

Interviewee: Marion Flood (nee McCrindle)
UoS Dates: 1967 - 1983
Role(s): Catering Officer



Interview summary:

Summary of content; with time (min:secs)

Start 00:10 – Came to interview in January 1967. Pathfoot was still being built. Garden Cottage was the hub of the university at that time. Met with Tom Cottrell in his office and was given a quick tour.

01:52 – Formal interview in the Golden Lion Hotel. Interview panel comprised of several new professors, Tom Cottrell, Bob Bomont, Harry Donnelly, Frieda Cowell and Amy Coates. Amy Coates was a close friend of MF and was the only female catering officer at a university at that time.

03:24 – Previously worked in halls of residence in the University of Newcastle.

04:04 – Took up the post in May 1967. Buildings progressed quickly

04:54 – Was involved in discussions with architects.

06:42 – In the first year, MF's only responsibility was catering in Pathfoot. As the university progressed, was more involved in the residences and other new buildings. Before students arrived had to hire catering staff, interviewed candidates in the job centre in Stirling under the watch of job centre manager Mr Pow. In those days it was difficult for people to understand how big the plans for the university were. MF's first assistant was Nan Dickie who married a postgraduate student from Psychology [David Mack].

09:06 – Nan Dickie went on to be responsible for Pathfoot catering while MF concentrated on the new residences. Frank and Helen Logan were employed to run Andrew Stewart Hall. Some students had to live off campus and an Accommodation Officer was appointed to look after them. He died and MF had to go and speak to landladies about housing students.

10:58 – There were a few houses on campus. Friarscroft had some students living in it along with someone to look after them. At Pathfoot, departments were using the coffee lounge for departmental meetings. A trolley service was put on for when the coffee lounge was being used. It was tricky to make everyone happy so only partially useful. The trolley was abandoned and it was decided that the coffee lounge and dining room would be for catering purposes only.

13:11 – University had an opening dinner on 18th of September. It had an informal start and end. Gave everyone a taste of what life at Stirling would be like. MF cut her hand and Tom Cottrell took her to the hospital.

15:13 – Good memories of Tom Cottrell. He wanted bathrooms at the university to be labelled Men and Women rather than Gentlemen and Ladies.

15:49 – Airthrey Castle was still a maternity hospital. Norman Walker, the Estates and Buildings Manager, would have MF talk to her friend Miss Bunyan, the matron, so that he and the architects could access the building. Miss Bunyan didn't approve of having men in the hospital. The fire regulations were poor. Some students at the University were born in Airthrey Castle, including Jack McConnell. University got in to Airthrey Castle in 1969. Harry Gardner succeeded Andrew Biggart as the Medical Officer. Andrew Biggart died in the University swimming pool. Harry

Gardner utilised the annexe at Airthrey Castle where the nurses had previously lived. He also started a curling club that MF joined.
19:08 – Other social clubs such as women’s reading clubs set up by the early wives were a good way to get to know people.
19:34 – MacRobert planning meant lots of discussions with the architects and the UGC. It was frustrating as plans were being changed for reasons outwith their control. By then the residences were self-catering but there was a big uptake in student meals when the MacRobert opened. Began doing meals for the community in the evenings which was a good way of introducing local people to the university. The first performance in the MacRobert was <i>The Rake’s Progress</i> .
22:12 – By then the residences were well equipped with porters and wardens and were being run outwith the catering department. This left them more time to get on with other things. At least half a dozen catering staff married students or young members of staff.
23:29 – Special occasions. Held the first graduation in the Pathfoot dining room so there was no space to do any catering. Graduations required more space and moved to the Museum Hall in Bridge of Allan. Catering did some small graduation lunches. There wasn’t a lot of space to do much until the other buildings opened. Then held graduation lunches in the Court Room.
24.42 – Lord Robbins always wanted to put on Scottish food at events. John Riddy came on as Conference Administrator and they began to do more conferences. Would have small dinners in the Court Rooms.
27.09 – Some visitors were keen to try Scottish food but some weren’t. It wasn’t always easy to cater for dietary needs and preferences. Had to provide a lot of Japanese food when Wang were building on campus.
29.09 – Would feed the gardeners sending sandwiches out to them. Good friends with Henry Milne the first groundsman.
30.10 – Summer was completely taken up with conference catering.
30.24 Students living in Dalnair house and Allangrange. Allangrange was the student club run by Nancy and George Donaldson. A small staff club was opened in a house on the perimeter of the University. Was welcomed as staff had nowhere to socialise away from students. Wasn’t well used, probably a bit too far away.
32.04 – Gannochy Sports Pavilion opened with its own private catering. Was popular with staff and students.
32.25 – University Secretary wanted an outdoor centre. Bought a lodge at Loch Rannoch which was of interest to MF as the catering facilities needed to be replaced. A young couple were appointed to manage the lodge. Had an administration weekend up there before it opened to students. Space for 30 students. Probably got too expensive to have a small unit so far away from the University.
34.43 – Incident of things going missing from the lodge. A local lady had been appointed to cook for the students. Peter Yates, the University Security Officer, and MF went to her house with local police to find she had been stealing from the University.
36.42 – Queen’s visit. A lot of planning for MF and Derek Lang. Was very tightly controlled. Had to send the menus in advance for approval. Had to put on lunch for more than 50 people. Went to Gleneagles to sample a simple lunch suitable for the Queen. Menu was approved apart from the cauliflower cheese as the Queen doesn’t have sauce on her cauliflower.
39.09 – University did Scottish summer courses in Airthrey Castle. Would send lunches up. Ally Bain was particularly fond of egg rolls.
39.46 – Was asked to put on a cooking course. Jimmy McGregor interviewed MF for his Scottish programmes on the BBC. The course was to be about Scottish cooking. An airline pilot who wanted to learn how to cook for his Scottish wife was to attend but couldn’t in the end. It was a successful course but wasn’t repeated.
[Ends 40.23]

Interview No:	SURSA OH / 030	<p style="text-align: center;"> SURSA University of Stirling Stirling FK9 4LA </p> <p style="text-align: center;"> info@sursa.org.uk www.sursa.org.uk </p>	 <p style="text-align: center;">SURSA</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Oral History</p>
Interviewed by:	Carolyn Rowlinson		
Date of interview:	01/09/2014		
Summary completed by:	Aime Jaffray		
Date:	24/06/2016		

