

Interviewee: Tom Young (Thomas Paterson Young), **MBE**
UoS Dates: 1967- 1979 (afterwards, self-employed.)
Role(s): Senior Technician (glass)



Interview summary:

<p>Start 00:00 Tom Young was thinking about emigrating to Australia when he heard about a new university in Scotland in 1966; he applied to the new university before they even began searching for staff.</p>
<p>01:25 In February 1967, he received a letter with an invitation from Professor Bell and Doctor Robert Clay (Senior Lecturer in the Chemistry Department) to a job interview, which took place at Oxford University. The first founding of a university in 700 years was an attraction for him. His second interview included making a test piece: scientific glass – he would run the new glass technology department.</p>
<p>02:19 TY was a glass maker of scientific instruments, to back up research for Chemistry, Physics, Biology – it’s unusual now, but at that time most universities had a research glass making department.</p>
<p>02:50 Worked before for 12 years in this field of expertise.</p>
<p>03:30 For the test piece he went to Professor Harrison at Culham. He was going to be Professor of Physics in Stirling, and would need scientific instruments. The test went very well.</p>
<p>03:52 When he arrived at the interview, there was a pencil-written card on the door: “Stirling University” – without logo.</p>
<p>04:40 He met there other future Stirling staff: Don Dance, Ron Harrison, Mike?</p>
<p>05:00 He thought carefully about accepting the job. He visited Stirling with his wife, but there was still no university: Pathfoot was emerging. He visited Garden Cottage; met Tom Cottrell, the Principal, there by accident – and he decided to take the job</p>
<p>06:37 Tom Cottrell ran the University without ‘stations of hierarchy’ at the beginning, all of them worked together; TY appreciated that.</p>
<p>07:22 He began work at the end of August 1967 in temporary office accommodation next to Garden Cottage; he shared the office with the chief technician Archie Young, an electronic engineer, Don Dance, Brian Povey and Roy Harrison. The job at that point was basically ordering materials and equipment and finding places for it (in storage in Alloa or Falkirk, because there still was no University).</p>
<p>09:00 His first day at the university. Scottish weather: the rain was so heavy and the construction so incomplete, that there was mud everywhere, and they had to take their shoes off and help mop up the floor.</p>
<p>09:50 The first lecture was in the lecture theatre at Pathfoot by Professor McEwen who welcomed undergraduates, and staff (technical, academic and secretarial). The kitchen was run by Marion McCrindle [Flood] who tried out the equipment and gave out a free meal.</p>
<p>10:50 In the first week, at breaks in the coffee lounge in J corridor, all had to sit on the floor because there wasn’t furniture.</p>

12:00 No structure at the beginning, all were new; he also got to know the students quickly, especially the Chemistry students.
12:40 In the first years, the budget was quite generous, which was unusual, so they tried to find the best equipment to start off. The number of staff in the Chemistry department was less than ten, and there was an equivalent number of specialized technicians.
14:20 Wonderful camaraderie. He recalls Peter Murray-Rust, Robert Clay, Frank Riddell, Brian Cox and informal evenings (wine tasting), also a house warming he gave in 1967 with people from all the departments.
15:15 By November 1967, the students got organized; they collected all the timber debris from the building works and had a huge bonfire night on 5 th of November.
16:40 Spring 1968: forming of clubs (all young people including wives). An inflatable sports building was established: "the barracuda" next to Allangrange (where 5-side football, badminton, tennis, indoor games and dry skiing took place). Students and staff used Queen Victoria School swimming pool. They also formed a ski club (which included Professors Holliday and Bain) and ran a bus every second Saturday to go skiing.
19:30 Wives and children being involved. TY's wife was a secretary at Loughborough university before she came to Stirling. She was interviewed by Mr. Donnelly and Mr Bomont and got a job similar to the one she had before, and so they could work together at the university. At the beginning there was a very strict secretary (Mrs McGrogan), but TY's wife enjoyed the work. She organized coffee mornings for the wives and when all had infants, she helped to arrange a baby-sitting group based on a token-system.
22:10 Coming to Stirling University at day one in 1967 was one of the best experiences of his life.
Ends 22:42

Interview No:	SURSA OH / 80	<p>SURSA University of Stirling Stirling FK9 4LA</p> <p>info@sursa.org.uk www.sursa.org.uk</p>	<p>SURSA</p>  <p>Oral History</p>
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Summary completed by:	Julia Schönthaler/CR		
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