

— hidden — HISTORY

Recently, a new donation made its way to the C. Elizabeth Boyd '33 Archives. I opened the package to find an original Jensen jewelry box and, nestled securely inside, a 1936 class ring that once belonged to the late Mildred Savacool '36.

Mildred's class was only the second to receive the Georg Jensen-designed ring. Originally, every class chose its ring design and they often varied from year to year. For instance, the Class of 1922 picked an all-gold ring with a square top, the Class of 1923 opted for one with a gold seal set into a square onyx top, and the Class of 1928 chose a heavy silver ring decorated with pinecones and branches, and the seal set on a blue, synthetic lapis top.

The Class of 1935 suggested creating a standard college ring. With the consent of the student body, a committee of administrators, alumnae and students formed to choose the final design. Sample after sample was brought in, evaluated and rejected until someone suggested they ask Georg Jensen to create a design.

Jensen, a famed Danish silversmith, specialized in flower and berry motifs on his creations. Working from a photograph of the College seal and a copy of the alma mater, Jensen created a design for a silver ring embellished with pine cones and maple pods. The Wilson seal sat on a square top, outlined in blue enamel. The cost: \$10. A 1934 *Billboard* stated, "The whole effect is very modern and much more feminine than that of the rings of former years."

Shortly after the first rings were made for the Class of 1935, Jensen died. Wilson's ring bears the distinction of being the only college ring he ever designed.

By 1968, prices had risen sharply and the wait time for ring shipments exceeded six months. In 1973, students and administrators decided to sever their connection with Jensen and moved to a facsimile version from Jostens. A version of Jensen's original square-topped design can still be ordered from Jostens by today's graduates.

For more information on Wilson's class rings, to see donated rings or to make a ring donation, contact the C. Elizabeth Boyd '33 Archives. For those alumnae who wish to donate their rings to a current graduate, contact the Alumnae Association of Wilson College about the Ring It Forward program.

— Leigh Rupinski, Archivist

