

— Feature Story — Interview With the Wheatons — Feature Story —

After having some time to settle into their new home and career at Ottawa University the Wheatons were kind enough to share some of their personal thoughts and feelings about being back at OU. Following are excerpts from an interview about their new life at OU.

Tauy Talk: Just for the record, tell us how you came to OU as students in the first place.

Wilbur: My brother came here before I did and I was encouraged to come to OU through his contact and OU was talked about in my home church in Scott City, Kansas. But basically, I was recruited by Dick Peters to play football for the school.

Ellen Ann: I grew up in Ottawa so I was what they called a "town girl." I really wanted to go away to school but my folks suggested that I come to Ottawa for two years then transfer. Obviously, I met Wilbur and decided to stay. My mother was a graduate of OU. I was recruited in music by Paul Stoner. I took lessons from him and played in the OU Symphonette, even while I was a senior at Ottawa High School.

Tauy Talk: Ellen Ann, your major was music. What was your major, Dr. Wheaton, and when did you decide on your major?

Wilbur: I decided in my sophomore year to major in math but even as a senior I was still not sure what I was going into. The head of the math department at that time was Dr. Bemmels. I suppose one of the reasons I majored in math was because he was willing to work with me even though I was not a strong mathematician. He was a very patient man. I received my teaching certificate in math and then began my career as a teacher.

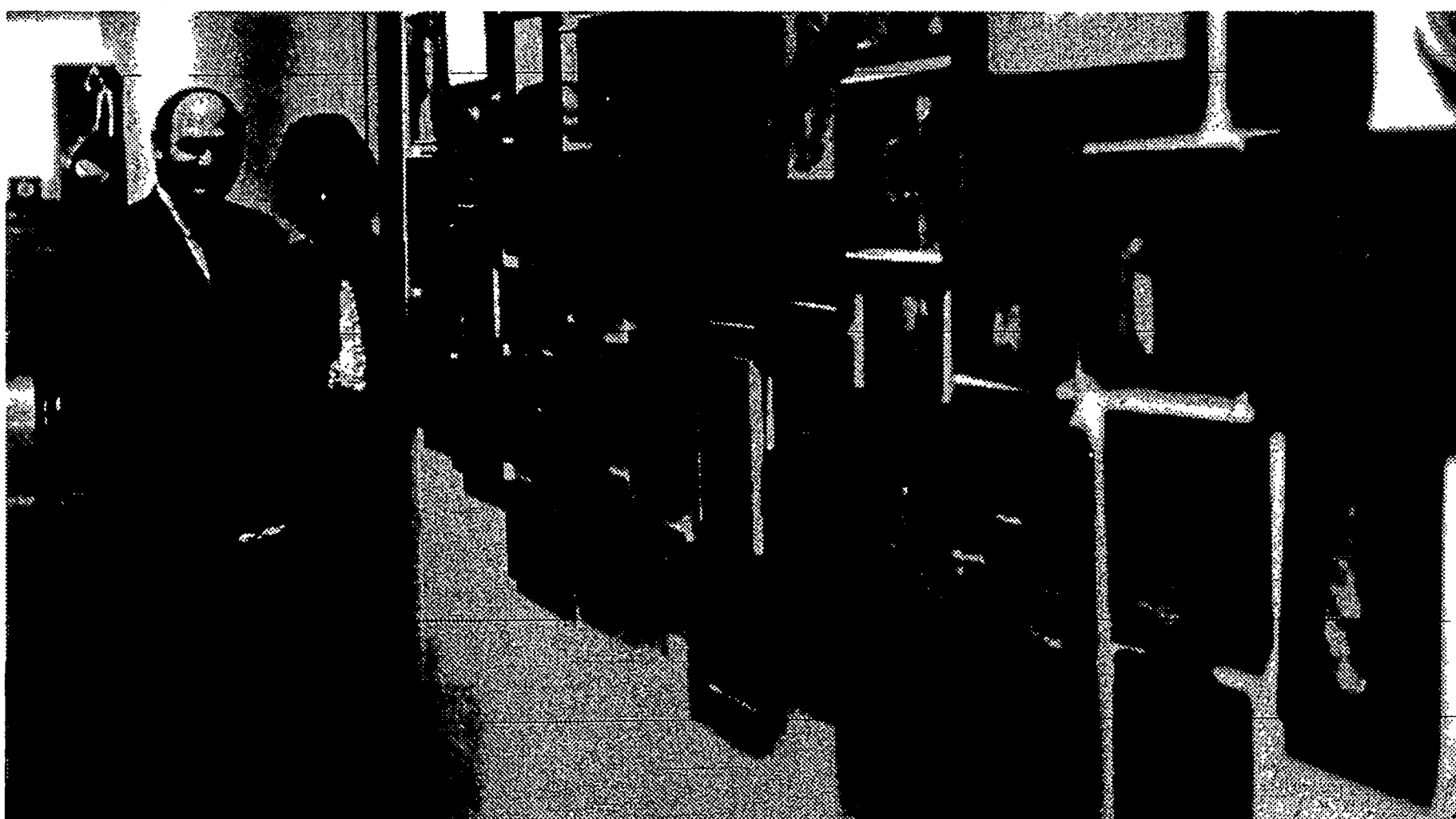
Tauy Talk: Was Dr. Bemmels Dean at that time?

Ellen Ann: I think he was but I really don't recall. I guess we were good kids because we never had to go see the Dean. When Wilbur first took the presidency over we didn't even know for sure where the President's office was.

Tauy Talk: How would you compare the campusing to do because I ended now to when you were here as students a little less than 19 years ago?

Ellen Ann: Well, there are more buildings, the men didn't live on campus, there were no mens' dorms at that time. But the campus really hasn't changed that much at least not like some of the student activities.

Wilbur: The fact that the men lived off campus probably dictated that we do more things as a total community. We all ate together at one time in the Commons in a massive sit down, family style dinner. Thursday and Sunday nights we had to wear a coat and tie to dinner. One of those nights was usually steak night. We also had two required



The Wheatons show off their "hallway" family album at the Presidential home.

chapters then. Academically, the program was strictly classroom work. We didn't have the expanded educational programs and the possibilities of internships OU students have today.

Ellen Ann: We had social clubs then but they weren't determined by where you lived. You were selected to a social club. In the Commons we had seating assignments that changed every week so that we wouldn't sit with the same kids all the time. We really enjoyed the campus life.

Tauy Talk: How do you feel about your decision to come back to OU after you've been here for awhile?

Wilbur: We are totally convinced that it was the right thing to do. We are really enjoying the opportunity to work together. For Ellen Ann and me to have a career "together" is really great. I believe the time was right for us to come back. Of course, the challenges are different from the superintendent jobs I've had in the past, but I'm finding a great sense of security in the support from so many people who care very much for this school. We love Ottawa too and want to give it our best.

Ellen Ann: I'm really enjoying being back too. I especially enjoy the house and the entertaining I can do. It's fun to have people over.

Tauy Talk: What do you miss most about California?

Wilbur: Probably the weather and all the fresh fruit. Where we lived in California, we had grape vines in the back yard. We would make our own raisins by drying them up on the back patio.

Ellen Ann: We're not as close to our grandchildren so we miss that part of California, too.

Tauy Talk: Thank you both for sharing your thoughts with the readers of **Tauy Talk**.

Wilbur: We appreciate the opportunity to serve the constituents of Ottawa University. We hope that we will be able to live up to the expectations and be worthy of their trust and support. ■