

— from the — ARCHIVES

WHEN DID
THE DINK
BECOME A
WILSON
TRADITION?

The history of Wilson College is filled with tradition, but not all traditions have endured through the years and not all are long-standing. Consider the “dink.” Dinks are the beanies students don during significant campus events, the caps alumnae pack first when preparing for Reunion Weekend, and the funny hats that outsiders do not appreciate.

The exact circumstances of how the dink was born are elusive, but some records of its origin can be found in the C. Elizabeth Boyd '33 Archives.

The dink's arrival at Wilson coincides with the resurgence of class spirit on college campuses around the nation after World War II. The felt hat is first mentioned in the Aug. 29, 1947, issue of the *Billboard*, in which the author calls the dink a “crew-cap.” The dink later appears in 1948 Conococheague photographs of Dummy Rush Day, a celebration of class spirit and competition between Wilson's Odds and Evens.

The oldest dink in the collection dates to 1944. By 1951, numerous Wilsonites were showing off their beanies in casual shots around campus and as the years go on, the dink becomes a wardrobe staple for college celebrations. In 2013, the dink is bestowed upon freshmen during the Sarah Wilson Week pilgrimage to the namesake's grave at the historic Rocky Spring Church Cemetery. A freshmen continues to wear the dink as it is first placed on her: conventional, backward, askew or even inside-out.

The dink tradition has evolved as classes of Wilson students change it to suit their needs each academic year. Traditions are fluid markers of identity and, while they are links that connect us to the past, they can take different forms throughout the years.

— Sarah Wilson '10