

Interviewee: Mary Hunter (aka Maureen Hunter)
UoS Dates: 1967 – 1971 (Died 2016)
Role(s): Undergraduate (Hons English Studies)



Interview summary:

Start 00:18 – MH was amongst the first hundred intake of students in 1967 and graduated 1971. She moved up from England to Dunblane when she was fourteen. Felt she had a more limited range to study in high school in Scotland than in England. She did her Highers in French, English, German and Latin. MH applied to Stirling, Edinburgh, Glasgow and St Andrews. She chose Stirling due to it being a new university and it was felt there would be more opportunities for students plus the location was convenient.

04:40 – MH stayed at home but there was no accommodation in the first couple of years on campus. Many students were farmed out into Bridge of Allan or Causewayhead. Work on campus accommodation didn't start till the second year of the University and wasn't available till its 3rd-4th year.

06:00 – MH took English, French and German at Stirling. The tutorial numbers never seemed to run to double figures, with her English classes holding the most students. The tutorials focused more in-depth on what the previous lecture had discussed.

07:00 – It was felt that there was a good relationship between staff and students. Lectures would often have no more than 30-40 people in them.

08:15 – MH feels that living at home made her miss out on the social side of university. Interviewer talks about students from Kenya he had who were appalled at the way 17 year olds living on campus were acting and that they thought the University was irresponsible for allowing this.

09:30 – Various societies were being set up. MH joined the Sailing Club and recalls Tom Cottrell lending them his boat which they sailed on the Forth. Feels this experience was unique and wouldn't be found in older universities. Small groups of students were invited to the Principal's house allowing them to get to know Tom Cottrell. There was canoeing on the loch. MH recalls often ending up in the coffee lounge after class where discussions would often continue over coffee as it was a staff-student coffee room. MH didn't take part in the student sit ins and strikes and so felt odd going against it. They picketed Pathfoot but staff continued lecturing. She had left when the Queen visited.

15:10 – MH thought it would be a challenge being amongst the first intake of students. It was a matter of trying your best. She got what she wanted out of Stirling and enjoyed it as well. MH ended up doing a degree in German and English. She enjoyed the modernity of the English department and found it unique in Scotland. Professor Tommy Dunn was the Head of the English department. She can recall all Heads of Department were enthusiastic.

18:15 – MH had intended to do teaching when she graduated but didn't fancy another year of studying. She worked for the Edinburgh police force for 30 years. Stirling helped her to be a bit more decisive and more objective when looking at things. University concentrated her mind.

[Ends 23:50]

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