

Interviewee: Brian Loasby (Professor B J Loasby)  
UoS Dates: 1967 - 1984  
Role(s): Lecturer, then Senior Lecturer in Economics, 1967 - 1971  
Professor of Management Economics, 1971 -1984  
Emeritus Professor, D Univ (1998)



## Interview summary:

### *Summary of content; with time (min:secs)*

**Start 00:47** – Studied at Cambridge Emmanuel College 1949-1952, receiving a First in Economics, having first done National Service. Followed by University Scholarship, M. Litt on the industrial history of his home town of Kettering. First post at Aberdeen University succeeding Roy Campbell who then became member of staff at Stirling University. Before coming to Stirling BL was a research Fellow at the University of Birmingham funded by Cadburys. Next post was at Bristol University on the newly set up Management Studies Programme. Influenced by Chester Barnard's book and involved in the Foundation for Management Education. Worked at Cambridge MIT/Harvard Business Schools.

**27:06** – On return to UK met Sir Charles Suckling and was introduced to Frank Bradbury who was going to Stirling University to set up Technological Economics Programme in Nov 1966(?). Scheme to have joint degrees combining science, economics and 'other stuff'. Innovative idea from the Principal Tom Cottrell, who had been Professor of Chemistry at Edinburgh and then worked for ICI in Central Research Department led by Challis.

**30:30** – Frank Bradbury who also worked for ICI was head-hunted for Stirling University by Tom Cottrell. BL met with Andrew Bain (working then at the Bank of England) then interview with Tom Cottrell making total of 3 unconventional interviews.

**32:37** – Students recruited had science backgrounds. Undergraduate programme had few graduates but included Bob Hamilton, later a Professor of Economics in New Zealand. Post-graduate one year MSc course much more successful through recruiting students from industry. Started with 2 students from ICI in its first year including Callum McCarthy. BL believes that undergraduate course not successful due to having to take 4 courses per year instead of usual 3. Management Economics from Technological Economics course survived in Economics course. Suckling gave lectures.

**37:25** – Promoted quickly to Senior Lecturer in 1967. In favour semester system compared with traditional Scottish system of 2 years followed by 1 year for Ordinary degree and 2 years Honours degree, which BL believed was constraining. Involved in decision making about courses as in 1967 so few members of staff. Specialist options were Finance led by Andrew Bain and Management by BL. Given free hand with the course.

**39:42** – Other early members of staff were Andrew Bain; Mark Brownrigg; Mike Greig. Largest department in the University with 4 members of staff possibly because it was so new. Initial allocation of 3 members of staff and as numbers grew staff numbers would rise also. Three main staff were Bradbury, BL and Mike Makower and also Andrew Bain – all turned up to all lectures even when just had 2 students. Bradbury and Bain very different characters. Ethos was that students not registered for specific degree in Part 1 because no barriers between faculties.

**44:42** – Innovation of compulsory Approaches and Methods course instigated by Tom Cottrell did not last long because no training given to staff who delivered the sessions. In line with Stirling ethos of students taking parts of different subjects, which worked well in MSc Technological Economics. Relating to Suckling's idea of different ways of thinking about things. BL not aware of other universities teaching such courses.

**50:09** – Innovating within established business is very difficult, better to be an outsider. Not associated with other university colleagues though worked with Patrick Guiton of Sociology Department on one week in-house courses mainly with ICI. Hans Meidner co-operated with PhD students approved by Fred Holliday.

**55.48** – Still lives in same house in Stirling in Melfort Drive found by Norman Walker. Happy with integrated social life of staff and students at first when small numbers, but it did not work with a couple of thousand. Went round schools promoting Stirling University. Reaction was to question why go to Stirling when plenty of established Scottish universities, whereas in England the new universities were the place to go. Not involved much in recruitment after Queen’s visit (12/10/1972). Other universities glad not to have such a visit planned because of the then climate of student activism.

**1:02:54** – Most satisfying aspect of working at Stirling in early days using industrial experience and being influenced by philosophical ideas. Was first economist to publish with names such as Karl Popper. Last book dedicated to Charles Suckling.

**1:08:13** – Involved with entrepreneurial studies in teaching about ideas about the subject working with Frank Martin in late 1970s and early 1980s after he had retired.

**[Ends 1:11:16]**

<b>Interview No:</b>	SURSA OH / 068	<p><b>SURSA</b>  <b>University of Stirling</b>  <b>Stirling</b>  <b>FK9 4LA</b></p> <p><a href="mailto:info@sursa.org.uk">info@sursa.org.uk</a>  <a href="http://www.sursa.org.uk">www.sursa.org.uk</a></p>	
<b>Interviewed by:</b>	John Stewart		
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