

Interviewee: Marian Hara (neé Orr)  
UoS Dates: 1967 - 1970  
Role(s): Undergraduate, BA General with English major



## Interview summary:

**Start 00:00** – In the first student intake 1967. Graduated in 1970 as graduate number 7. Chose Stirling because new university; lived in Glasgow and wanted to live away from home. Great joy when she was accepted for Stirling.

**01:47** – No residences for students in the first year. Students had to live in digs. Marian started off in centre of Stirling, 5 girls in one house. Owners were fussy people, had lots of rules: it was very difficult for Stirling to adapt to having students. Later small flat in Bridge of Allan with one bedroom for 5 girls, and then 3 moved to Alloa. University had long list of requirements for any student who wanted to rent accommodation.

**05:33** – Chose English because enjoyed it at school and perhaps best at that. Marian's first Director of Studies was Alastair White. Other subjects Marian took were Philosophy, Sociology and History. Good assessment system in English, based on best pieces of work. Lots of work to do.

**10:22** – First impressions: new beautiful environment. Steps up to Pathfoot, which was what the University consisted of, plus Airthrey Castle and Allangrange. 168 students approximately. Mature students were a feature, which made it interesting, including Monica Clough, who wrote impressive dissertation on India. Closer contact with staff compared with other universities, including dinner parties, babysitting for staff, etc

**13:42** – Staff: Tommy Dunn was Head of English. John and Felicity Riddy made use of the babysitting club set up by Marian's friend Jackie. Robin Mayhead was there, and Mr Wood who made caustic remarks on Marian's essays, which she still keeps.

**14:47** – Like many for whom it is the almost automatic next step, Marian was not sure what she was at University for. This was one reason for graduating after 3 years with General Degree (rather than 4 for Honours Degree). Had to read the views of critics on literature, rather than own views. Wasn't sure why studying. Enjoyed the course, but lots of work, more than expected. Wide choice of courses within English.

**17:13** – Teaching was organised through lectures (e.g. in big lecture theatre in Pathfoot), seminars with 20-30, and small tutorials taking turns to present, very nerve-racking – different from school. Did the work she had to do, lots of reading and papers to write, but no memory of lots of extra-curricular discussions with other students. Remembers the pressure, hours in the Library, and reserving books on short loan. Library was in Pathfoot.

**20:48** – Other facilities: dining hall, coffee area, much time spent there. Allangrange: bar, room with piano where a friend played Chopin. Influenced by that, Marian decided around 30 years old in Tokyo to start piano lessons. At Stirling as a new university very little was pre-established, so students had to organise everything themselves. Apart from the babysitting club, there were clubs for horse riding, sailing on the loch, drama (e.g. Waltz of the Toreadors performed in

the coffee shop area). Marian involved in setting up the United Nations Student Association, encouraged by Stanley Kleinberg, who later came to work at Stirling, and Marian arranged speakers to come and talk. There was nothing in place, so nothing would happen unless you did it. Raised money for charity by walking. Did some paid work as waitress. Also did voluntary work, going to Raploch to clean and decorate a kitchen.

**26:28** – Director of Studies system. Marian’s second Director of Studies had just come back from USA, and he talked of her ‘sophomore identity crisis’. Career Advisory was in Castle. Remembers seeing the names of big companies, and decided it was not for her. Decided to head for London after graduation. Graduation was not easy: had to go home and sit in bed for a week and wrote papers typed up by father’s secretary. After living in Japan for some years, returned to Scotland to study for Diploma in English Teaching and loved that, studying for practical purpose. Very young to be at University first time, quite a struggle.

**31:58** – Graduation ceremony was held in the Pathfoot Dining Hall. Lovely robes, speeches. Very proud to be amongst first graduates. Garden party outside. Still have photo of John Riddy and his daughter. Marian had not been so active, rather shy, but got through it and got piece of paper, and very glad to have it. It was very important to her that she was graduate number 7. After moving back from Alloa to Bridge of Allan they had parties and good social life, but the academic side was quite a struggle. Did some Sociology, still remember ‘Family and Kinship in East London’. I was not so aware of what was going on in the world. Bit of a cocoon – Stirling was a nice place to be for that, campus rather than city. Fish shop in Bridge of Allan – used to live on fish cakes, mushrooms on toast, saving money. Difficult to survive on the grant.

**37:30** – After graduation went to work in London, secretarial courses, job as typist. When started travelling East, became a teacher. Didn’t use English Literature as subject, but the experience of University, and pushing yourself and presenting arguments, developed the ability to write. Now teaching English as a foreign language to high school students in Tokyo. An appreciation of language has helped.

**39:27** – The times when Marian was studying was a time of great social change, music and ideas. The pill became available. New freedoms. Local GP was delighted to be asked about birth control. Drugs: smoking dope, trying different things. Listening to music like Beatles, Bob Dylan (especially), Simon and Garfunkel, Joan Baez, Incredible String Band. In the last year of study at Stirling Marian was really running short of money and sold all her records to her friend Jackie, who still had them! These things (music etc.) were very important in the lives of the students.

**[Ends 42:21]**

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