaningful part of this journey has been the conversations surrounding alumni recognition and the alumni awards connected to Boston University Wheelock College. I am deeply thankful to the many hundreds of alumni and community members who have nominated me or expressed support for the work I have done over the years. Knowing that people took the time to recognize my efforts has meant more to me than any plaque or formal title ever could.

At the same time, I understand that some of the work I have taken on has involved speaking openly about difficult issues, correcting misunderstandings, preserving alumni history, and addressing challenges that have existed over the past eight years. Realistically, those kinds of efforts are not always the type of work institutions formally celebrate. While recognition would certainly feel rewarding, I have come to realize that my greatest reward is knowing that I stayed true to what I believed was right for my college, its alumni, and the legacy of Lucy Wheelock.

Much of this work has also been entirely voluntary and unpaid. Over the years, I have helped reconnect alumni with classmates and friends they had lost touch with, guided alumni through cross-university transcript questions and processes, and gathered and preserved archives and historical materials that many people wanted saved and recognized rather than forgotten. It has truly been my honor to help the people I have helped and reunite the people I have been fortunate enough to reconnect.

Through this experience, I have also realized that keeping the Wheelock alumni network strong requires all of us working together. For the last four years, much of this communication has reached a Facebook audience of alumni, many of whom no longer regularly check the platform, while younger classes have naturally shifted more toward Instagram and other forms of communication. Because of that, continuing to grow and preserve this community now depends on grassroots alumni connections — alumni reaching out to alumni, classmates reconnecting with classmates, and people sharing information across generations.



Christopher '03

Who is this guy ?



Reclaiming a Legacy: Christopher King and the Fight for Wheelock's Story.

Born and raised on Massachusetts' North Shore, Christopher King's path toward Wheelock College began long before he ever stepped onto campus. A 1998 graduate of Essex Agricultural and Technical High School, Christopher knew early on that he wanted to become a school teacher.

During a meeting with his guidance counselor senior year, he was asked the defining question: "What do you want to do for college?"

His answer was simple — "I want to be a school teacher."

Without hesitation, she handed him the now-infamous teal folder from Wheelock College and said, "This is where you want to go."

She told him about the college's reputation in education, its mission, and its strong classroom preparation. What she did not mention was the gender ratio — approximately 900 women to just 22 men — something Christopher would only fully realize on move-in day.

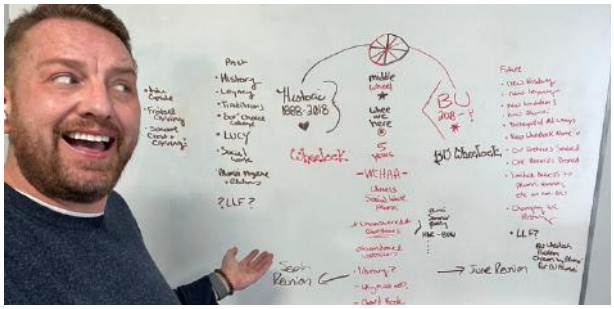
1999–2003: A Defining Experience.

From 1999 to 2003, Christopher's time at Wheelock was immersive and transformative. As an Elementary Education major, he quickly became involved in student life and leadership. He served as President of Riverway House for two consecutive years, fostering connection, pride, and advocacy within campus housing.

Wheelock was more than lectures and lesson plans. It was a community built on early childhood education, social justice, and service — values that would shape Christopher's life long after graduation.

After earning his degree in 2003, he began teaching art, channeling creativity into the classroom. But his journey soon expanded beyond traditional education.





"Your degree is a tangible symbol of your commitment to making a difference in the lives of as many children as possible. Your work will enlarge your education and our understanding of the meaning of Wheelock's mission. I urge you to keep it alive in your hearts, in your work and in the world."

— President Marjorie Bakken



From Classroom to Cultural Icon

Reinventing himself as Queen Dilly Dally, a child-directed and themed drag persona rooted in imagination, storytelling, and positive youth engagement, Christopher moved to San Francisco. For 12 years, he built a vibrant career in performance and community leadership.

Hosting a weekly show and participating in Drag Queen Storytime events, Queen Dilly Dally created inclusive, affirming spaces for families and children. The persona blended theatrical flair with educational themes — reinforcing literacy, confidence, and self-expression.

Her impact extended beyond performance venues; Queen Dilly Dally became a recognized pillar of the San Francisco community and was ceremonially honored by the State of California for civic and cultural contributions. When the pandemic reshaped communities nationwide, Christopher returned home to Massachusetts. What awaited him was not simply reintegration — but an institutional mystery.

The Merger That Changed Everything.

In 2023, approaching what should have been his 20-year reunion, Christopher reached out to Boston University seeking clarity. What began as a simple reunion inquiry uncovered something much larger — confusion, fragmented communication, and unresolved details from the 2018 merger.

Over the past two years, he has committed himself to uncovering answers and rebuilding connections.

Rebuilding What Was Lost.

Since 2023, Christopher King (Class of 2003) has:

- Located and preserved numerous Wheelock yearbooks
- Fully funded and maintained an alumni website — at $350 per year — to sustain alumni communications
- Begun organizing a yearly alumni newsletter
- Developed plans for alumni awards
- Administered a Facebook group connecting 2,500 alumni
- Built an Instagram presence to reach lost graduates
- Continued investigating the location and status of historic archives
- Sought clarity regarding the remaining time capsule

This effort has been entirely volunteer-driven. No institutional funding. No administrative staff. Just determination to ensure Wheelock's history is preserved with integrity.

Why This Matters.

Founded in 1888, Wheelock College shaped generations of educators, counselors, and advocates. When institutions merge, histories can fragment. Alumni can lose connection. Traditions can fade without intentional stewardship. Christopher believes legacy requires action.





"not bad for 6'3, 220 and size 15 heels!"



The Work Ahead .

The mission is far from complete: • Confirming the full status of archives and library materials • Formalizing alumni governance • Strengthening collaboration with Boston University • Reestablishing a structured alumni association • Planning reunions and recognition ceremonies • Preserving both physical and digital historical materials A Call to Action Wheelock alumni — this is your story. What began as a reunion inquiry has become a movement to reclaim history, restore alumni connection, and rebuild institutional memory. But one person cannot carry this forward alone. An alumni committee must be formed. Leaders must step forward. Archivists, organizers, writers, historians, event planners — all are needed. The teal folder once handed to a North Shore high school senior opened the door to a lifelong journey in education and community. Now, more than two decades later, Christopher King is asking fellow alumni to help protect what that folder promised — legacy, purpose, and connection for generations to come.

Join forces with your fellow Wheelock College Historic Alumni-
WheelockCollegeHistoricAlumni@gmail.com

Our First Home Away From Home

There are places we visit.
There are places we pass through.
And then there are places that raise us.

_____.

For many of us, Wheelock College was not simply the institution where we earned a degree. It was our first home away from home — the place where we learned who we were becoming.

We arrived with suitcases and uncertainty. We left with purpose.

The campus was never the largest, nor the loudest. It did not compete on spectacle. What it offered instead was something quieter and far more enduring: belonging. Professors who knew our names. Classrooms where conversations mattered. Hallways that felt intimate rather than anonymous. It was a place that asked not only what we wanted to do, but who we wanted to serve.

In those years, the buildings held more than lectures. They held late-night study sessions and early-morning doubts. They held friendships forged in shared conviction. They held the first sparks of careers rooted in compassion — education, social work, advocacy, community leadership.

When a college becomes your first home away from home, it shapes you in ways that are not always visible at graduation. It becomes the soil in which your adult self first takes root.

That is why returning can feel so complicated.

When an institution merges — as Wheelock did into Boston University — the legal language speaks of assets, transitions, continuity. But alumni feel something less administrative and more intimate. We feel the shift in atmosphere. The renaming. The subtle sense that the space we once inhabited now belongs to a different rhythm.

It is a peculiar experience to stand in a place that once felt entirely yours and sense that you are now a visitor.

There can be pride in knowing the legacy continues in new forms. There can also be grief for what was distinct and self-contained. These emotions are not contradictions. They coexist. We can honor growth while still mourning change.

Grief, in this context, is not about resisting the future. It is about acknowledging the depth of attachment. You do not mourn what did not matter. The ache proves the impact.

Wheelock taught many of us to center children, families, and communities. It taught us that education is an act of hope. It taught us that institutions are strongest when they remain close to their mission and close to one another. That spirit does not dissolve because governance shifts. It lives in classrooms across the country where alumni teach with patience. It lives in nonprofits where graduates advocate for equity. It lives in living rooms where former classmates still gather and speak the same language of care.

A home is not defined solely by its ownership. It is defined by the lives formed within it.

Our first home away from home gave us more than credentials. It gave us courage. It gave us conviction. It gave us one another.

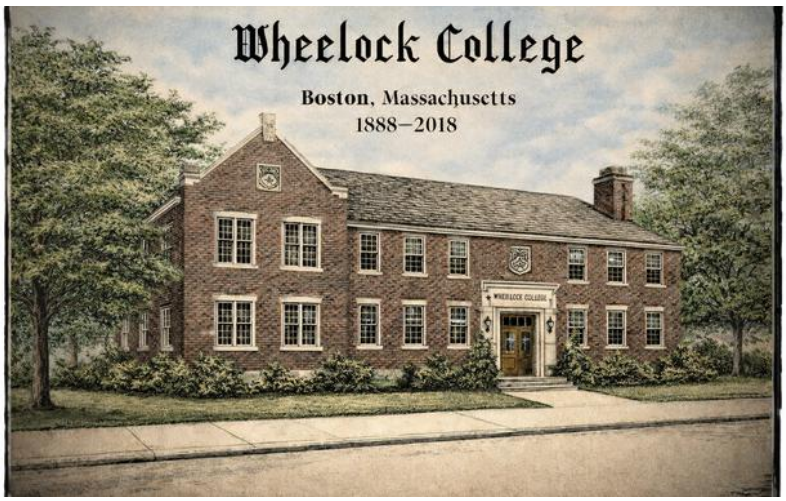
Brick can change hands. Charters can merge. Names can be revised.

But the version of ourselves that grew there — the friendships, the mentors, the sense of calling — remains untouched.

When we gather now, whether on campus paths or online, we are not simply reminiscing. We are reaffirming that the heart of Wheelock was never confined to its boundaries. It was carried outward in every graduate who left its gates.

Perhaps that is the truest measure of a home: not whether it stays the same, but whether it stays with you.

And Wheelock, our first home away from home, always will.



Through The Wheelock Tunnel:

WCHA Opinions and Observations.

The Wheelock College and Boston University merger was not a merger in any meaningful or ethical sense of the word. A merger implies mutual respect, shared governance, preservation of legacy, and continuity of mission. What occurred instead was the acquisition of property, assets, and a respected name. Freedom of speech allows us to state our opinions, ask difficult questions, and speak truths that have been ignored or obscured. We have the right—and arguably the responsibility—to challenge narratives that misled students, alumni, faculty, and the broader community. We have the right to name what we experienced and to reject language that minimizes that experience. Calling this process a "merger" does not make it one. From the perspective of those who lived, studied, taught, and worked at Wheelock College, this was not a shared future built together. It was the loss of an institution, the erasure of a community, and the taking of a legacy without its consent. To many of us, that is not a merger. While it was publicly presented as a partnership that would preserve Wheelock's historic mission in education and social justice, the outcomes since 2018 strongly suggest otherwise.



BU initially proposed that the Wheelock campus would serve as the home of its School of Education, signaling continuity and purpose for the Historic Wheelock Campus. However, despite this promise, the campus sat largely unused for nearly two years, and then the COVID-19 pandemic began. (This timeline undermines later claims that the pandemic was the primary reason for the campus's lack of use.) Once it was learned that the campus has been sitting unused, questions arose. Where were Wheelock's archives, artifacts, memorials, (alumni) publications and many historic items that had been in the library? Had they been packed up and stored? Were they left on campus neglected, and allowed to deteriorate? (UPDATE: Since initial discovery of the unused campus (in 2023?), it was learned that everything was indeed packed up but their location was unknown- they have since been found as of fall 2025- there are 20 large pallets in storage) We are happy to report that the portrait of Lucy Wheelock was relocated soon after the merger to Commonwealth Avenue BU/Wheelock School of Ed. and a future display cabinet for archived items once they are cataloged by the new BU archivists.





Wheelock College Historic Alumni in front of the sealed tunnel on the WFT side



Legacy Ladies

"On Her Legacy..."

By: Pamela Thumith Crino
1987 BS and 1996 MS

WHAT IS A LEGACY?

Wheelock, Wheelockian, Wheelockers, Wheelies....and Legacies!
The story of a Legacy Alumnae.
What is a Legacy? A Legacy is a person who attends the same college in the footsteps of a Parent or Grandparent.

"Wheelock! However will you do it?!" Those were the first words out of my grandmother's mouth when I told her that I would be attending Wheelock College, her beloved Alma Mater. She was the class of 1925, 100 years ago!

I had heard Grammy talk fondly of Wheelock for years, and my guidance counselor advised me that it was the best college to prepare you for teaching. But when it came time for me to apply to colleges in 1983, Wheelock was not on the table.

It was simply too expensive.

My parents never asked me what I wanted to be. They did not ask me if I wanted to go to college. Let's just say that they had a "hands off" parenting style. But when someone steps back, it gives an opportunity for someone else to step up. I will forever be grateful to my brother Warren who had that conversation with me. When I listed the two state schools that I had applied to, he asked me where I really wanted to go. "Wheelock," I said, "I would love to go to Wheelock... but I know we can't afford it," I mumbled as I hung my head. Warren knew that our parents were not in a position to contribute to college costs. I would have to count on federal and state aid and what I could earn working after school and in the summer.

Without explanation, he told me to apply to Wheelock. I protested that I would lose the application fee. I worked hard for my money, and I wasn't accustomed to just throwing it away. He wouldn't take no for an answer. He kept telling me to just apply. "You never know what can happen." I was confused and a little reluctant, but I sent in the application.

When I received the financial aid offer from Wheelock in the mail, I couldn't believe it. I had been awarded the usual state and federal assistance, but besides an expected personal contribution of $1000, Wheelock had offered me enough to cover the rest of the cost for me to attend for my freshman year! I don't think I'd ever been so happy in my entire life; my dream was coming true! And Wheelock continued to offer me the entirety of that package every year for the next four years!

My grandmother was SO happy to hear the good news. I hadn't told her that I was applying to Wheelock. I wanted to gain acceptance on my own. She was so excited! In fact, during the time that I attended Wheelock, my cousins would complain that all she talked about was me going to Wheelock!

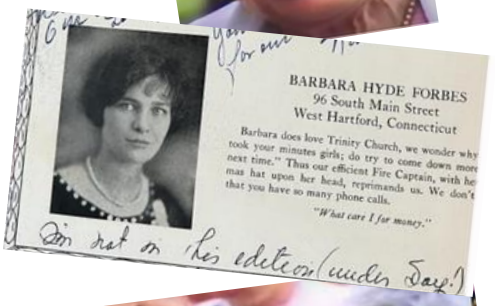
As the time for graduation grew near, Grammy asked me if I was ordering a class ring. "No," I told her, a little embarrassed, "I can't afford it." She didn't say anything else, and I soon forgot about the conversation with all that was going on to get ready for graduation and thinking about next steps in my life.

The day for graduation came, and Grammy was in attendance with gnarled hands grasping her walker and a big proud smile on her face. I did not expect the gift that she gave me later in the quiet aftermath; her own class ring from when she had graduated Wheelock College in 1925. I don't think any gift could have meant more, and even though Grammy has long since passed, I wear it every day.

I am her Wheelock Legacy.

(On a side note: Barbara was a 1924/1925 editor of "The Wheel" - also neat to think, she lived at 100 Riverway in the same building as, Lucy, seeing/speaking to her as needed)













Pamela '87

THE GREAT 1888 debate

Did you ever notice if your degree or any of your college flair says the date
1888 or 1889?
If you're a graduate of Wheelock College, you may have spotted one of these two dates stamped proudly on a diploma, printed on a banner, or etched into a commemorative pin. At first glance, it might seem like a simple discrepancy — perhaps even a printing error. But the story behind those two years reveals a meaningful chapter in the college's history.

A Beginning in 1888

Wheelock College officially opened its doors in September 1888. That year marks the institution's founding — the moment when its mission to prepare educators and child development professionals first took shape. Classrooms filled, faculty gathered, and the groundwork for generations of graduates was laid.
From a historical standpoint, 1888 is the birth year of the institution. It represents the vision, the launch, and the commitment to education that defined Wheelock from the start.

The First Graduating Class: 1889

However, while the college began in 1888, its first graduating class completed their studies in May 1889. That milestone made 1889 equally significant. It wasn't just the year after opening — it was the year Wheelock celebrated its first graduates, the first tangible proof of its educational mission fulfilled.
For many years, both dates carried symbolic weight:

- 1888 — the founding year
- 1889 — the first graduating class

Depending on the context, either could be used to represent the college's heritage.


At Wheelock School, January 30, 1939

A PROCLAMATION

By The Senior Class

Assembled at 100 The Riverway, Boston, Mass.

To all who shall see these presents, Greeting:

Fiftieth Anniversary Year of the Wheelock School;

The Centennial Confusion — or Celebration?

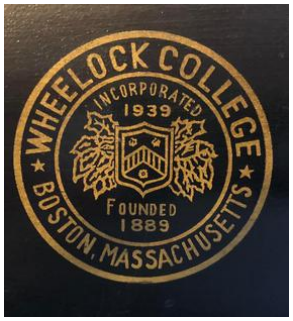
Fast forward one hundred years. Because the college opened in September 1888 and the first class graduated in May 1889, the Centennial celebration naturally stretched across 1988 and 1989. Both years were part of the 100-year milestone, following the same calendar pattern as the original founding and first graduation.
As a result, during that period you might have seen materials referencing 1888 in 1988 and 1889 in 1989. Both were technically correct, reflecting different but equally important benchmarks in the institution's early timeline.

A Shift Around 2005

Sometime around 2005, Wheelock began consistently emphasizing 1888 as its official founding year in branding and materials. While 1889 remained historically significant, 1888 more clearly marked the institution's origin. Over time, it became the primary date displayed on merchandise, publications, and formal insignia.
This shift wasn't about rewriting history — it was about clarity. When institutions choose a founding date, they typically select the year they first opened their doors rather than the year of their first graduating class.

More Than Just a Date

For alumni, those small numbers — 1888 or 1889 — can spark curiosity and even nostalgia. They are reminders that institutions are living histories, shaped not only by official milestones but also by traditions, transitions, and evolving identity.
So the next time you glance at your degree or college memorabilia and notice 1888 or 1889, you'll know: it's not a mistake. It's a reflection of a story that began in September 1888 and celebrated its first graduates in May 1889 — a legacy that carried forward for generations.
And sometimes, history doesn't fit neatly into just one year.





The Crest Controversy: When Alumni Can't Use Their Own History

One of the most surprising developments to emerge from the post-merger era has involved something many Wheelock alumni never imagined would become controversial: the Wheelock College crest.

For generations, the crest represented the institution we attended, the values we learned, and the community we became a part of. It appeared on diplomas, publications, merchandise, buildings, and memorabilia. It was not simply a logo. It was a symbol of identity.

Yet today, Wheelock alumni have been informed that the historic Wheelock College crest is now trademarked under Boston University and may not be reproduced on reunion shirts, tote bags, mugs, promotional items, or other merchandise without authorization.

The irony has not been lost on alumni.

After all, we are Wheelock alumni.

We attended Wheelock College.

Many of us graduated from Wheelock College.

The school still bears the Wheelock name as part of Boston University's Wheelock College of Education & Human Development.

So how can the very people who lived the Wheelock experience be told they cannot place the historic crest on a reunion shirt or commemorative tote bag?

The answer, legally speaking, is simple: ownership of the institution transferred to Boston University, and with it came ownership of trademarks and intellectual property.

The answer emotionally, however, is far more complicated.

To many alumni, the crest belongs not just to an institution but to a community. It represents friendships, memories, traditions, professors, classrooms, commencement ceremonies, and a shared educational experience stretching back more than a century.

The situation became especially frustrating because the crest itself is rooted in the Wheelock family heritage and carries symbolism that extends beyond a simple corporate logo. To many graduates, it is part of the historical identity of Wheelock College itself.

The restrictions eventually sparked a quiet alumni protest online.

=

In one notable show of solidarity, more than 200 alumni changed their Facebook profile pictures to the historic Wheelock crest. Others continued displaying the crest on personal memorabilia, sharing photographs of old sweatshirts, tote bags, pins, banners, and keepsakes that proudly carried the symbol. For many, it became less about merchandise and more about a larger question:

Who owns history?

Can a university legally own a trademark? Absolutely.

Can it stop commercial reproduction of that trademark? Certainly.

But should alumni be discouraged from celebrating and displaying a symbol tied to their own educational heritage?

That question continues to resonate throughout the Wheelock community.

The contrast becomes even more noticeable when looking at traditions elsewhere within Boston University. While BU's official seal and crest remain important institutional symbols, the university's public identity often centers around Rhett the Terrier and the scarlet-and-white Terrier branding seen throughout athletics and student life.



Dear Chris and Debbie,

It's been brought to my attention that the Wheelock College seal is being used by you on social media in both posts online and as a profile picture. As I mentioned in my last email, we do not allow use of the Wheelock seal on swag, and this also extends to its use in social media and on printed materials. As I mentioned in my previous email, the BU Marketing Communications team has offered to work on a brand-approved graphic for you to use instead.

Please remove uses of the Wheelock college seal where you are currently using it and refrain from using the Wheelock College seal in any printed or online moving forward.

Thanks for your attention to this matter,
Danielle

Danielle T. Reddy
Assistant Vice President, Alumni Engagement Programs
she/her/hers

Boston University Development & Alumni Relations
Dahod Family Alumni Center
225 Bay State Road
Boston, MA 02215



WHEELOCK COLLEGE
1888 W 2018
HISTORIC ALUMNI

WHEELOCK COLLEGE
INCORPORATED 1939
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS

Following its 2018 merger with Boston University, the original Wheelock College crest and branding were replaced by the BU Wheelock College of Education & Human Development brand. The current official branding uses the Boston University "plate" (logo), which features the BU shield, in red, white, and black, alongside the text "Boston University Wheelock College of Education & Human Development".

- **Original Seal/Crest:** Historically, the Wheelock College seal was used, which is now considered a legacy image.
- **Current Branding:** BU Wheelock branding, including the university plate or an icon, must be used for all official, marketing, and communication purposes.
- **Colors:** The official, updated, brand colors are BU Red (PMS 186), black, and white.

For official, current, and legacy,,, brand assets, one can visit the Boston University brand guidelines website.

At the same time, graduating BU students participate in one of the university's most beloved traditions: posing on or near the Boston University seal embedded along Commonwealth Avenue. The seal itself is treated as a point of pride, connection, and institutional identity.

For many Wheelock alumni, the desire to display their historic crest comes from the same place.

It is not about challenging ownership.

It is not about creating counterfeit products.

It is about honoring a history that existed long before the merger and ensuring that history remains visible.

Over the years, alumni have even suggested alternative designs, commemorative heritage emblems, and modified versions of the historic crest that might satisfy trademark concerns while still preserving Wheelock's identity. To date, those efforts have not resulted in an officially approved solution.

As a result, the crest remains a symbol of a broader conversation that continues within the Wheelock community.

What does a merger mean?

Does preserving a name also require preserving traditions?

Can a historic identity survive if its symbols become increasingly difficult for alumni to use?

These questions have no easy answers.

What is clear, however, is that the Wheelock crest still matters.

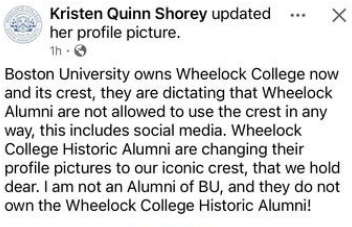
Years after the merger, it continues to inspire loyalty, pride, discussion, and debate. Perhaps that alone demonstrates the enduring power of the institution it once represented.

Because while ownership may change, history remains.

And for thousands of alumni, the crest will always represent a place they proudly called Wheelock College.





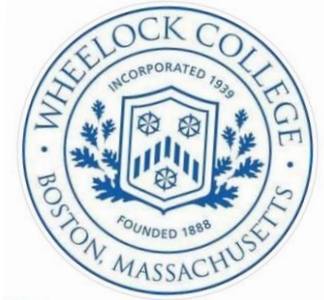














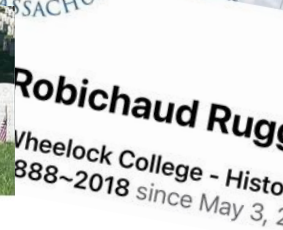






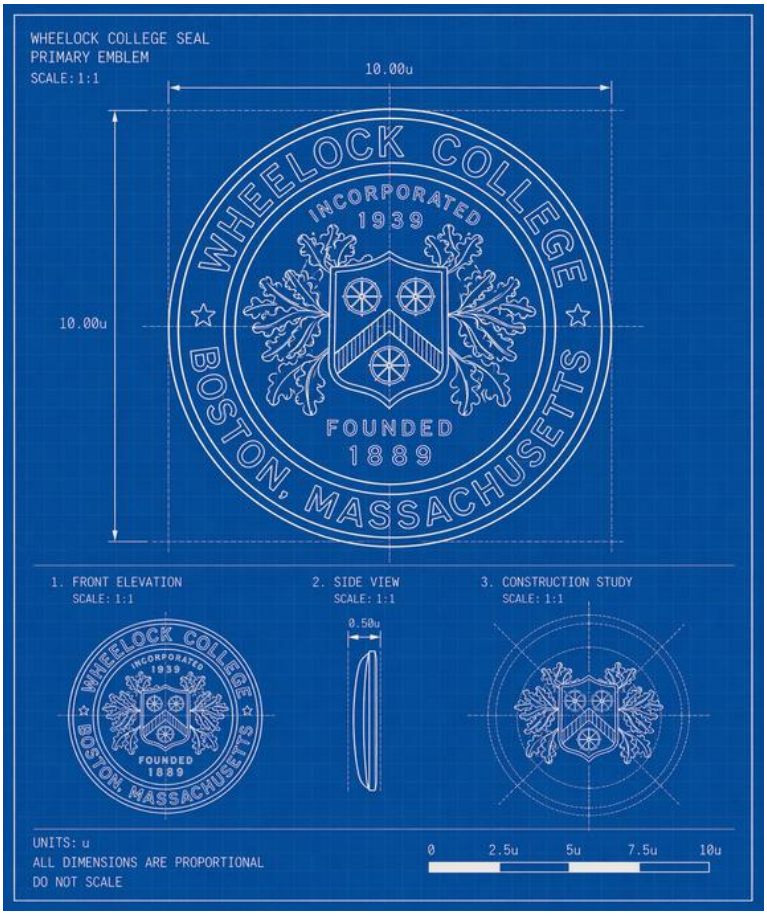


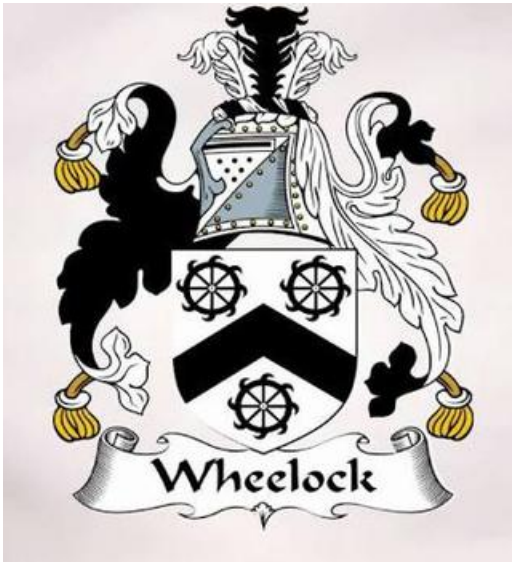




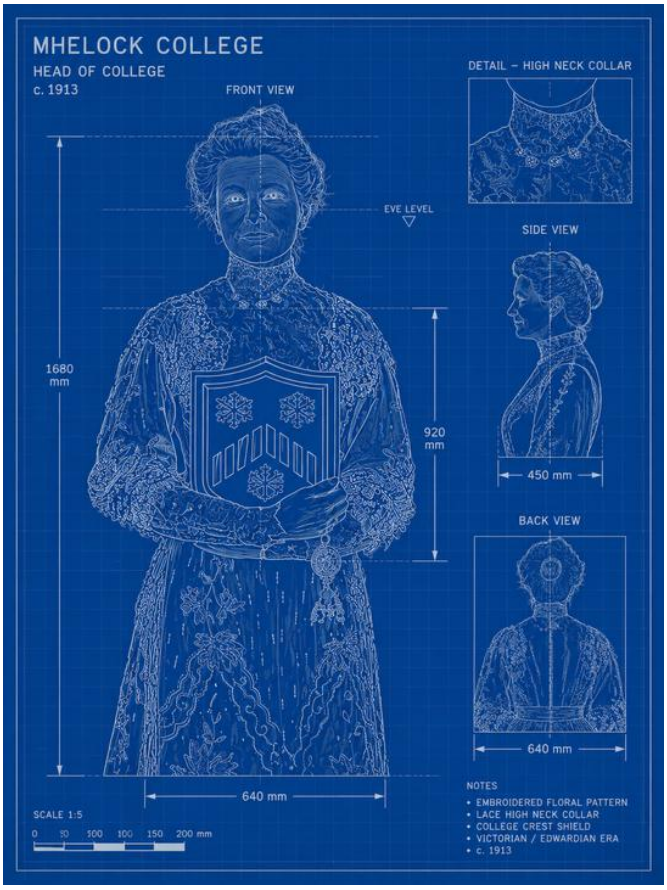


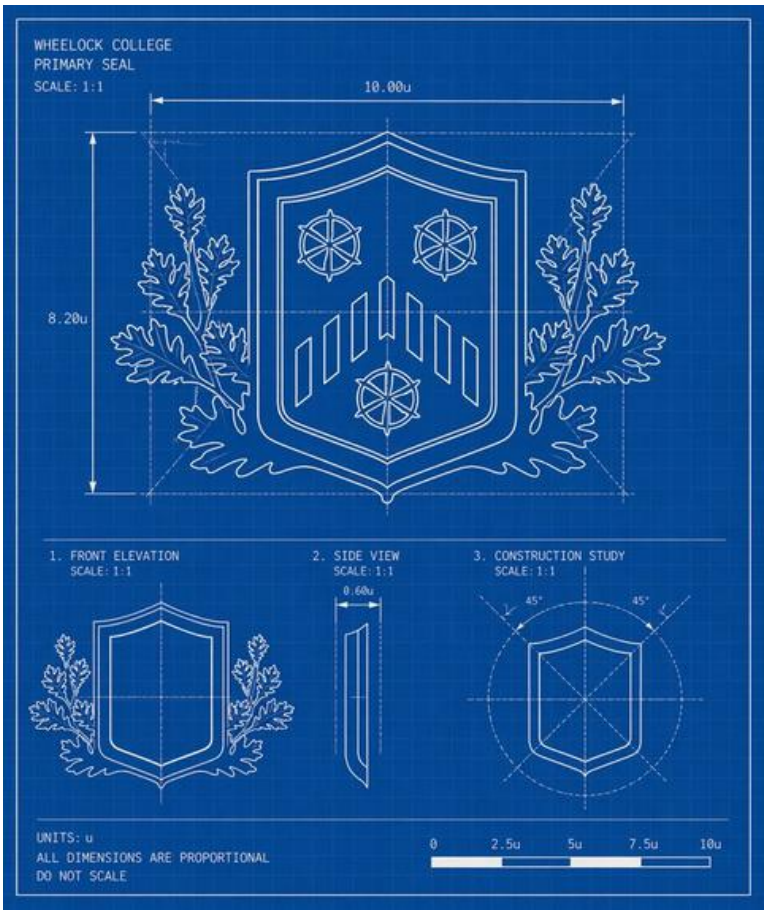


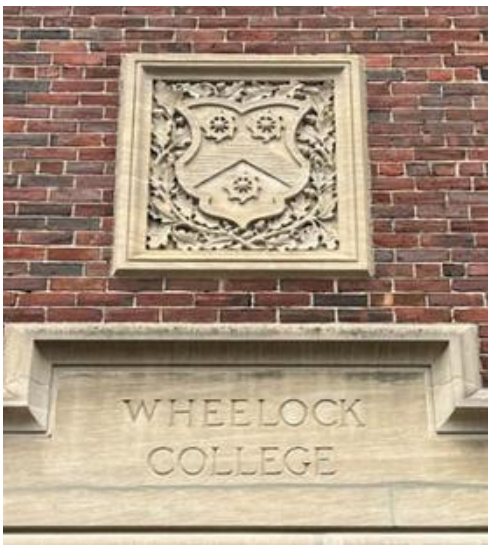




And now you understand the inspiration
for the Newsletter Cover Design,
we hold our family alumn crest close.







A Promise Kept: Why One Alumnus Won't Let Wheelock Be Forgotten.



By Christopher King

There is a question that comes up often—sometimes asked sincerely, sometimes with a hint of teasing skepticism.

"Why are you so obsessed with Wheelock College?"

The assumption behind the question is simple: that the countless hours spent researching, organizing, restoring, and sharing the history of Wheelock must come from some kind of fixation. That perhaps the work is driven by nostalgia or an inability to move on.

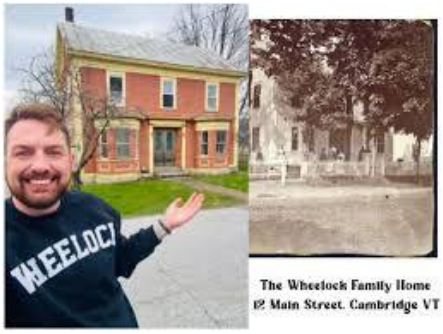
But the truth is something different entirely.

This story isn't about obsession.

It's about a promise.

A Pilgrimage

The moment that set everything in motion did not happen in Boston, inside a library, or in a classroom archive. It happened hundreds of miles away, in the quiet landscape of Vermont.



The Wheelock Family Home
82 Main Street, Cambridge VT

There lies the homestead and grave of Lucy Wheelock, the educator and visionary who founded Wheelock College in 1888.

For many alumni, Lucy Wheelock's name appears on plaques, buildings, and historical summaries. But standing at her gravesite is something different entirely. It is a reminder that institutions begin with people—people who believe deeply enough in an idea to devote their lives to it.



On that visit to Vermont, a small act of restoration took place. A cement vase bearing the Wheelock crest was placed at the gravesite. On the back was a brief history of the college she founded. The stone itself was cleaned, the area cared for, the moment treated not simply as a visit but as a kind of pilgrimage.

Before leaving, a hand rested on the stone.

And a promise was made.

The promise was simple: that the story of Wheelock—its founder, its mission, its legacy—would be properly organized, preserved, and restored.

At the time, the weight of that promise was not fully understood.

But it would become the reason the work never stopped.

The Work No One Asked For

Since that day, the hours have added up quietly. Researching archives. Organizing alumni materials. Restoring photographs. Collecting yearbooks. Documenting names, stories, and pieces of institutional memory that might otherwise disappear.

It is work that rarely has a clear endpoint.

And it is work done without financial gain.

Which leads to another question that often follows:

"What do you want to get out of it?"

The question is understandable. In a world where effort is often measured by profit, time devoted without compensation can seem puzzling.

But the answer is surprisingly simple.

The choice to dedicate this work to Wheelock was not random. It was personal.

Because the college represented something real.



I deliver this with love and admiration from all you created and continue to put into this world.

















The values of the school, the purpose behind its founding, and the community it created mattered. For many alumni, Wheelock College was not simply a place where degrees were earned. It was where identities were shaped and careers devoted to education, child development, and service were formed.

When that history becomes fragmented—or feels as if it is being erased—it can feel strangely personal.

Like watching someone tear pages out of a book that helped write your own story.

Love, But Not Blind Love

There is another misconception about this work—that it comes from loving everything about the institution without question.

But that isn't the case.

Love for an institution does not mean ignoring its complexities, changes, or even its painful moments. In fact, preserving history often requires confronting them directly.

The work being done is not about romanticizing the past.

It is about making the record clear.

Because institutions evolve. They merge, restructure, and sometimes lose pieces of themselves along the way. What matters is whether the history of those institutions—and the people who built them—remains visible.

That is what the promise was about.

The Power of a Promise

If that hand had never touched the stone in Vermont, the story might have ended long ago.

There have been moments when the work felt overwhelming. When progress was slow. When criticism appeared. When the effort seemed larger than any one person could carry.

Without that moment at the grave, it would have been easy to stop.

But promises have a way of creating endurance.

They turn effort into obligation—not to an institution, but to a principle.

And in this case, the promise was made both to Lucy Wheelock and to oneself.

To ensure that the history she began would not fade into scattered fragments.

Not Obsession—Commitment

So when someone asks again—"Why are you so obsessed with Wheelock?"—the answer remains the same.

It isn't obsession.

It is the fulfillment of a promise.

A promise made in a quiet cemetery in Vermont, at the resting place of the woman who began something remarkable.

A promise that the story of Wheelock College would be organized, preserved, and told clearly.

Not for recognition.

Not for profit.

But because some promises, once made, are meant to be kept.

See more of Lucy's Home and Grave here:

A Conversation We Need to Have:
The Wheelock Library & Its Legacy.



One of the most pressing and unanswered questions since the merger concerns the fate of Wheelock College's historic library contents and special collections.
For generations, Wheelock alumni, faculty, and friends donated books, research materials, children's literature, early education texts, social work archives, and rare classics—many of them given with the understanding that they would remain part of Wheelock's living academic and historical record. These were not merely books on shelves; they were artifacts of a mission, a profession, and a century-long commitment to children, families, and social justice.
Yet today, many alumni are left wondering:

- What happened to Wheelock's historic library collections during and after the merger?
- Were materials transferred, sold, donated, or disposed of?
- Where are the two major alumni-donated classic collections, and are they intact?
- Were donors or alumni communities informed or consulted?
- What records exist documenting these decisions?







Equally concerning are questions about the Froebel Frieze, a deeply symbolic and educational artwork tied to the foundations of early childhood education and Wheelock's identity. As plans move forward to remodel the former library space into future dormitories, alumni are asking:
What will happen to the Froebel Frieze?
Will it be preserved, protected, and publicly accessible?
Does it remain recognized as a historical and cultural artifact of Wheelock College?
These questions are not about blame. They are about stewardship, transparency, and respect for legacy. Libraries hold institutional memory. When their contents disappear without clear explanation, a community loses more than books—it loses continuity.
This newsletter raises these questions not to close doors, but to open conversation. We invite alumni, former faculty, librarians, archivists, and administrators—past and present—who may have information, documentation, or memories to share what they know.
History deserves clarity. Legacy deserves care. And this story deserves to be told fully.

Future of Building

Boston University is moving forward with renovations to its three-tower dorm complex on Commonwealth Avenue, Warren Towers. During this renovation period, the university plans to convert the historic Wheelock College Library into temporary BU dormitories. This conversion would involve gutting the multi-level historic building, raising concerns about the Froebel Frieze.....a historic art piece.

The Froebel Frieze

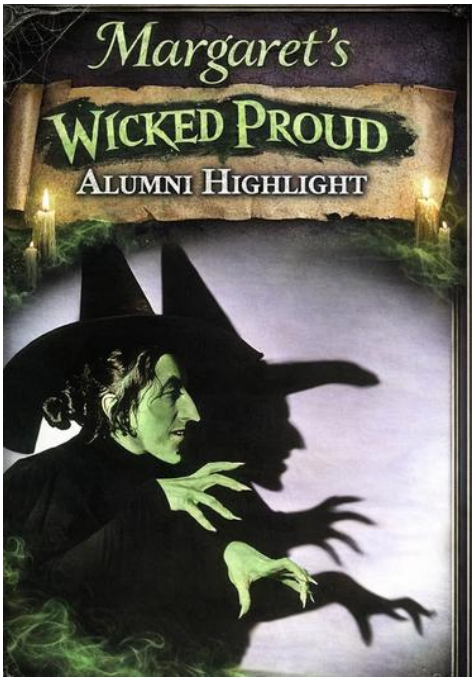






Rare Book Collections

Amongst the library treasures were two major alumni donated book collections that would be worth quite a bit of history and money.
Where are they?



Korie Leigh
2005



Dr. Leigh obtained her BA in child development concentrating in child life and became a certified child life specialist in 2005. Since then, she has gone on to obtain her PhD in Psychology and is associate professor and program chair of the MS in Thanatology program at Marian University. She continues to work clinically as a grief counselor and child life specialist specializing in pediatric palliative and hospice care grief and loss.



Grief is a universal human experience—every person will grieve at some point in their life. You're reading this book because you're grieving right now, and that can be really hard.

Grief often feels isolating and confusing. The people in your life might not know what to say or do, or they may say and do the wrong things. They may treat you differently than before. Or they might be grieving so much themselves that they don't recognize your grief at all.

Maybe you picked up this book because you want some support in your grief. Or maybe you want to hear about what other teens have experienced in their own grieving processes. Whatever the reason, this book is written for you—to help you feel less alone and more connected, to teach you new ways of understanding yourself and your grief, and to help you make sense of the difficult experience you're going through.

Order Your Copy On Amazon!

KorieLeighPHD.com

share your story!
WheelockCollegeHistoricAlumni@gmail

What does it feel like to
Visit a place , a college, that was once a home and familiar that has now been sold to another university and is not used as it should be in it's capacity and love, grief? Disappointed? Sad? Failure?

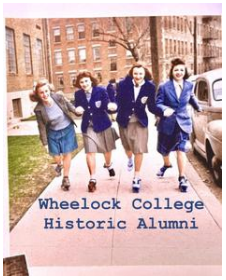
Let's break it down into what we feel:

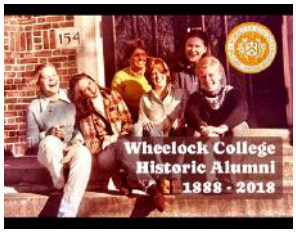
It's visiting a memory that no longer knows your name.
When you walk onto a place that once felt like home — where you knew the creak of the stairs, the smell of the library, the way light hit the quad at 4 p.m. — and it's been absorbed, renamed, repurposed... it can feel disorienting. Like walking into your childhood house and finding the walls painted a different color.
It can feel like grief.
Not dramatic grief. Not headline grief.
But quiet, interior grief.
Because the place wasn't just buildings. It held:
• Your becoming.
• Your first confidence.
• Your friendships.
• Your purpose.
• The version of you that was forming.
When that place changes hands, it can feel like someone edited your origin story.
It can feel like disappointment.
You may look around and think:
This isn't what it was meant to be.
This isn't how it was cared for.
This isn't how we loved it.
And there's a kind of helplessness in that — you can't restore it, can't rewind it, can't protect it the way you once would have.
It can feel like rejection.
Especially if the new institution enforces ownership over symbols, traditions, or spaces that shaped you. It can sting to be told — implicitly or explicitly — that something you thought was yours is now legally someone else's.
That can create a strange tension:
• You belong to the place.
• But the place no longer belongs to you.
It can feel like failure — even when it isn't.
Sometimes alumni internalize institutional change as personal loss.
Did we not love it enough?
Did we not give enough?
Could it have survived?
But institutional mergers are about finances, governance, enrollment, policy — not about the worth of the students who passed through the doors.
You did not fail because a structure changed.
It can also feel like betrayal.
If promises were made about preserving legacy and the lived experience doesn't match the language, that gap can hurt deeply.
And yet...

It can also feel like proof.
Proof that it mattered.
You don't grieve places that didn't shape you.
You don't feel displaced by buildings that were never home.
The ache means it formed you.

There's a specific kind of nostalgia called "ambiguous loss."
It's when something is gone but not gone.
The campus still stands.
The name may still appear in some form.
But the version you knew exists only in memory.
That in-between state can be harder than a clean ending.

If you're asking whether what you feel is normal:
Yes.
Grief.
Disappointment.
Sadness.
Anger.
Dislocation.
Even questioning.
All of it makes sense.





But here's something important:
A college is not just its charter.
It is the people it formed.
If you and hundreds of others still carry its values, still gather, still remember — then the institution lives in a different form.
Brick can be sold.
Logos can be trademarked.
But formation cannot be repossessed.













NEW WHEELOCK WEBSITE

Preserving the Wheelock Legacy.

When Wheelock College closed in 2018 and merged into Boston University, many alumni feared that generations of memories, photographs, traditions, publications, and history could be lost forever. Over the years that followed, social media groups disappeared, websites vanished, and access to historic materials became increasingly difficult.

Recognizing the urgency of preserving Wheelock's story, Christopher King (Class of 2003) began the enormous task of saving and organizing as much of Wheelock's history as possible. Before Facebook groups and online resources could be deleted or lost, thousands of photographs, documents, publications, stories, and alumni memories were preserved and archived.

What began as a simple effort to save history quickly grew into a year-long project to create a permanent online home dedicated to Lucy Wheelock, her schools, Wheelock College, and the generations of students, faculty, staff, and alumni who shaped its legacy. The result is the Wheelock College Historic Alumni website—a growing digital archive and historical resource that continues to expand every day.

The website preserves the history of Lucy Wheelock's early schools, the founding and growth of Wheelock College, campus traditions, historic photographs, publications, alumni stories, and much more. While thousands of items have already been added, there is still a tremendous amount of history waiting to be documented and shared.

Maintaining the website is not free. The domains, hosting, and related services currently cost approximately $275 per year. To date, no funding has been provided by Boston University or any formal alumni organization. Thankfully, generous support from members of the Classes of 1983 and 1988 has covered the costs for the coming year.

However, the future of the website remains uncertain. Without ongoing financial support, the website could eventually disappear. With support from alumni and friends of Wheelock, it can continue to grow and serve as a permanent home for our shared history.

If you would like to help preserve the Wheelock legacy and support the continued maintenance of the website, please contact:

WheelockCollegeHistoricAlumni@gmail.com

As of today, we have not been able to raise dedicated funds to secure the long-term future of the website. Every contribution, no matter the size, helps ensure that the story of Lucy Wheelock, her schools, Wheelock College, and its alumni will remain accessible for future generations.

History survives because someone chooses to preserve it. Together, we can ensure that the Wheelock story continues to be told.

This version reads more like a professional alumni magazine article while clearly explaining the preservation work, costs, and need for support.

Over the past years, the Wheelock College Historic Alumni website has become far more than a collection of archived documents. It has become a beacon of information across the internet for anyone searching for Lucy Wheelock, Wheelock College, its history, traditions, faculty, and alumni. Search engines now regularly direct visitors to the site, making it one of the most comprehensive public resources dedicated to preserving Wheelock's story.

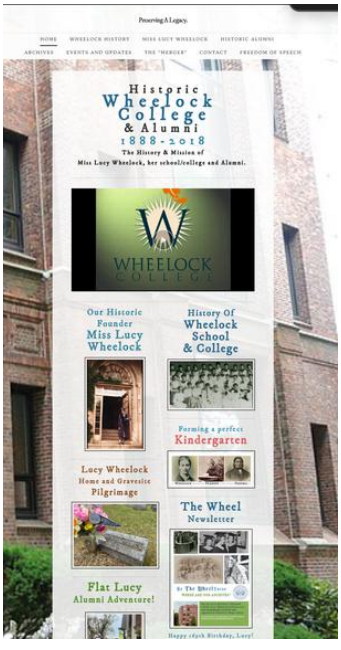
The website has helped reconnect alumni from across generations, answered questions left unresolved after the 2018 merger, and provided a place where former students, faculty, and staff can better understand how Wheelock's history fits into today's Boston University Wheelock College of Education & Human Development. For many alumni, it has become an essential guide to navigating the post-merger world while maintaining a connection to the institution they knew and loved.

The website is only one part of a much larger preservation effort. Through the Wheelock College Historic Alumni Facebook group, Instagram presence, alumni newsletter, historical research projects, reunions, and advocacy work, Christopher King has spent countless hours ensuring that Wheelock's history remains accessible and visible. These efforts have helped preserve traditions, reconnect classmates, share news of alumni accomplishments, document the lives of former faculty and staff, and keep the Wheelock spirit alive for future generations.

What began as a personal effort to save history has evolved into an unofficial alumni historical organization. Many alumni have remarked that the scope of this work mirrors the responsibilities of an Alumni Historian and Alumni Representative—roles dedicated to preserving institutional memory, connecting alumni, and serving as a bridge between the past and the future. Whether or not such a title is ever formally recognized, the impact of this work is already evident in the thousands of alumni, students, educators, and researchers who have benefited from these resources.

This version makes the case for your contributions and impact while allowing readers to draw their own conclusions about the need for a formal Alumni Historian or Alumni Representative role.

www.WheelockCollegeHistoricAlumni.com



The Lost Time Capsule of Wheelock College.

By Christopher King

As the final hours of Wheelock College drew to a close, hundreds of alumni returned home one last time. At the end of June 2018, graduates from across generations gathered on the Riverway campus for an emotional evening of memories, reunions, and a final overnight stay before the institution formally changed hands to Boston University the following day.

The occasion was bittersweet. Dormitories that had housed generations of students were open one last time. Alumni wandered familiar hallways, shared stories, and said goodbye to a campus that had been part of their lives for decades. Yet amid the sadness, there was also hope. Many believed that while the college itself was changing, its spirit and history would remain preserved.

That evening, one final project brought the generations together: the creation of a time capsule.

Unlike the traditional capsules buried beneath cornerstones, this was a large wooden box assembled to hold pieces of Wheelock's past. Alumni were invited to contribute objects and memorabilia that represented more than 130 years of history. Into the box went historical documents, photographs, keepsakes, and small treasures collected from around campus.

Among the contents were items connected to Lucy Wheelock herself, founder of the school that bore her name. There were artifacts from student life, souvenirs from residence halls, and mementos from beloved places including Colchester House. Small trinkets, notes, and objects that had passed through generations of Wheelock students found their way inside, entrusted to the care of Boston University with the expectation that the collection would remain safeguarded for future generations.











But somewhere along the way, the time capsule disappeared.
Today, the whereabouts of the box remain unknown.
Over the years, numerous questions have been asked and repeated requests have been made regarding its location. Alumni have sought answers, hoping simply to know that the capsule and its contents remain safe. Yet no definitive explanation has ever been provided. Despite assumptions to the contrary, the capsule was never buried beneath the campus grounds. It was intended to be stored and preserved, not hidden underground.

Its disappearance has become one of the great mysteries left behind by the closing of Wheelock College.

For many alumni, the lost time capsule represents something far greater than a missing box. It symbolizes a trust placed in the future—a belief that the stories, traditions, and artifacts of Wheelock would be protected after the transition to Boston University. Within that box are pieces of student life, fragments of institutional memory, and tangible connections to Lucy Wheelock herself.

Perhaps the capsule rests quietly on a shelf, tucked away in storage and simply forgotten. Perhaps records exist that have yet to surface. Or perhaps its discovery lies in the hands of a future archivist who will open an unmarked container and realize they have stumbled upon a piece of Wheelock history.

Until then, the lost time capsule remains exactly that—a mystery.

And somewhere, hidden in plain sight, may rest one final box containing generations of Wheelock memories, still waiting to be found.

Identity Lost in the Wheelock Era

By Christopher King

When Boston University's School of Education merged with Wheelock College in 2018, the change was celebrated as the beginning of a new chapter. The creation of Boston University Wheelock College of Education & Human Development brought together two proud institutions under one name and one umbrella community. In the larger picture, the merger created a shared identity and a broader alumni family. Yet for many alumni, something important was lost in the process.

Graduates of Boston University's historic School of Education suddenly found themselves grouped together with graduates of Wheelock College. Likewise, Wheelock College alumni became part of the same combined alumni structure. While everyone became "Wheelock," the distinct identities that had existed for generations became blurred.

The confusion can be surprisingly simple. Open a Boston University publication and see someone identified as "Wheelock '77." What does that mean? Was that person a member of the Boston University School of Education class of 1977, or a graduate of Wheelock College in 1977? Without asking, no one really knows. Two separate histories now share the same label.





On paper, the arrangement appears inclusive. Everyone belongs to the same family. But in practice, many alumni feel they have lost direct connections to their own classmates and traditions. Former School of Education graduates no longer have a separate alumni identity, and many miss having directories and networks that specifically reflected their own history. Wheelock College graduates have experienced similar changes as both groups have been folded into a larger umbrella organization.

Among many Boston University School of Education alumni, there is also a popular sentiment that they do not think of themselves as "Wheelock" alumni. They see themselves as graduates of the historic School of Education, whose roots stretch back long before the 2018 merger. Likewise, Wheelock College alumni maintain pride in their own institution and traditions.

Caught in the middle are the students who entered after 2018—the BU Wheelock generation. Many of them have little awareness that two separate alumni communities exist around them, each with its own history, traditions, and sense of identity. In many ways, they have inherited a combined institution without fully knowing the brothers and sisters who came before them.

Established in 2018, BU Wheelock represents a new chapter. But for some alumni, the transition also marked a reset. The names and histories that once clearly defined who they were became merged into a single identity. While the broader vision may have succeeded in creating one community, many still wonder whether something valuable was sacrificed in the process—the ability to know exactly who their fellow alumni are and to preserve the distinct legacies that shaped them.

Why are we called "Historic"?

Why are we called "Historic"?

When you register for anything on the BU website and scroll the tab for your school, we appear as "Wheelock College Historic", as BU school of education appears as "BU SED Historic".

.....And then there is

BU Wheelock.

REUNION 2023

Five Years of Silence... Until

How One Alumni's Question Sparked a Movement to Reclaim Wheelock College's History

For five years following the 2018 merger of Wheelock College into Boston University, silence filled the space where a proud institution's voice once stood.

Promises had been made. Assurances had been given. Alumni were told that Wheelock's history, traditions, archives, and community would be preserved and honored. Yet as the years passed, many alumni heard little, saw little, and began to wonder whether those promises were quietly fading away.

Then, in 2023, one simple phone call changed everything.

When Christopher King, Class of 2003, contacted Boston University to ask whether his class would be holding its 20th reunion, he expected a straightforward answer. Instead, he learned that Boston University did not organize individual class reunions. Rather, the university hosted an umbrella reunion weekend, bringing together graduates from across its schools and colleges.

The answer left him curious.

What would happen to Wheelock alumni?

Would there be an opportunity for former students, faculty, and staff to reconnect?

Would Wheelock's legacy have a place within Boston University's reunion structure?

Armed with those questions, King turned to Facebook and created the Historic Wheelock College Alumni group. What began as a simple effort to gather classmates quickly evolved into something much larger. Alumni from every era began finding one another again. Stories resurfaced. Friendships were rekindled. Memories long tucked away returned to the forefront.

As King worked with alumni and representatives from Boston University over the next six months to organize what would become the first Historic Wheelock Reunion, another realization emerged.



Many of the commitments made in 2018 appeared not to be happening.

Questions arose about the archives.
Questions arose about the yearbooks.
Questions arose about historical collections, memorabilia, and institutional records.
The deeper the research went, the more concerning the discoveries became.
(For details regarding the archives, yearbooks, and historical collections, see the accompanying feature article on the preservation of Wheelock's historical assets.)
Yet despite those concerns, anticipation grew for the reunion itself.
More than 150 alumni from graduating classes spanning 1975 through 2018 committed to attend. For many, it would be their first opportunity to reconnect with fellow Wheelock graduates since the merger.
The event was held at the historic Haas Mansion in Brookline.
As alumni arrived, many expected an evening celebrating Wheelock's remarkable 130-year history. Instead, they were greeted with little more than a name tag.
There was no formal welcome.
No historical displays.

No celebration of Wheelock's accomplishments.
No acknowledgment of the generations of educators, social workers, leaders, and advocates who had passed through its halls.
Guests stood mingling in a room until eventually being told they could proceed upstairs.
Having paid $25 per ticket for what had been advertised as a dinner, attendees entered a conference room containing plain tablecloths, bottled water that quickly ran out, and a cold buffet-style meal.





There were no decorations recognizing Wheelock's history.
No slideshow.
No historical exhibits.
No video presentations.
No storytelling.
No celebration.
A photographer moved throughout the room, while red-and-white Boston University balloons decorated the space.
Yet many attendees proudly wore their Wheelock sweatshirts, shirts, pins, and memorabilia.
They smiled for photographs.
They celebrated each other.

They celebrated Wheelock.
But afterward, alumni were disappointed to discover that not a single photograph from the gathering appeared in Boston University Wheelock publications or promotional materials.
When questions were asked, alumni were told that the event was not being used for university marketing or promotion.
The response left many confused.
After all, those attending were not simply guests.
They were Wheelock College.
As the evening continued, another realization settled over the room.
This was no longer the Wheelock College they had known.
The institution that had shaped generations of educators and social workers seemed absent from its own reunion.

After nearly an hour, David Chard—the final president of Wheelock College and then dean of Boston University Wheelock College of Education & Human Development—addressed attendees.
Many alumni hoped to hear stories of Wheelock's legacy.
Many expected reflections on the merger.
Many hoped for acknowledgment of the institution's extraordinary history.
Instead, the remarks focused largely on Boston University and current initiatives.
Historic Wheelock received little mention.
An uncomfortable silence lingered throughout the room.
Many alumni later expressed that they wished Christopher King had been allowed to address the gathering formally.

.

Prior to the event, however, he had been informed that any speech would need prior review and approval by Boston University.
Yet as the evening drew to a close, emotion and passion ultimately prevailed.
Joined by two fellow alumni, King approached the podium.





His remarks were brief.
He thanked everyone for attending.
He reminded those gathered that Wheelock College was more than a campus or a building.
It was a community.
It was a mission.
It was an identity.
And most importantly, he declared:

"WE ARE WHEELOCK COLLEGE. WE ARE ITS HISTORY. WE ARE ITS LEGACY. AND WE WILL NOT BE FORGOTTEN."
AND WITH THAT DECLARATION THE ENTIRE ROOM OF ALUMNI CLAPPED AND CHEERED.

As he pointed toward university leadership and spoke about preserving that legacy, the microphone was cut.
Moments later, university officials, including Chard, left the room.
For many attendees, the symbolism was impossible to ignore.
The microphone had been silenced.
And so, too, it seemed, had the voices of Wheelock alumni.
What should have been a joyful evening ended instead with alumni gathering in small groups, taking their own photographs,
sharing their own memories, and creating their own moments.
Yet amid the disappointment, something important happened.
A realization spread through the room.
Christopher King was not going to let the story end there.

In the months that followed, alumni advocacy intensified.
Feedback was gathered.
Concerns were documented.
Meetings were held.
And slowly, changes began to occur.
One of the most significant victories involved the timing of future reunions.
Historically scheduled during September reunion weekends, the events posed challenges for many Wheelock graduates, particularly educators, school administrators, counselors, and social workers whose professional responsibilities made travel difficult at the start of the academic year.



After sustained conversations with Boston University leadership, Historic Wheelock reunions were eventually moved to June.
It was a practical change.
But it also represented something larger.
It proved that alumni voices mattered when they were heard.
Today, the Historic Wheelock movement continues to grow.



What began as a single phone call asking about a 20th reunion evolved into a grassroots effort to preserve history, protect archives, reconnect generations, and ensure that Wheelock College's story remains alive.

Five years of silence had passed.

Then one alumnus asked a question.

And thousands of voices began answering it.

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Wheelock College



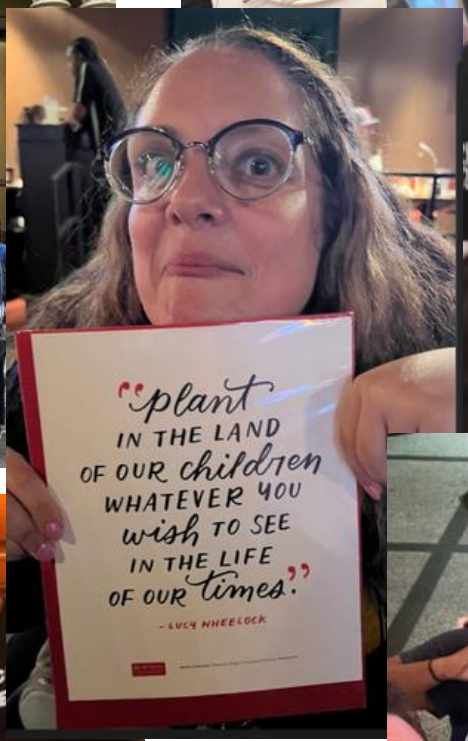











"plant
IN THE LAND
OF OUR children
WHATEVER YOU
wish TO SEE
IN THE LIFE
OF OUR times."
- LUCY WHEELOCK




WHEELOCK COLLEGE
WHEELOCK COLLEGE
WHEELOCK
WHEELOCK COLLEGE


WHEELOCK
22

We Just Wanted SOME SHIRTS.

a 'short' shirt story...

By - Debbie Cooper Crane - Class of 1993





In preparation for our 'alumni day' at BU on June 29th 2024, I set up a shirt design using our Wheelock Crest/Seal/Logo (it does go by many names) with printing company Custom Ink®. I have used Custom Ink® for other groups many times and had good experiences. Who doesn't love swag and many of us no longer had our Wheelock t-shirts or sweatshirts. I created the design you see here, and selected several shirt styles to choose from, shared the group order link and close to 40 alumni placed orders.

I was excited, I'd met and exceeded my order minimum. YAY!

The order deadline arrived, and I processed the order with the help of their customer service team.

There was over $1000 worth in orders I might add.

So, a nice little order for Custom Ink®.

(This was not a fundraiser.)

Within a couple hours I received a phone call and email that there was a licensing question. OH, I thought, this is an easy explanation, the college doesn't exist in this way anymore so no big deal, the seal is online (public access) everywhere. I soon realized that because BU 'merged' /bought Wheelock, they owned everything. (Including a logo/crest/seal they won't use.) So, I had to get permission from BU to use the seal. Now, let's backtrack a moment; during the entire process over many weeks leading up to this point, I talked several times with Custom Ink® customer service folks; each time they would look at the design as they called up my account to answer my questions, and not once was I asked about this being a college logo and needing licensing. (I later learned that they do have an agreement with BU but not with their red & white seal.)

Over nearly 2 weeks (now the shirts would definitely not be arriving for the alumni events)... I emailed with BUs licensing guy, and my contact at Custom Ink® and during this time, I had mentioned the seal was used on swag sold at the school store back in the day, and was asked (by BU) how the logo was used. So, I went on a search for items I knew had the seal on them. Shirts, mugs, pennants etc. It was then that I actually discovered several versions of the crest with different amounts of leaves and styles as well as the years 1888 and 1889 both being used. There didn't seem to be an 'official' crest? Surely, this would help my case, I shared this information with BU. But to no avail. I was eventually told by BU "we do not allow the blue Wheelock seal to be used on any swag - for comparison, we also don't allow the Boston University seal to be used on most items." I was not surprised by this explanation at this point, but it had seemed so simple, why not give permission use this logo, they aren't using it, it is obsolete. It was 40 or so shirts. Licensing aside, I wish they (BU) could have worked something out with me and Custom Ink®. BU offered to design something, but I said no, thank you, we wanted this logo which is part of our Historic Wheelock history/experience and we only want to remember and honor it. Nothing more.

I then had to cancel the order and email all the alumni that did order. Thankfully, alumni were understanding, and thanked me and appreciated my efforts, but of course we were all disappointed. I am hopeful that moving forward some progress can be made for use of the old seal to honor our historic Wheelock.

Debbie Cooper Crane
'93



Post Script: After all of this, a post was made on Facebook by another alum about not being able to use the crest for shirts, and I received an email from BU saying they heard we were using the crest online (who is telling them..?) and we were told not to use it online or anywhere. And then this went viral! Alumni from all over were changing their profile pictures to the crest in support! WOW! We are Historic Wheelock and we are proud of our history, and that will not change in our hearts or memories. We only want to preserve and honor the legacy of Lucy and the wonderful college she founded.





POV REUNION 2024

"Dear BU Wheelock....." An Alumnae Response Review Of The Reunion.

To BU Wheelock:
I just wanted to give you some feedback about the June 29th events. It's rather lengthy but I'd rather you get it directly from me, rather than being forwarded by another Alum who's on the Wheelock College - Historic Alumni FB page:
"It's been almost three weeks since the Reunion on June 29th. I've been asked and thinking about how that weekend went. While I had a good time, making new friends within the Wheelock family (we're not a community, we're a family), the actual BU Wheelock functions that were provided that was a mixed bag. I did not know what to expect from these two events. Another friend had told us that BU Wheelock had planned fun activities for us. I'm not sure what their definition of fun is, but neither event was what I expected. This felt more like a "look what we can do for you" but no real interaction with actual BU Wheelock staff, including the new Acting Dean to see how we could improve moving forward with this new BU Wheelock Alumni organization. Wheelock Alum are used to having a weekend Reunion, getting together on campus, having fun and visiting our home for four years. Various events are spread out over three days, including class dinners, a President's luncheon and tours of campus. The June 29th event provided two events: Earl Center for 2 hours and an afternoon luncheon for 2 hours at the new "Jenga" building on the 17th floor. Every door to the buildings on the Wheelock campus were secured with the exception of the Earl Center when the event was going on (although you could go over to the Wheelock theater because there were more bathrooms available there). The Earl Center was advertised as a "Explore the Earl Center" and while we did get to look around the Earl Center for a bit, it really felt more like a professional development class. We were welcomed by the Dean of Development Services for BU Wheelock but it was honestly too brief and that's the only time she spoke for either event. The Earl Center team then gave us an overview and then a learning session and we broke off into groups before some Alum presented. They also asked us at the end for feedback because this was the first time they were using this presentation so I ended up feeling like a guinea pig.





The Summer Celebration in the afternoon had no cohesion. There was no welcome from the Dean of Development Services for BU Wheelock, although she was there and talked with some but not all tables. It was food and Alum talking with one another at tables or using the photo booth provided. We were told yearbooks would be pulled for us to look out....they were black and white copies of parts of yearbooks.
There were also three class of 2024 alum at this event and while I didn't talk to them directly, I was told one of the first questions out of their mouths was, "What did you think of the 2018 merger?" No offense BU Wheelock, but what 22 year old would say that without being asked to do it? While BU Wheelock provided good food and had plenty of it (unlike last September's running out of food and water at the Wheelock dinner) they lost a real opportunity to connect with Wheelock Alum and to make them feel like a part of the BU Community.
I truly believe that BU Wheelock has once again blown an opportunity to try and bring the new BU Wheelock Alumni together. There are so many ways the BU Wheelock could have built this new group together but they haven't seemed to want to deal with the human factor of this new organization. We have been told by BU Wheelock Alumni folks that Wheelock no longer exists, we are all BU Wheelock. While I understand this from a business perspective on their goal of raising donations for BU Wheelock, there is a HUGE disconnect between what could have been said and done and this has been a problem since the merger in 2018. This belief that we are all BU Wheelock and totally disregarding Wheelock alum and BU's own SED school alum is still disheartening and discouraging.
BU Wheelock has upset their own SED Alum who think that Wheelock lowers their degree because Wheelock was a "lower" priced college, even though Wheelock's name and accreditation was why this went forward with this merger. Wheelock Alum are also upset because the only thing they've promoted is Lucy Wheelock's name and not the history of the College including care of the archives. It feels like BU Wheelock only wants to move forward without addressing this gaping hole between the former alum from both college and truly trying to make this work.
Wheelock Alum do not feel part of BU. That's a fact. There's been no real onboarding to educate Wheelock Alum of the potential benefits of being part of BU (which outside of being in Boston, are honestly, few) and to make them feel a part of the actual BU Wheelock Alumni. SED Alum have also been thrown to the side of the new BU Wheelock and from what I've seen on various sites, they are as unhappy as Wheelock alum are.
Did I feel welcomed by BU Wheelock? Not really. Did I learn anything that would want me to donate money as an Alum? Absolutely not. Do I feel a part of the BU Community? No, more like the unwanted stepchild that was given a handout with two events."
Thank you.
Christine Schuman Kenny -
Wheelock Centennial Class of 1988

Christine Schumen Kenny

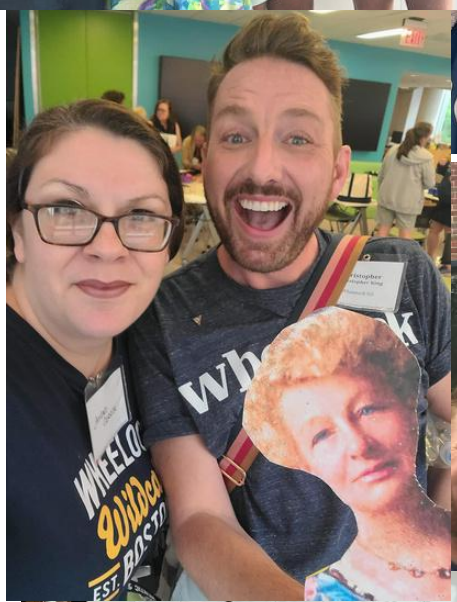



BU Wheelock Alumni Summer
Reception












BOSTON UNIVERSITY
WHEELOCK
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION & HUMAN DEVELOPMENT
BOSTON UNIVERSITY
WHEELOCK
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION
& HUMAN DEVELOPMENT











REUNION 2025

THE RIGHT IDEA, THE WRONG DAY AND TIME
BU CANT SEEM TO GET REUNIONS RIGHT.
HELD ON A FRIDAY AT 10AM TO 3PM.
A LOVELY TIME, MANY HAD TO MISS.





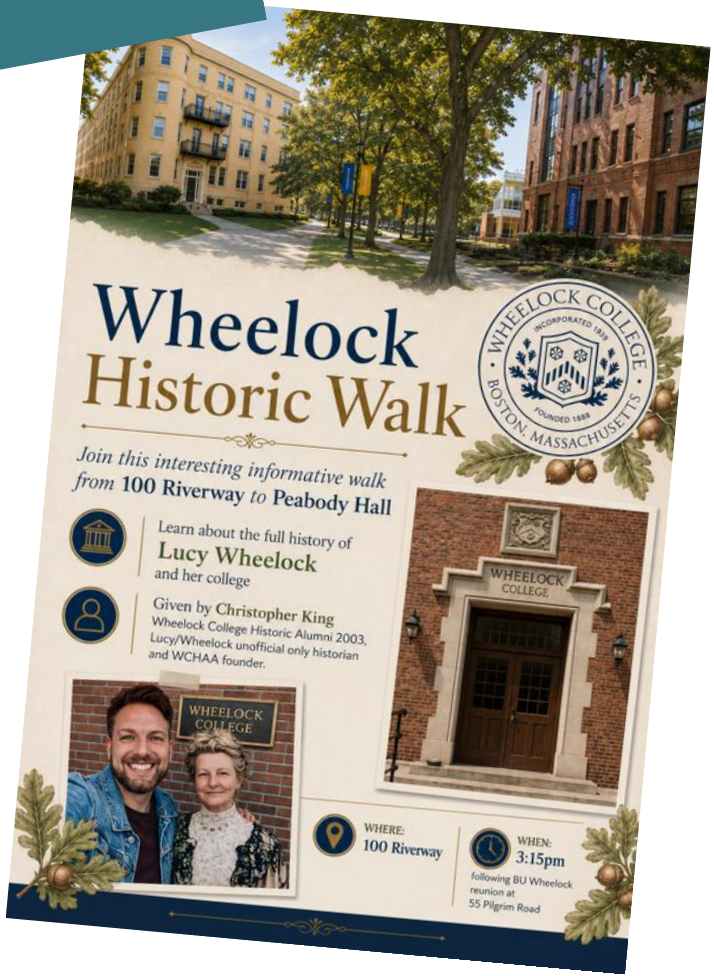




REUNION 2026 - To Be Continued..









Stories from the classes of

2018 & 2019

THE ALUMNI THAT WATCHED

WHEELOCK DISAPPEAR

2018
The Last Class:

How the Merger Uncertainty Impacted Students Individually, Not Just Symbolically

People came to Wheelock because they believed in education, child development, community work, and social justice. They believed in "inspiring a world of good." The college attracted students who wanted meaningful lives more than impressive résumés. Professors knew your name. Staff knew your story. Alumni returned often because Wheelock was more than a college—it was part of who they were.

As freshmen, none of us imagined we would become the final independent graduating class of a 130-year-old institution.

For me, the merger rumors did not fully register until the middle of my junior year. Before that, there were only quiet conversations about finances and comments about Wheelock "struggling." I remember the sadness when President Jackie Jenkins-Scott left, but also the hope that accompanied President David Chard's arrival in 2016. Students wanted transparency, stability, and reassurance that Wheelock could survive.

Instead, what followed was mostly silence.

Questions were carefully answered without actually being answered. Faculty seemed uneasy. Students speculated constantly. At the same time, parts of Wheelock itself appeared to quietly disappear. Buildings and traditions that once symbolized the institution's identity became underutilized or were sold off entirely, including symbolic spaces such as the President's House. Even then, many of us still wanted to believe the college would somehow remain itself.

The full emotional reality of the merger did not hit me until March of my senior year.



I was suddenly told that I might not pass my practicum and could potentially lose the credits I needed to become an early childhood educator. Ironically, I was also told that, under normal circumstances, before the merger, I likely could have stayed an additional year to complete the program. But because Boston University was taking over, that option effectively disappeared.

In the end, I graduated with a double major in Educational Studies and Performing Arts, holding on to the credits I still could. That experience captured the instability students felt during those final years. Plans changed abruptly. Futures became uncertain. Many students felt trapped between two institutions during a transition that nobody fully understood.

Senior year arrived under a strange cloud. We knew we would graduate from Wheelock College. We understood that history was ending around us, yet there was no meaningful acknowledgment of it.

Then graduation came.

To this day, that ceremony remains one of the strangest experiences of my life.

There was no real mention of the merger. No recognition that this was the final graduation of Wheelock College. No honoring of the institution's 130 years of history, alumni, traditions, faculty, or mission. No emotional acknowledgment that an entire college was effectively closing.

President David Chard acted as though it were simply another commencement ceremony. Everyone who spoke carried on as though everything was normal. Nothing was said about Wheelock alumni becoming part of another institution. Nothing acknowledged the emotional weight of what students, faculty, staff, and alumni were experiencing in that moment.

And maybe, for them, it truly was just another ceremony.

The truth is that many of us left graduation feeling emotionally hollow. There was no closure. No collective goodbye. No final moment when the college stopped and acknowledged itself before disappearing into another institution.
Wheelock simply ended.
And while the merger itself was painful, the uncertainty surrounding it often felt worse.

Students and faculty were repeatedly assured that Wheelock's legacy, mission, and community connections would remain intact. We were told the history would be preserved. We were told alumni relationships would continue. But over time, many of those promises quietly dissolved.
Many beloved professors disappeared from the institution entirely. In my own experience, nearly all of my favorite professors, except one, were eventually gone.

For many alumni, that became one of the deepest wounds of all—not simply that change happened, but that the people and relationships who defined Wheelock were slowly erased alongside it.

Still, even in those final days, there were moments of humor that captured the closeness of our class better than any official speech ever could.

One memory I still laugh about is graduation day itself. As we prepared to walk into the synagogue wearing heels and wedges, we kept joking that if one person tripped, we would all go down together like dominoes.

In hindsight, that joke felt strangely symbolic.

We really were all trying to hold each other up through the end of something none of us were ready to lose.

Today, I am proud to have been part of the final graduating class of Wheelock College. I am proud to hold one of the last Wheelock diplomas ever awarded and proud to be part of a legacy that shaped generations of educators, social workers, child advocates, artists, and community leaders.

Though the institution no longer exists as an independent college, the values, relationships, and spirit that defined Wheelock live on through those of us who carry its story forward. Being part of the last class was not something any of us expected, but it is a responsibility I carry with pride.

We were the final chapter of Wheelock College, and I am honored to be part of its enduring legacy.



Christina Roberio

Historic Last Class of Wheelock College, 2018

BU WHEELOCK CLASS OF 2019

- NAME WITHHELD BY REQUEST

I arrived at Wheelock College in the fall of 2015 carrying the same hopes and excitement that generations of Wheelock students had carried before me. I was not enrolling at Boston University. I was not applying to a large research institution. I chose Wheelock because it was Wheelock.

The college had a history stretching back more than a century. Its mission was rooted in education, social justice, child development, and service to others. The campus was small enough that people knew your name. Professors knew your story. The college wasn't defined by rankings, athletics, or prestige. It was defined by purpose.

As a freshman, I walked across a campus filled with traditions I assumed would always be there. I saw the historic buildings, the archives, the photographs of alumni who had come before us, and the symbols that connected us to generations of Wheelock graduates. I believed I was becoming part of something that would last long after I graduated.

None of us knew how quickly that future would disappear.

When President Jackie Jenkins-Scott departed and David Chard arrived, many students hoped he would help stabilize the institution. Financial concerns had been discussed for years, but students believed there was still a future for Wheelock as an independent college. We trusted the leadership of the institution. We trusted that if there were serious problems, we would be included in the conversation.

Instead, decisions were being made behind closed doors.

As students, we attended classes, completed assignments, worked jobs, participated in campus life, and planned for our futures. We were building our identities as Wheelock students while, unbeknownst to many of us, the future of the college was already being negotiated.

Then came the announcement that changed everything.



Wheelock College would merge with Boston University.

The announcement was presented as a positive opportunity. We were told that the merger would preserve Wheelock's mission. We were told that our degrees would carry the Boston University name. We were told that this was an exciting new chapter.

But for many of us, it did not feel like an exciting new chapter.

It felt like a funeral.

What administrators and public relations statements often failed to understand was that students had not chosen Wheelock because it was connected to Boston University. We had chosen Wheelock because it was different from Boston University.

The merger was described as a partnership, but from the student perspective, it often felt more like an erasure.

Our college name disappeared.

Our independent identity disappeared.

Our traditions disappeared.

Our future alumni community was suddenly uncertain.

The institution we had chosen as freshmen would no longer exist by the time we graduated.

There was grief attached to that reality.

We watched signs change.

We watched references to Wheelock slowly become references to Boston University Wheelock.

We watched our college become something else.

What made the experience even more painful was how little public acknowledgment there seemed to be of what students and alumni were losing. Discussions focused on assets, opportunities, programs, and administrative structures. Rarely did anyone speak about the emotional cost.

AeJay Malachi Fletcher received his degree at Wheelock College's commencement at Temple Ohabei Shalom in Brookline.

At Wheelock, a last graduation

Due to merge with BU, college marks bittersweet rites

By Michael Levenson
GLOBE STAFF

BROOKLINE — Kathy Clunis D'Andrea's voice broke Friday as she took the stage on behalf of alumni to address Wheelock College's last graduating class after 130 years as an independent institution dedicated to teaching and social work.

"I'm going to be really honest with you," D'Andrea said, looking out on the 336 graduates in colorful stoles and brightly decorated mortarboards. "I wasn't sure how I was going to come and speak to you today. There were so many unknowns, and I wasn't sure what to say. It's been a hard year."

Wheelock, founded in 1888 as Miss Wheelock's Kindergarten Training School, is merging next month with Boston University. Like many small colleges, it had been facing declining enrollment and mounting expenses, and Wheelock officials said the merger was necessary to preserve its mission.

But the change will come at a cost: 111 Wheelock employees — representing a majority of the college's faculty and staff — will lose their jobs when the merger becomes official June 1.

The deep cuts, and the loss of the college's independent status, made Friday's commencement bittersweet for many students, faculty, and staff at the Fenway-area school.

"It's sad," said Lisa Lobel, an assistant professor of biology who was not invited to teach at BU next year because she was a tenure-track faculty member at Wheelock. Only tenured professors were guaranteed positions, she said.

Still, Lobel was given the Cynthia Longfellow Teaching Award at the commencement at Temple Ohabei Shalom in Brookline.

"Maybe it was the consolation prize," she said with a laugh, adding that her Wheelock colleagues helped her, as a scientist, become a better teacher.

As a result of the merger, Wheelock, which had 1,000 undergraduate and graduate students, will become a new academic unit within BU called the Boston University Wheelock College of Education & Human Development. Wheelock's president, David J. Chard, will serve as interim dean of the program for at least two years.

Wheelock's students will join BU but pay the same tuition they would have paid to attend Wheelock. Beginning next year, however, students hoping to enroll in the Wheelock program will apply through Boston University.

"It's a very poignant day," said Chard, who hopes to preserve Wheelock's small, intimate feel as it merges with its much larger neighbor. "We spent commencement celebrating and acknowledging the 130 years of Wheelock, and the sadness but also the hope for the future."

Melissa Baez, a graduate from Canton, said her class, as the last to graduate from an independent Wheelock, "feels like a family."

"We haven't lost the Wheelock touch," she said after the ceremony. "We're still Wheelock, continuing on."

Joanna Newman, a graduate from Washington, D.C., said knowing that her school was headed for a merger "honestly gave us a lot of extra strength."

"We're ready to go into this world to prove what Wheelock set out to be," said Newman, a preschool teacher. "I got some of the best of the best and will carry the Wheelock name forever."

In his commencement address, Eric G. Bing, a professor of global health at Southern Methodist University, paid tribute to Wheelock's founder, Lucy Wheelock, saying she believed in education for all at a pivotal moment in the 19th century when women, the poor, and immigrants faced rampant discrimination.

"Pivotal moments create change, and change is stressful, and I know that is true for this college that Lucy Wheelock founded," Bing told the graduates. "But I believe in the legacy of Lucy Wheelock. I believe her call for social justice will not diminish."

D'Andrea, a member of the class of 1997, told graduates that Wheelock alumni are already working with BU to ensure that Wheelock students feel welcome in their new home, while remaining connected to Wheelock's 33,000 alumni around the world.

"This is not the end," D'Andrea declared. "Can we can say that again? This is not the end."

Michael Levenson can be reached at mlevenson@globe.com.



The graduates were Wheelock's last after the Fenway school's 130 years as an institution dedicated to teaching and social work.

A college is not just a collection of buildings.
A college is a community.
It is traditions.
It is memories.
It is identity.
It is belonging.
For students who had chosen Wheelock specifically because it was Wheelock, the merger felt like losing a home.
By the time graduation arrived in 2019, many of us were carrying mixed emotions. We had worked hard for our degrees. We had survived uncertainty. We had watched our institution disappear around us. We were proud of what we had accomplished, but there was also sadness because this was not the graduation we had imagined as freshmen.
There was no final celebration of Wheelock's independent history equal to the magnitude of what was being lost.
There was no recognition that we were the last generation of Wheelock students.
There was no moment that truly captured the weight of ending more than 130 years of institutional history.
Instead, graduation proceeded as though this were simply another commencement ceremony.
For President Chard, perhaps it was.
After graduation, he would go on to become Dean of Boston University Wheelock and remain there for years.
Life moved forward. Careers advanced. New chapters began.
For students and alumni, however, the story was very different.
We were the ones left carrying the loss.
Then came one of the most painful moments of all.
As Wheelock graduates crossed the commencement stage, some graduates from Boston University's School of Education booed.
The explanation circulating afterward was that Wheelock students were receiving a Boston University degree at a reduced cost and therefore had somehow received an unfair advantage.
What those students failed to understand was that they viewed the situation through the lens of a name.
To them, Boston University was a brand.
To us, Wheelock was a home.
They saw a degree bearing the BU name.
We saw the disappearance of our college.
They saw a perceived discount.
We saw the loss of our institutional identity.
They experienced a name change on a diploma.
We experienced the end of an institution.
No discount could replace 130 years of history.
No diploma could replace traditions that had vanished.
No university name could erase the grief of watching the college we chose cease to exist.
As we crossed that stage, we were not celebrating a bargain.

We were saying goodbye.
The boos hurt because they reflected a complete misunderstanding of what Wheelock students had endured. They reduced years of uncertainty, loss, and disappointment to a simplistic argument about
tuition and prestige.
What many people never understood is that
we did not ask for the merger.
We did not choose for Wheelock to disappear.
We did not trade our college for a different name.
If anything, many of us would have preferred to graduate from an independent
Wheelock College that still existed.
Today, years later, the pain remains for many alumni. Wheelock survives in archives, memories, photographs, and stories. It survives in the friendships formed there and in the lives changed by its mission. But the institution itself is gone.
Future students will never know what it felt like to walk onto a campus that belonged
entirely to Wheelock College.
They will never know what it was like to be part of a small community dedicated to preparing educators, social workers, and advocates under
the Wheelock name.
They will never experience the pride of being a Wheelock student before the merger.
Those experiences belong to the
generations who came before.
And they belong to the Class of 2019—the last class that began as Wheelock students and graduated carrying both the pride of what we had achieved and the sadness of what we had lost.
History will record the merger as an
administrative success.
But those of us who lived through it remember something more complicated.
We remember the uncertainty.
We remember the grief.
We remember the feeling of
watching our college disappear.
And we remember that while others celebrated a new beginning, we were mourning an ending.
One of the most disheartening realizations came years later.





As students, faculty, staff, and alumni were struggling to understand what was happening to the college we loved, much of the story was being documented from the perspective of the administrators overseeing its disappearance. It was painful to learn that David Chard and Mary Churchill would eventually write about the merger process, reflecting on decisions that had transformed our institution forever.
From the student perspective, what made this especially difficult was the feeling that so many of those decisions had occurred without meaningful transparency. Faculty members often seemed as shocked and uncertain as students. Questions circulated throughout campus, yet answers were limited. Rumors traveled faster than official communications. Many of us felt that the people most invested in Wheelock's future—the students, faculty, staff, alumni, and supporters—were the very people who had the least voice in determining it.
While we were trying to process the loss of our college, others were planning for the future that would emerge after Wheelock ceased to exist.
What made it hurt even more was
what happened afterward.
Following the merger, David Chard became Dean of Boston University Wheelock and remained there for years. Mary Churchill likewise continued her leadership role within the newly created institution. Meanwhile, many Wheelock alumni watched from a distance as the history, traditions, archives, and identity of the college that had shaped our lives faded further into the background.
For many of us, it felt as though the people entrusted with guiding Wheelock through its final years moved forward into successful new positions while the rest of us were left to mourn what had been lost.



The feeling was not simply anger—it was disappointment.

Wheelock was more than a financial transaction, more than an administrative restructuring, and more than a case study in higher education. It was a community built over generations. It was thousands of students, faculty members, staff, and alumni who devoted their lives to its mission.

Yet after the merger, many alumni were left with the impression that little attention was being paid to preserving that legacy. The archives sat largely forgotten. The stories of former students received little attention. The traditions that once defined Wheelock disappeared from public view. It often felt as though the institution's history was being packed away into boxes while everyone responsible for the transition moved on.

For those of us who lived through it, that may be one of the most painful parts of the story.

Not simply that Wheelock ended, but that so many people who loved it were left feeling as though its ending was treated as a beginning for everyone else.

We watched our college disappear.

Then we watched many of the people who oversaw that disappearance build successful futures from the institution that replaced it.

And for years afterward, many alumni were left asking a simple question:

Who was left to remember Wheelock?

And yet, amid all of that loss, something unexpected happened.

For years after the merger, many alumni felt disconnected—not only from the institution we had lost, but from one another. The community that had once existed so naturally on campus seemed scattered across states, careers, and generations. There was grief, frustration, unanswered questions, and a feeling that much of Wheelock's story had been left untold.

Then came Christopher King.

At a time when so many of us felt forgotten, he stepped forward and began doing something that few others were willing to do: he started preserving the history, collecting the stories, asking the difficult questions, and bringing people back together.

For many alumni, he became a bridge to a place we thought had disappeared forever.

Through his research, advocacy, and commitment to preserving Wheelock's legacy, he provided answers that many of us had been searching for since the merger. More importantly, he helped rebuild something that had been lost—the sense of community that made Wheelock special in the first place.

No building can replace Wheelock College.

No merger can recreate what once existed.

But through the work of people who refuse to let its story be forgotten, the spirit of Wheelock continues to live on.

There are no words to fully express the gratitude many of us feel toward Christopher King. In a time when so much felt lost, he brought light into a very dark chapter. He reminded us that our memories mattered, that our history mattered, and that Wheelock's story did not end when the college closed.

For me, his presence has helped ease a sadness that I carried for years. Not because he brought Wheelock back, but because he reminded us who we were, who we are, and why our shared history deserves to be remembered.

When so many people moved on, he chose to look back.

And because of that, countless alumni have found their way home again.

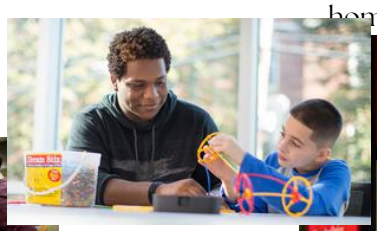
















Merger of Wheelock College and Boston University

In celebration of the common heritages and legacies of Boston University and Wheelock College, we the undersigned today recognize the conclusion of one era and the beginning of another.

Through the merger of our respective institutions, as detailed in the Merger Agreement executed on December 21, 2017, we are able to honor the legacy of Lucy Wheelock and Wheelock College and offer the public we are chartered to serve a new vision for a Wheelock College of Education & Human Development at Boston University. This new unit at Boston University builds on the strengths of both institutions and will graduate new generations of highly capable professionals dedicated to serving as teachers, counselors, and leaders. We believe this new college will quickly emerge not only as an institution that prepares professionals for the field but also as a major contributor to research that can improve the human condition.

We commend those who have served and supported Wheelock College over generations. We thank those who have worked to turn the vision of a new entity and opportunity into reality, and we look to the future with hope that is justified by the devotion and dedication of members of both our communities, soon to be joined in one.

February 13, 2018

Robert A. Brown, President, Boston University

Kenneth J. Vido, Chair, Board of Trustees, Boston University

David J. Chard, President, Wheelock College

Barbara Salice, Chair, Board of Trustees, Wheelock College

Susan Simon, Chair of the Corporation, Wheelock College

Wheelock College was not merged.

It was absorbed, renamed, and quietly dismantled.

Notes From:

A Wheelock

Social Work

Alumni



A Perspective Across Generations:

Preserving the Wheelock Social Work Legacy

- Although I graduated from Wheelock in the early 2000s, I knew that it was the place for me, as I began my college experience at Wentworth and within months realized I belonged in the college at the other end of the the, Colleges of The Fenway, Wheelock College, with thtat, this reflection was inspired by deeply moving conversations with members of the Class of 2018—the final graduating class of Wheelock College—and by the persistent questions many social work alumni continue to ask about what truly happened to our program during the merger.

This piece would not exist without the dedication of small, tireless groups of passionate workers at Wheelock who refuse to let our institutional memory fade. In that same spirit of preservation, we owe a profound debt of gratitude to Christopher King. whom is one of my very best friends that I met at Wheelock and I am in awe of his dedication and His unwavering advocacy has ensured that aside from everything else, social workers are intentionally included in all alumni events, keeping our major, our unique history, and our alumni community firmly in the light where
they belong.

In many ways, this article represents an essential collaboration across generations of Wheelock social workers. Those of us who graduated years before the merger share an unbreakable bond with those who experienced its final, bittersweet days. We studied in the same classrooms, completed field placements grounded in systemic service and radical advocacy, and embraced the foundational mission to
inspire a world of good.

Central to that shared experience was the guidance of transformative faculty members like Professor **Debby Beck**, whose mentorship exemplified the rigorous, empathetic standard of a Wheelock education. It was under the care of educators like Professor Beck that we learned how to turn theory into life-changing practice, a standard carried right through to the very last cohort.

When news of the merger broke, alumni from earlier decades followed developments with a mix of sorrow and anxiety. While we were not enrolled students facing immediate academic uncertainty, we cared deeply about the physical and intellectual ecosystem that shaped our professional identities. As public discussions focused overwhelmingly on education, child life, and human development, many of us watched from afar and wondered what would become of Wheelock's distinct social work legacy and the students still fighting to complete their degrees.

Through conversations with members of those final classes, a painful but recurring theme emerged: social work students frequently felt overlooked within the larger, chaotic merger narrative. They were promised clear pathways to complete their education, and many did so through sheer resilience. Yet, unlike our peers in education, they did not see their program integrated as a distinct pillar of the new Wheelock structure at Boston University. Instead, their academic home seemed to disappear into a massive, pre-existing university system. This left many to wonder whether future generations would ever even know that social work had been a vital organ of Wheelock's history.

social worker
noun

: a social change warrior that evokes ferocity, passion, and empathy in order to create significant positive change in the lives of others. Often overlooked superheroes that juggle life's most pressing issues, while attempting to remain sane.

see also: *world changer, highly caffeinated, sleep deprived, your #1 cheerleader*

For alumni from earlier decades, this concern resonates on a profound level. We remember a program built entirely on relationships, social justice, deep community engagement, and family-centered practice. We recognize those exact same fierce values in the stories shared by the final classes of 2018.

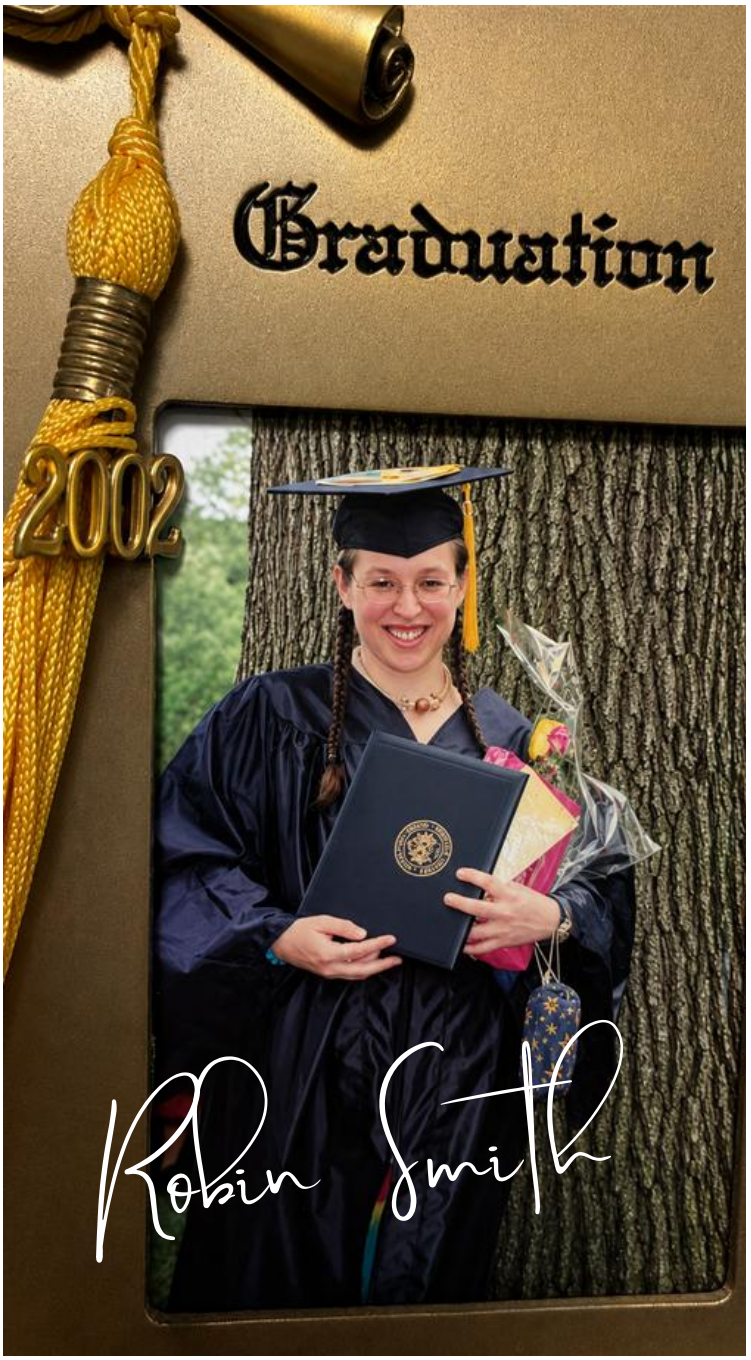
The result is a unique, cross-generational shared experience. Whether we walked across the stage in 2002 or 2018, we remain inextricably connected by the same social work tradition. The merger altered institutional structures and dissolved physical spaces, but it is utterly powerless to erase the impact of the program or the thousands of social workers who carried Wheelock's mission into schools, hospitals, community agencies, nonprofits, government offices, and neighborhoods across the country.

This article is therefore not just a eulogy for the last class. It is a living testament of generations of Wheelock social work alumni reflecting together on what was lost, what endured, and why the social work legacy of Wheelock College deserves to be honored alongside every other celebrated chapter of our institution's history.

Robin (Smith) Edwin - Social Work '02



"STUDENTS CHOSE WHEELOCK BECAUSE OF ITS MISSION, ITS CULTURE, AND ITS COMMITMENT TO CHILDREN AND FAMILIES. THOSE VALUES EXTENDED BEYOND EDUCATION AND INTO THE PRACTICE OF SOCIAL WORK."



THE END OF A MISSION?

Wheelock College's Social Work Program and the Legacy Left Behind

By Christopher King '03

When Wheelock College closed its doors as an independent institution in 2018, the public conversation largely focused on teacher education and the creation of Boston University Wheelock College of Education & Human Development. Less attention was given to another important chapter in Wheelock's history: the undergraduate Social Work program.

For nearly four decades, Wheelock educated social workers dedicated to serving children, families, schools, healthcare systems, and communities. Yet unlike many of the college's education programs, the Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) degree did not continue after the merger. The story of Wheelock Social Work is one of innovation, service, and ultimately, disappearance.

Building on Lucy Wheelock's Vision.

Although Wheelock College was founded in 1888 by Lucy Wheelock, the Social Work program was a much later addition to the institution's mission.

According to Wheelock records, the college established its Bachelor of Social Work program in 1980 and graduated its first BSW class in 1984. The program received accreditation from the Council on Social Work Education in 1985 and maintained continuous accreditation thereafter.

The addition of Social Work represented a natural evolution of Wheelock's long-standing commitment to children and families. What had begun as a teacher-training institution expanded into preparing professionals who would advocate for children beyond the classroom—in hospitals, community agencies, family services, mental health settings, and social service organizations.

By the early twenty-first century, Social Work had become one of the defining professional programs at Wheelock.

A Program With a Distinct Identity.

Wheelock's BSW program developed a reputation for combining rigorous field experience with an emphasis on human development and interdisciplinary practice. College documents described the program as particularly successful in attracting students from diverse communities and preparing graduates to address poverty, discrimination, violence, and the challenges facing immigrant families. Many graduates went on to pursue master's degrees in social work and eventually returned as field instructors and mentors for future Wheelock students.

At its core, the program reflected the values that had long defined Wheelock itself: social justice, advocacy, equity, and service.

The Merger Changes Everything.

In October 2017, Wheelock College announced its merger with Boston University.

For Social Work students, the news immediately raised difficult questions.

Boston University operated a nationally respected graduate School of Social Work, but it did not offer an undergraduate Bachelor of Social Work degree. Unlike education programs that could be integrated into the new BU Wheelock structure, Social Work lacked a direct undergraduate home within the university.

The result was a complicated transition.

Students pursuing a BSW were offered pathways to complete their degrees through Simmons College (now Simmons University), which had an established undergraduate social work program. Students could also choose to remain at Boston University and pursue other academic programs.

More than twenty Wheelock BSW students ultimately continued their social work studies through Simmons while living in Boston University housing. Wheelock Dean Hope Haslam Straughan even taught at both institutions during the transition to provide continuity for students facing an uncertain future.

More Than a Transfer.

For many students, the transition represented more than a simple change of campus.

They had selected Wheelock because of its culture, mission, faculty relationships, and community. While arrangements were made to ensure degree completion, the undergraduate Social Work program itself would not continue beyond Wheelock's closure.

No equivalent undergraduate BSW program was created at Boston University.

The program effectively ended with the institution that created it.

What Remains.

Today, Social Work alumni remain Wheelock alumni.

Their degrees continue to carry the Wheelock College name. Their careers continue to embody the institution's commitment to service. Yet their program occupies a unique place within the merger story.

Unlike programs that found a direct successor under the BU Wheelock banner, the Bachelor of Social Work became one of the academic offerings that disappeared entirely.

For many alumni, this reality has fueled continuing debate over whether the 2018 transaction was truly a merger or something closer to an absorption.

Regardless of terminology, one fact remains clear:

From 1984 until 2018, Wheelock College educated generations of social workers who carried Lucy Wheelock's belief in service and human potential into communities throughout Massachusetts and beyond.

That legacy deserves to be remembered.

TIMELINE: SOCIAL WORK AT WHEELOCK









- 1888
- Lucy Wheelock establishes Wheelock Kindergarten Training School.
- 1980
- Wheelock establishes its Bachelor of Social Work program.
- 1984
- First Bachelor of Social Work degrees awarded.
- 1985
- Program receives initial accreditation from the Council on Social Work Education.
- 1985–2017
- Program grows into one of Wheelock's signature professional offerings, emphasizing social justice, child welfare, family support, and community engagement.
- October 2017
- Merger between Wheelock College and Boston University announced.
- 2018
- BSW students transition through Simmons and Boston University arrangements.
- June 2018
- Wheelock College ceases operations as an independent institution.
- 2018–Present
- No undergraduate Bachelor of Social Work program exists at Boston University.

INSPIRE A WORLD OF GOOD



MUCH LOVED SOCIAL WORK PROFESSOR, DEBBY BECK



The Search for Wheelock's Lost Archives

By Christopher King, Class of 2003

After attending the 2023 Wheelock reunion, questions about the fate of our archives, yearbooks, and the contents of our beloved library began to surface. Five years had passed since the 2018 merger with Boston University, and many alumni assumed that these treasures had simply been preserved and integrated into their new home. Yet as I began asking questions, I quickly discovered that nobody seemed to know where anything was.

My search began with a simple phone call to the alumni office asking where the Wheelock yearbooks were located. That one question led me in every direction imaginable. I was transferred from office to office, speaking with five different people, none of whom appeared to know what had happened or where anything had gone. It was unsettling. Five years after the merger, there seemed to be no clear answer.

Eventually someone contacted me and suggested that the yearbooks might be "in the Castle." At the time I had no idea what "the Castle" referred to. I would soon learn that alumni events and offices were housed in the Dahod Family Alumni Center at Boston University, known affectionately as the Castle.

At the same time, I and other alumni were raising questions with former Wheelock College President David Chard and leaders of BU Wheelock. When asked about the archives, we were told that many materials had been disposed of. That statement sent waves of concern through the alumni community.

Determined to understand what had been lost, I turned to the Internet Archive. There I was fortunate enough to find Wheelock College's original website, complete with its archive inventory database. I printed the inventory and was amazed by the scope of the collection. I remembered many of these items from my own years at Wheelock: the Froebel gifts and educational toys, major book collections, photographs, Lucy Wheelock's personal belongings, and countless treasures representing over a century of history.

Where were they now?



My search led me to former archivists and faculty members. I quickly learned that many faculty and staff had signed non-disclosure agreements during the merger process and were unable to speak openly. Information was difficult to obtain, but there was a feeling that many former professors and employees were quietly cheering us on from behind the scenes.

One discovery shocked me and many fellow alumni. Hidden within the collection was an unpublished biography of Lucy Wheelock herself, along with a voice recording of the founder speaking. These were extraordinary historical treasures, and one could only hope they had survived and were being cared for properly.

As my research intensified, members of our Facebook group, which now numbered over 2,500 alumni, began paying attention. I created a website to document our findings and share information. Around this time, fate introduced me to someone who would become one of my closest partners in the search.

As I graduated in 2003, I often saw photographs in Wheelock magazine featuring alumni from earlier years. By chance, one of those faces became a friend. Debbie Cooper Crane, Class of 1993 and a resident of Peabody Hall, reached out. Though separated by ten years, we formed an immediate friendship and shared dedication to uncovering the truth. For the first time, I had someone witnessing the same things I was seeing and hearing, and I no longer felt alone.

One of our first meetings was with the alumni office. We wanted to discuss reunions and traditions that had once defined Wheelock. The beloved Lucy Wheelock Tea, once held under tents adorned with flowers, tea kettles, dishes, souvenirs, and laughter, had been reduced to a windowless lobby with a cardboard standup and Lucy's portrait tucked into a corner. It felt like only half of what had once existed.

We were reminded repeatedly that we were now Boston University alumni and should appreciate the "upgrade." Those words were difficult to hear. We had chosen Wheelock College, not Boston University, and our love for Wheelock had never required an upgrade.

Soon after, Debbie and I met Sean Noel at the Mugar Memorial Library. Together we searched for Lucy Wheelock's autobiography. In an ironic moment, the student worker assisting us admitted that they had not even known they possessed it until we asked. Smiling, she welcomed us to Boston University and remarked, "We don't collect archives. We collect art collections and properties."

I will bever forget that moment.



As we sat reading Lucy's autobiography, our mission became stronger than ever.

During our meeting, Sean suddenly produced several Wheelock yearbooks. When asked where they had been found, he explained that he could not disclose details regarding the archives. However, as we left, he quietly mentioned that they were in the Castle.
Debbie and I immediately walked over to the Alumni Center. A young employee, whom I believe was named Colin, stepped away to ask about the yearbooks. He returned and brought us upstairs into a boardroom. There, he opened what appeared to be a mop closet. We stood in disbelief.
Stacked one upon another were sixteen boxes containing Wheelock yearbooks and archival materials. They sat in a closet, despite beautiful built-in shelves surrounding the room that displayed Boston University yearbooks. As we looked closer, we found silver trays, groundbreaking shovels, historic documents, and other treasures crushed into corners after spending years untouched.
While we were examining the materials, an employee from alumni relations entered and asked who we were. We explained that we represented Wheelock College Historic Alumni. She left briefly and returned with instructions from Vice Dean Bobbi Wold to escort us from the building because we did not have permission to be there, despite having been brought to the room by employees.

The experience was embarrassing and deeply troubling. It felt as though someone suddenly realized we had seen something they had not intended us to witness.



Weeks later, however, I was invited back for a limited amount of time to photograph as much as possible before the materials disappeared again. Alone, I documented nearly 120 years of yearbooks and memorabilia. Scrapbooks from 1945, documents signed by Lucy Wheelock, awards, photographs, and even a beautiful Wheelock crest intended for Cynthia Germanotta, Lady Gaga's mother, still sat untouched with a Post-it note attached years later.

It became apparent that these materials had originated from Wheelock's own alumni office and contained decades of correspondence, donations, and records.

Over the following year, I contacted numerous organizations, including Historic New England, the Bostonian Society, Froebel USA, the Elizabeth Peabody Society, and the Colleges of the Fenway. I spoke with multiple archivists and received conflicting answers. Yet one fact remained legally clear: Boston University had inherited 130 years of archives, including Lucy Wheelock's belongings and major collections, and with the merger alumni had lost much of their control over these materials.

Among the losses was the deterioration of the recording of Lucy Wheelock's voice, depriving future generations of hearing the founder speak.

Then came another revelation.





Sean Noel informed me that when archivists investigated the missing collections, they discovered that records had identified the holdings simply as "21 items." For eight years everyone assumed that meant twenty-one objects. In reality, there were twenty-one pallets in cold storage, forgotten and unknown.
Who had paid for that storage all those years? How could such a collection simply be forgotten?
By this point, concerns over the condition of the archives and the disposition of Wheelock's historic library had become deeply upsetting.
Yet hope remains.
The Froebel gifts and educational toys have been located. Lucy Wheelock's belongings still exist somewhere in storage. One can only hope that much of the magnificent collection survives and that future generations may once again see it.
Over the years, we have proposed many ideas: a Lucy Wheelock 101 orientation for incoming students, rotating exhibitions, and a permanent museum and archive gallery beneath the Wheelock Family Theatre. We have even offered to help store and care for the collections ourselves.
But much of it remains beyond our control.

What became increasingly obvious was that Boston University's greatest interest in Wheelock had never been its history. It was the Riverway campus and the real estate it occupied.

Today, one of the few visible reminders of Wheelock's founder is her portrait, relocated from Riverway to the School of Education. Yet rather than occupying a place of prominence, it hangs around a corner in a dim area, almost as an afterthought.

Most troubling of all, current Boston University Wheelock students have told us that they have little understanding of who Lucy Wheelock was or her role in bringing the kindergarten movement to America. For many, "Wheelock" has become little more than a name.

But for those of us who lived it, who walked Riverway, who studied beneath Lucy's gaze, and who inherited the responsibility of remembering, Wheelock College was far more than a name.

BE SURE TO CHECK OUT ALL THE YEARBOOKS THAT IVE DOCUMENTED ON WHEELOCKCOLLEGEHISTORICALUMNI.COM



WHAT'S NEW @BU





What's New at BU?

We Are Wheelock. You Are Wheelock. Everyone Is Wheelock.

A tale of three alumni associations.

September 2024: We met the new dean—and what a delight it was. She was present, attentive, and genuinely engaged. She listened carefully to our concerns, understood the complexities we raised, and expressed a clear commitment to supporting all alumni.

As a gesture of welcome, we presented her with an 8•10 framed autograph from the 1924 Wheelock College yearbook. It marked a symbolic moment: after a century, it felt meaningful to see the "hands on the wheel" once again guided by a woman. The sentiment was not lost in the room.

Our conversation covered a wide range of topics—identity, archives, yearbooks, and even the college crest. Each point was acknowledged, each concern heard. Most importantly, we emphasized a central issue: the alumni landscape she is stepping into is not singular, but layered.

In reality, three distinct alumni communities now coexist within this shared space: the historic Boston University School of Education (SED), historic Wheelock College, and the current BU Wheelock. While all are connected by Boston University, their identities and histories remain unique—and, at times, in tension. Alumni from BU's School of Education do not necessarily identify with the name "Wheelock," just as historic Wheelock alumni do not see themselves as "BU" graduates. Meanwhile, those who identify with BU Wheelock often exist between these perspectives, sometimes unaware of the full historical context surrounding them.



The merger of Wheelock College into Boston University further complicated this landscape. Wheelock's alumni body—once distinct—was absorbed into BU's broader alumni network. In doing so, certain nuances of Wheelock's history became blurred. For example, Wheelock did not admit men until 1952, yet today, BU publications occasionally reference "Wheelock male alumni" from earlier dates—individuals who were, in fact, part of BU's School of Education.

This overlap has created ongoing challenges, particularly in recordkeeping and historical accuracy. Without a clear system distinguishing alumni by their original institutions, it has become increasingly difficult to answer a simple question: who belongs to which legacy?

Even in moments of remembrance, the lines are unclear. Obituaries and memorial listings often categorize individuals broadly under "Boston University," making it difficult to track and honor members of the historic Wheelock community. As a result, careful reading—and cross-referencing with records like the 2017 directory—has become necessary to preserve the integrity of our alumni history.

As BU continues to evolve, so too must its approach to honoring the identities within it. Recognizing the distinctions between these alumni groups is not about division—it is about respect, clarity, and preserving the stories that brought us here.



What Would Lucy Think?

To truly honor Lucy Wheelock, BU wouldn't need to recreate the past. It would need to do one very specific thing: put the continuous, lived study of the child back at the center of teacher formation.

Her bottom-line verdict: She wouldn't say BU is "doing it wrong." She would say something more precise—and more critical: What Lucy Wheelock would notice instantly: "You have stopped speaking about the child as a person, and begun speaking of them as part of a system." That shift alone captures the philosophical divide.

She would approve of: continued training of educators; use of research and evolving knowledge; and commitment to working with children and communities. She would question: is the child still at the center—or the system? Are teachers being formed—or just credentialed? Is education still a calling—or primarily a career?

Beyond courses, Lucy Wheelock would notice something deeper: at Wheelock, students absorbed: teaching is relational, education is human development, and schools are moral communities. At BU, students absorb: teaching is structured practice, education is system-driven, and schools are institutions to navigate.

Here's where it becomes very clear:

THEME	WHEELOCK LANGUAGE	BU LANGUAGE
Focus	"The child"	"The learner"
Goal	"Understanding development"	"Achieving outcomes"
Teaching	"Guidance"	"Instruction"
Method	"Observation & reflection"	"Assessment & evaluation"
Experience	"Continuous participation"	"Structured practicum"
Identity	"Becoming a teacher"	"Preparing educators"

This focus came directly from influences like Friedrich Froebel—learning through play, creativity, and human development.

👉 At Wheelock, education *was the identity*, not a department.

What Lucy Wheelock would notice instantly:

> "You have stopped speaking about the child as a person, and begun speaking of them as part of a system."

That shift alone captures the philosophical divide.

She would approve of:

✓ Continued training of educators
✓ Use of research and evolving knowledge
✓ Commitment to working with children and communities

She would question:

? Is the child still at the center—or the system?
? Are teachers being formed—or just credentialed?
? Is education still a calling—or primarily a career?

Beyond courses, Lucy Wheelock would notice something deeper:

At Wheelock, students absorbed:

- Teaching is **relational**
- Education is **human development**
- Schools are **moral communities**

At BU, students absorb:

- Teaching is **structured practice**
- Education is **system-driven**
- Schools are **institutions to navigate**

👉 This is the **biggest philosophical shift.**

At Wheelock: *education was the mission*

At BU: *education is a program within a system*

Her Bottom-Line Verdict

She wouldn't say BU is "doing it wrong."

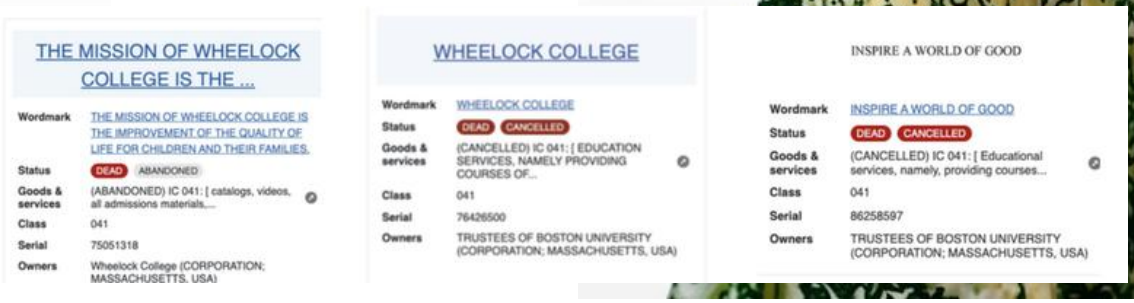
She would say something more precise—and more critical:

> **"You are preparing teachers efficiently.**
> **But you are not forming them completely."**

The Real Answer (Stripped Down)

- The **mission survives in fragments**
- The **institution does not**
- The **philosophy exists—but diluted and redistributed**





Dear Boston University,

To the leadership of Boston University,

We write not in opposition, but in remembrance—
and in hope.

When Wheelock College chose this path, it was not an act of surrender. It was an act of belief. We believed that by joining with Boston University, our mission—rooted in education, social work, and the well-being of children and families—would not only endure, but expand. We believed our campus would become a living foundation for your School of Education. We believed our history would be carried forward with intention, visibility, and care.

We gave freely.

A debt-free institution.

Tens of millions in assets and properties.

A library and archive built over generations.

A name that stood for over a century of service. A family theatre we created and loved.

These were not transactions. They were a gift—offered with the understanding that our legacy would be preserved, honored, and integrated in a way that allowed it to continue breathing.

What has followed has not fully reflected that shared understanding.

Our physical spaces, once vibrant with purpose, have not been sustained in the way we envisioned. Our archives—repositories of memory, scholarship, and identity—have not remained whole. Traditions that shaped generations of educators and social workers were not continued. Alumni communities were consolidated without the space to know one another, to honor distinct histories, or to build a shared future with clarity and respect.

In becoming "one," something essential was lost: the ability to recognize where we came from.

We say this with care: Wheelock was not acquired. It was entrusted.

And with that trust came an expectation—not of preservation for nostalgia's sake, but of stewardship. That our alumni would retain a voice. That our crest and identity would not disappear, but remain accessible to those who built and lived it. That our story would not be reduced to a footnote or confined to a single portrait, but be present, visible, and understood.

This is not simply about the past. It is about continuity, dignity, and accountability to the values that made this partnership possible.

We remain proud to be part of this shared institution. We believe in what Boston University can be at its best. And it is precisely because of that belief that we ask for more—for recognition, for restoration where possible, and for a renewed commitment to the legacy that was placed in your care.

We are not asking to be separate.

We are asking to be seen.

To be heard.

To be remembered not as something that was absorbed,
but as something that was given—and still lives
.

Respectfully,

The Alumni of
Wheelock College

Make Yourself KNOWN!

Sign up for BU Wheelock alumni, update contact and more.
Also make sure your transcripts and records are properly transferred.





BOSTON UNIVERSITY ALUMNI





Bold Ideas Building a Better Future

QUESTIONS?
CONCERNS?
STORIES?
GREETINGS?
ALUMNI RELATIONS?

EMAIL THE DEAN!
DEAN PENNY BISHOP
OF BU WHEELOCK.







BU

Boston University Wheelock College of Education & Human Development











Portraits of the Men of Wheelock

Fifty-One Years of Brotherhood, 1967–2018

By Christopher King, Class of 2003

They were never many in number.

Sometimes there were only five or six in a graduating class. Sometimes twenty. In the final years, perhaps a hundred men walked the halls of Riverway. But whether there were six or sixty, one thing remained true:

Everybody knew who the guys were.

For fifty-one years, from the arrival of the first male undergraduates in 1967 until the merger with Boston University in 2018, the men of Wheelock College became a unique brotherhood. There were no fraternities, no secret societies, and no Greek letters. There was simply Wheelock.

The Pioneers

Classes of 1967–1979

The first men who arrived at Wheelock entered a world that had belonged almost exclusively to women for nearly eighty years.

There were no traditions written for them.

No men's dormitories.

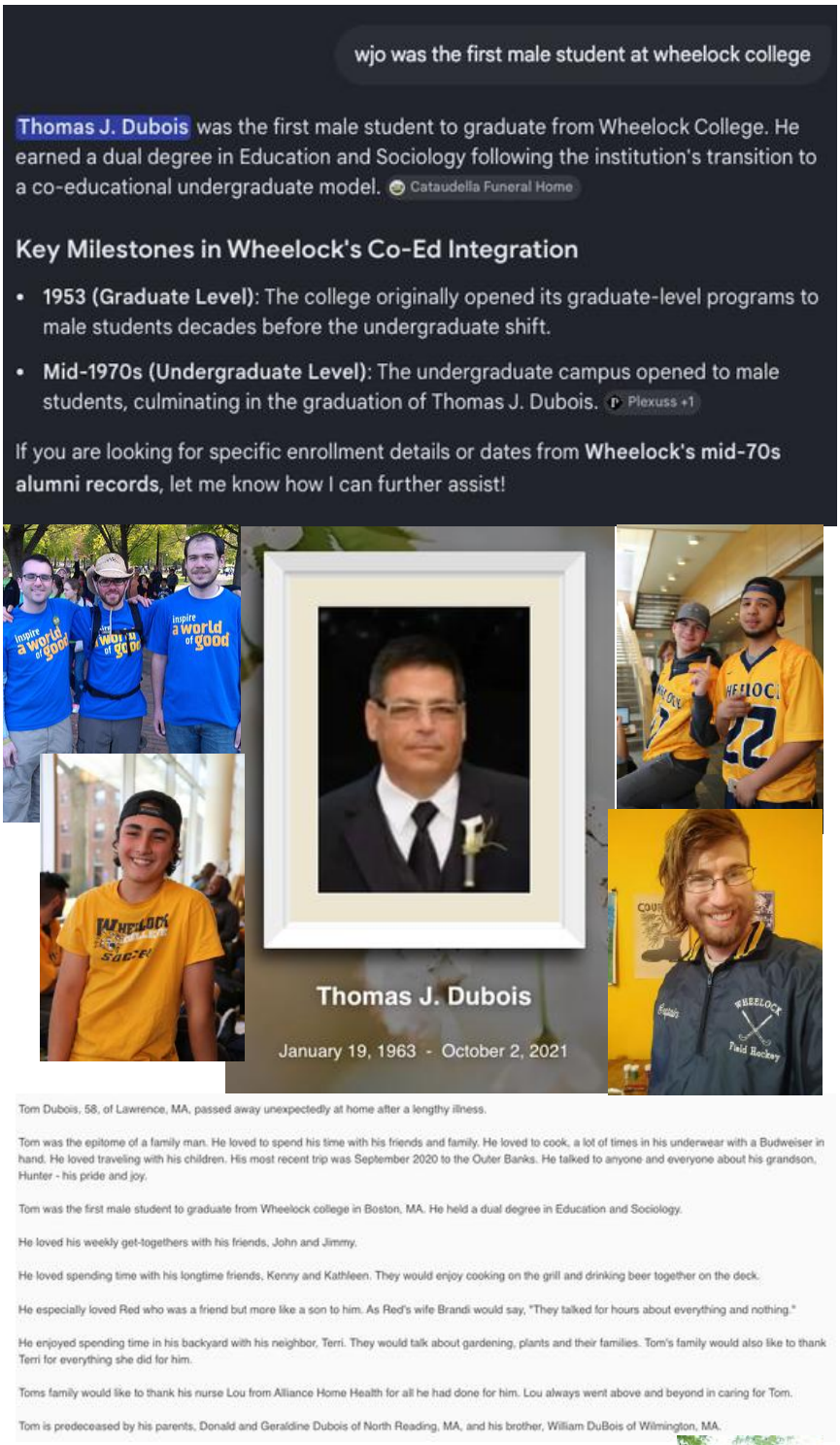
No handbook explaining what it meant to be one of the first Wheelock men.

Yet they came because they believed in Lucy Wheelock's mission.

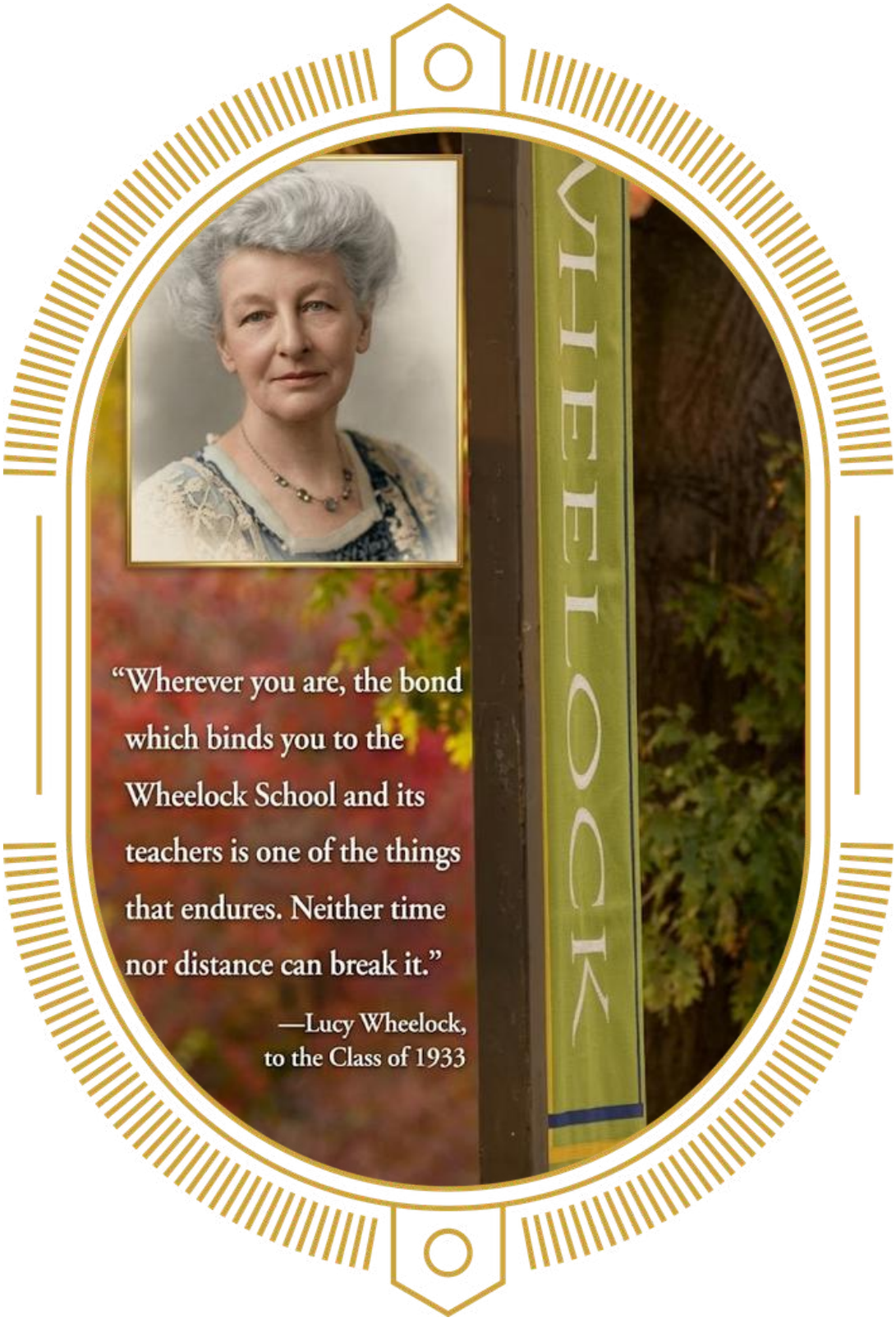
These pioneers became classroom teachers, youth workers, counselors, and advocates. They entered professions where men were rare and, in many cases, became positive male role models for thousands of children.

Many would later joke that they were "famous" simply because everyone on campus knew their names.





Whee Remember....



Who Tells Our Stories?

Remembering the Wheelock Family in an Age Without the Wheelock Magazine

By Christopher King, Class of 2003

For generations of Wheelock alumni, one of the joys of receiving the Wheelock Magazine was opening the back pages and catching up with the people who had made the college feel like home.
Births.
Marriages.
Retirements.
Class notes.
And perhaps most importantly, deaths.
The magazine lovingly remembered faculty, staff, alumni, and friends who had passed away.
Obituaries were more than announcements.
They were celebrations of lives dedicated to children and families. They connected generations and allowed classmates and former professors to say goodbye.
When Wheelock College ceased to exist as an independent institution in 2018, much of that tradition quietly disappeared.

A Different Kind of Alumni Community
Boston University's alumni network serves hundreds of thousands of graduates from seventeen schools and colleges. Unlike the intimate community of Wheelock College, where faculty and alumni often knew one another by name, BU's communications naturally focus on a much larger audience.
While Boston University does maintain online memorial pages and occasionally publishes tributes to distinguished faculty and alumni, the personal class notes, celebrations, and remembrances that once appeared regularly in the Wheelock Magazine are largely absent.

Likewise, those searching through the pages of the BU Wheelock magazine hoping to find extensive coverage of historic Wheelock College may be surprised. Although the publication occasionally references the legacy of the college and highlights current programs and alumni accomplishments, relatively little space is devoted to the history of the independent Wheelock College that existed from 1888 to 2018.
There are few historical articles.
Few memories of Riverway traditions.
Few stories of beloved faculty and staff.
Few features on the buildings, customs, organizations, and culture that shaped generations of alumni.
For those who attended Wheelock College itself, this absence can feel disorienting. It is not that the history is denied—it is simply not often told.

Searching Under Another Name
One of the strangest consequences of the merger is that Wheelock alumni searching for former professors or classmates often discover that "Wheelock College" no longer exists as a category.
On http://Legacy.com and other obituary websites, searches frequently direct users toward Boston University rather than Wheelock College itself.
Many alumni have accidentally discovered the passing of beloved professors while searching for entirely unrelated information.
There is no annual Wheelock memorial page.
No printed list.
No class notes section.
No familiar magazine arriving in the mailbox with news from friends and professors.
And so alumni find themselves searching the internet.

Who Else Have We Lost?
As alumni search deeper, more names emerge.
Former professors.
Staff members.
Librarians.
Administrators.
Classmates.
People whose lives helped define Wheelock College.
Many alumni admit they had no idea these individuals had passed away.
Some deaths occurred years earlier.
Others were discovered only by chance.
Without a central Wheelock publication preserving these stories, memories become fragmented and scattered.

A Community Built on Relationships
Wheelock was never a large institution.
Professors knew students by name.
Staff knew families.
Presidents attended reunions.
Faculty became lifelong friends.
The Wheelock Magazine reflected that spirit.
It celebrated new grandchildren.
Announced marriages.
Welcomed babies.
Shared retirements.
And mourned losses.
Those pages reminded alumni that they remained part of a family.
Today, while Boston University provides a vast and accomplished alumni network, the intimacy of those traditions has largely disappeared.
Not because anyone intended harm.
Simply because Wheelock was small, and Boston University is enormous.

Remembering What Came Before
Many alumni understand that BU Wheelock must focus on today's students and current programs. Yet they also hope that more space can be devoted to telling the remarkable story of the independent college that came before.
After all, 130 years of history did not begin in 2018.
The story began with Lucy Wheelock in 1888.
It lived through generations of faculty, students, traditions, clubs, songs, libraries, buildings, and friendships.
And those stories deserve to be told alongside the work being done today.

Preserving Our Own History
Perhaps this is one reason why Wheelock College Historic Alumni exists.
Not merely to preserve buildings or archives.
But to preserve people.
To remember the professors who changed our lives.
To celebrate grandchildren and marriages.
To share news.
And to honor those we have lost.
Because institutions are more than names.
They are communities.
And communities remember one another.
Perhaps someday there will once again be a place where Wheelock births, marriages, anniversaries, retirements, and memorials are collected together.
A place where future generations can look back and know who came before them.
Because if we do not tell these stories—
Who will?

"A college is not merely remembered through its buildings, but through the lives and stories of the people who called it home."



Whee Remember....

Dr. Marcia Folsom



Dr. Folsom joined the Wheelock College faculty in 1969, earning tenure in 1981. In 1986, she was appointed Professor of Literature and served as the Chair of Arts and Sciences from 1986 to 1993. Demonstrating her commitment to the institution's leadership, she also served as Vice President for Academic Affairs from 1993 to 1997.
She retired from teaching in 2017.

A renowned expert in English literature and feminist studies, Dr. Folsom was a leading scholar in Jane Austen studies. She edited and co-edited prominent volumes for the Modern Language Association's Approaches to Teaching series, focusing on Austen's Pride and Prejudice, Emma, Mansfield Park, and Persuasion. Earlier in her career, she co-edited By Women: An Anthology of Literature and published influential work analyzing the depiction of women in Renaissance texts like Edmund Spenser's The Faerie Queene.

Beyond her academic achievements, Marcia was the heart and soul of the Charles River Museum of Industry and Innovation in Waltham, Massachusetts. The museum was founded in 1980 by her late husband, Dr. Michael "Mike" Folsom. Following his tragic passing in 1990, Marcia joined the museum's board, later serving as President and Board Chair from 2007 until her death. She was also deeply engaged in community initiatives across her neighborhood in Boston's South End.
A formal memorial service celebrating her multifaceted legacy was held on June 14, 2025, at the Charles River Museum of Industry and Innovation.

President Gordon Marshall

Dr. Gordon Marshall, who served as the president of Wheelock College from 1973 to 1983, passed away on September 8, 2024. He is widely remembered as a stabilizing, visionary leader who successfully navigated the college through a highly challenging period in its history.



Presidency at Wheelock College

Dr. Marshall assumed the presidency in 1973, bringing a unique blend of academic scholarship and business acumen to the role. He held degrees from Princeton University and Harvard Business School. Over his ten-year tenure, he revitalized Wheelock's campus and financial foundation. Among his most visible and enduring achievements was his instrumental support in founding the Wheelock Family Theatre in 1981, which established a space for professional, accessible, and community-centered theater.

Upon his retirement, the Wheelock community honored his transformative impact by establishing the Gordon Marshall Faculty Endowment, ensuring long-term funding for full-time faculty to pursue significant research and teaching initiatives.

Following his time at Wheelock, Dr. Marshall maintained an active professional life. He worked with an entrepreneurial startup, served on the faculty at Colby-Sawyer College in New Hampshire, and served as the executive director of a New Hampshire non-profit organization focused entirely on environmental education.

Family, friends, and the historic Wheelock community gathered to honor his memory at a memorial service

Dr. Frances Chaput Wacksler

With the correct spelling (Wacksler), her archival records and academic history are readily accessible.
Dr. Frances Chaput Wacksler, known warmly to generations of students and colleagues as Fran, was a foundational pillar of the sociology and psychology departments at Wheelock College for 35 years. She passed away on April 22, 2024.
Obituary & Legacy

Dr. Wacksler earned her Ph.D. from the Boston University Department of Sociology in 1973, studying under the influential sociologist George Psathas. Immediately upon graduating, she joined the faculty at Wheelock College, where she would teach from 1973 until her retirement in December 2008, when she was named Professor Emerita.
Because Wheelock was a small institution, she often functioned as the sole sociologist in the combined Psychology and Sociology Department, leading her to develop a staggering breadth of courses, including Introduction to Sociology, Women in Cross-Cultural Perspective, The Sociology of Education, and The Sociology of Deviance.

Dr. Wacksler was a pioneering figure in the Sociology of Childhood, a field she helped shape when such specialized study was rare. In 1977, she created the course Studying the Social Worlds of Children, which she taught for three decades. Rather than looking at children strictly through the lens of developmental psychology, she used phenomenological sociology to treat children as competent, fully functioning social actors who actively construct their own social realities. Her major publications included:
The Sociology of Deviance: An Introduction (1982, co-authored with her husband Douglas)
Studying the Social Worlds of Children: Sociological Readings (1991)
The Little Trials of Childhood: And Children's Strategies for Dealing with Them (1996)
Even in retirement, she remained an active scholar. She turned an old pet research project regarding the January 1973 New Orleans Howard Johnson's hotel sniper incident into a fascinating phenomenological case study titled The New Orleans Sniper: A Phenomenological Case Study of Constituting the Other, published in 2010.

Born in Cambridge, Massachusetts, Fran spent her entire life and career in the Boston area. She married her husband, Norman Waksler (a fiction writer), in 1962 after meeting as undergraduates at Boston University. She was an avid gardener, deeply devoted to her dogs (including her beloved whippet, Greta Garbo), and remained profoundly intellectual until her passing.
Following her death in the spring of 2024, her family and the broader Boston University and Wheelock historic alumni community honored her enduring impact on the fields of ethnomethodology, pedagogy, and childhood studies.



heelock College alumni and community leaders who passed away recently, reflecting lifetimes dedicated to early childhood development, education, and community advocacy:



Recent Alumni & Trustee Passings

Anne L. Reiley (Class of 1963)

Passed Away: April 27, 2026 (Age 84)

Legacy: After graduating from Wheelock in 1963, Anne began her career teaching third grade in Sharon, Massachusetts. She later transitioned into a successful four-decade career as a prominent Realtor in the Attleboro area, while remaining deeply active in local civic boards, church committees, and the public library.



Kathryn "Kathy" W. Lordan

Passed Away: February 3, 2026 (Age 80)

Legacy: Kathy earned her Bachelor's degree in Early Childhood Education from Wheelock College. Her studies launched her into a fulfilling career as a dedicated school teacher, and she spent her later years deeply embedded in the Cape Ann community in Rockport, Massachusetts.



Karen L. Talbott

Passed Away: March 1, 2026 (Age 75)

Legacy: A resident of North Andover, Massachusetts, Karen paired a Bachelor's degree from Merrimack College with a Master's degree from Wheelock College. She was remembered by her family for her gentle heart, deep creativity, and a quiet sense of adventure.



Nellene Chisholm

Passed Away: September 21, 2025 (Age 79)

Legacy: After working for many years at Blue Cross Blue Shield, Nellene found her true calling in community advocacy. She returned to school at Wheelock College to study Child Care Development, using her training to transition into a vital retirement career as a counselor for the Pine Street Inn in Boston.



John F. Knutson (Board of Trustees)

Passed Away: December 26, 2025 (Age 85)

Legacy: While not an alumnus himself, Knutson served as a dedicated member of the Wheelock College Board of Trustees for ten years. His thoughtful leadership and financial acumen were instrumental during the transitional period leading up to the historic merger with Boston University.

QR code for BU Wheelock Deaths

Hlstoric Retirements

Here is what is publicly documented (2025–2026 BU Wheelock retirements)—this is the most recent confirmed list of historic Wheelock-linked faculty stepping into retirement status.

🎓 BU Wheelock Faculty Retirements (Most Recent Cohort)

📌 Announced retirements (2025–2026 cycle)

1. Linda Banks-Santilli

Associate Dean for Academic Affairs

Clinical Associate Professor

Longtime Wheelock administrator spanning pre-merger Wheelock College + BU Wheelock

Key role in academic operations and program coordination

➡️ One of the most significant "bridge figures" between the independent Wheelock College era and BU integration.

2. Ellen Faszewski

Faculty member in Child Life & Family-Centered Care

Longstanding educator in pediatric and family systems training programs

3. Lisa Ijiri

Faculty member in Science Education / Teacher preparation

Focus on curriculum and STEM education pathways

4. Paul Thayer

Faculty member in Education / Higher Education practice areas

Longtime contributor to educator preparation and program design

📌 Additional major retirements (from the prior cycle, still historically relevant)

These are often grouped with the broader "Wheelock legacy retirement wave":

David Chard — Former BU Wheelock Dean (and former Wheelock College president pre-merger)

Hardin Coleman — Former Dean (2008–2017)

Catherine O'Connor — Education & Linguistics scholar

Petra Hesse — Child development & psychology scholar

(Boston University)

🧭 What this means historically

This 2025–2026 retirement group is significant because it represents:

✔️ Final wave of early merger-era leadership

People who directly transitioned Wheelock College → BU Wheelock

Faculty who helped redesign programs after 2018

✔️ Loss of "institutional memory layer"

Especially:

Linda Banks-Santilli (administrative continuity across eras)

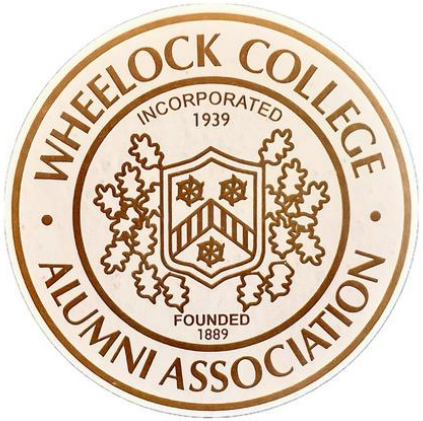
Chard/Coleman/O'Connor cohort (merger architects + senior faculty leadership)

Wheelock College

Wheelock College
ALUMNI

Sharpen your resource center talents!
Print, Cutout, Tape, Laminate,



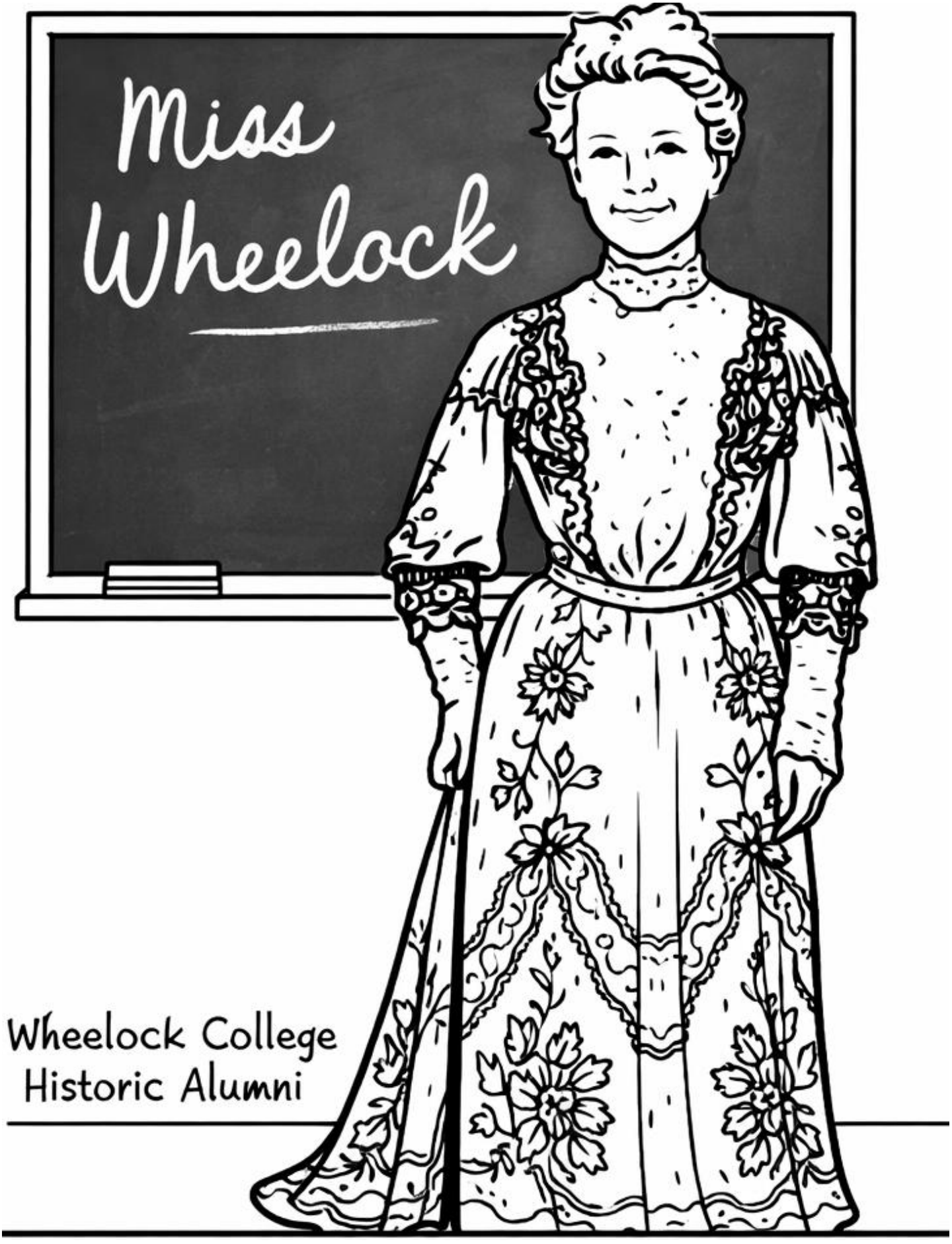




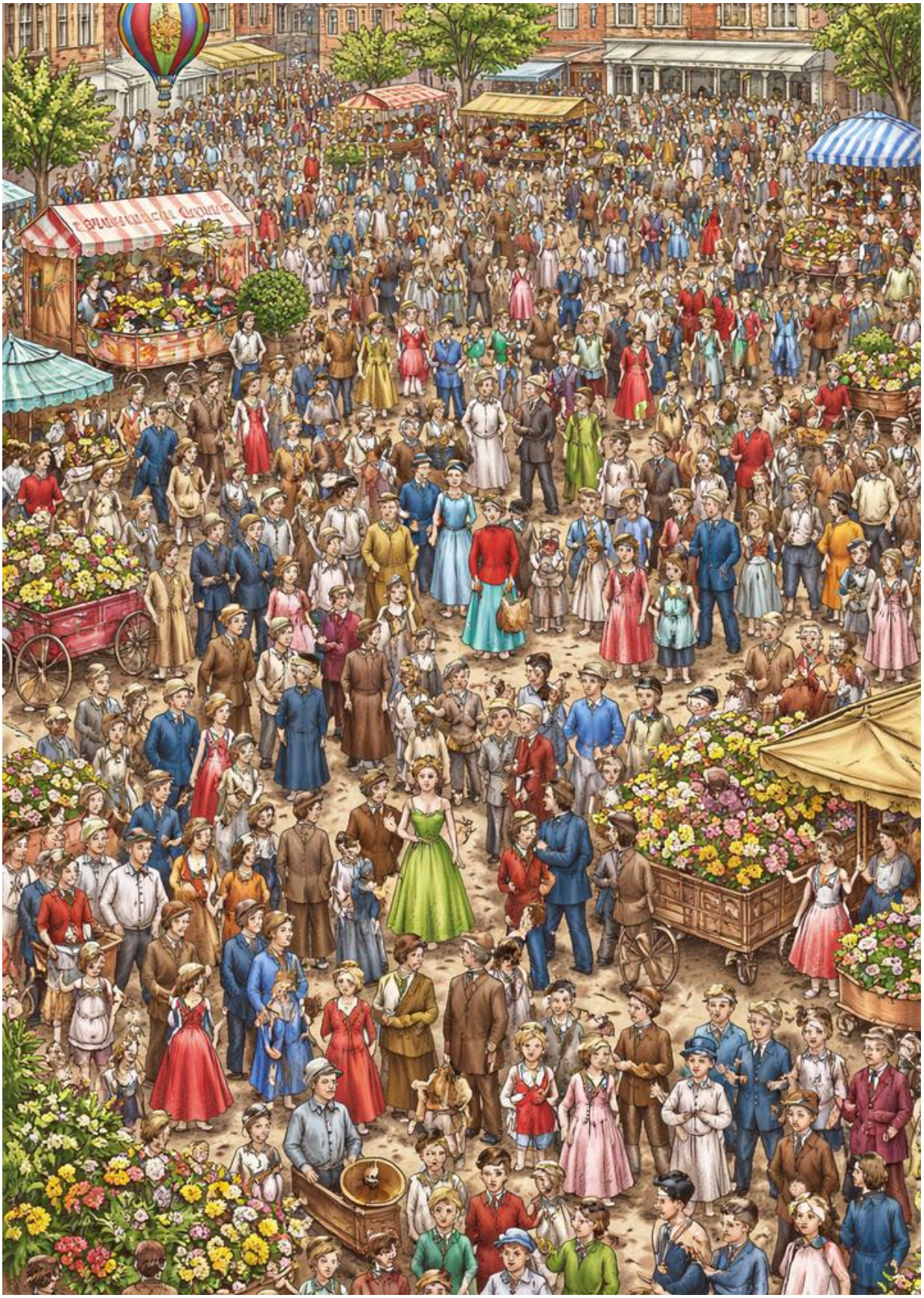


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Where's Lucy?



Wheelock College Alma Mater





Listen to the new Historic Wheelock Alma Mater written by Christopher King

So, so, so, much more to come.....




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