

Oral History Interview with Heather Harris Alumnus
Conducted by Kathleen Lingley August 25, 2003
Transcribed by Nadège Toussaint August 8, 2008

HH: So Kathleen, what we've been talking about was what it was like for me being here at Saint Mary's. I worked and went to Saint Mary's at night after being rejected by Dalhousie because they could only accept me for 4 o'clock in the afternoon and there was no employer that I had that was going to let me go at that time. Then I went to summer school and I went full-time. I was in the classroom at the time in which a significant group of 58 women became part of the campus. And also after I graduated I got a BA in history, then a Masters of Arts in history, then I worked here for a year and I worked in the president's office for a while - and then I worked as the first administrative assistant over in the department of business administration. So it was a hoot and a holler. And then I went to UBC to do Education.

I wrote regularly for the Maroon and White and I got a column called "Alumni of the 70s" and this sort of tells you what it was like for me during the late 60s and early 70s at Saint Mary's and what it meant for me and when I read it, it was just fresh as it ever would be. So it goes both in quotation marks, and as a matter of fact: "As we go our separate ways and use the confidence, the tools we acquired at Saint Mary's. We will remember each other, and we will hang on to each other, because we are all members of the class of 1973. And we will always have Saint Mary's University in common - that quiet, warm, happy feeling, we will have as a memory in the future is the result of our time and the experience we were a part of together during these last years" - end of quote. That was part of Brain Duffy's valedictory the last year which would have been the 1973, and I feel expresses the sentiment of many students and graduating classes that have passed through the portals of this University.

Having graduated from, worked, and lived at Saint Mary's, my own ties are very strong and have been made so in many ways. For many of you Keith Hotchkiss, Ken Clark, and Mike Quinn are outstanding athletes but Saint Mary's had made them more than that, for me. Mike, his wife Nancy and daughter Kelly were my neighbors in residence, and Mike's prowess at furniture moving was as greatly appreciated as his stick handling. Keith was a classmate in Chinese history and many of days we drove the Dr. Mary Sun right up the Great Wall of China by our western pronunciation of "Hang Chow". Mary was ready to hang us and of course Keith, Ken Clark, and Rick Clair were among the stalwarts who, manned the desk at high rise 2 when I lived there. David Hope, Paul Cormier, Pat O'Neil, Mike Larsen, Jack Bradford, George Murphy Howard, Ken Bandelier, Kevin Cleary, Lori Smith, Bruce Smith and Murray Wilson, are for many of you either part of the faculty or administration of the university, but they are also Santamarians who gained part of their education in the same school as yourselves.

Bryan O'Byrne lived with me in residence and he and Dennis Reardon are remembered as captains of the Hockey and Basketball teams, but for me the most memorable moment were not in the rink or basketball court but in the limited confines of the History graduate students room. There, O'Byrne, Jerry Kelley, Murray Burkhouse, Bill Casey, and Terry Punch and myself had Dennis almost convinced that he was indeed one of the world's greatest authorities on the rise of French Canadian nationalism. Those were the kinds of feelings to which Bryan Duffy referred, for Bryan himself those memories would include Lennox Philips, Paul Hoyt, Bill Arthur, Malcolm Butterfield, Madeline Yogus, and the rest of the Commerce crew.

Convocation represents the end of one's stage of Saint Mary's life, but it opens the door for another. And the unsung heroes, not too many females had been involved as yet, who have kept the Alumni Association going bid you welcome. They will keep you in touch with the school, the people in it and the people you met there. Through the Alumni Association you will meet others sharing your common bond. If you want to see this in action join the fun for homecoming 74, it's your year, so why not come and meet those who have gone before you. Last year's homecoming brought some of the finest back to Halifax: Bob Healy, Roger Bellido, Ted Sandino, Maurice Leblanc, Ron Maloney, and Carlton Mirandes to name a few. Along with these men came some of the nicest wives and sweetest kids you'd ever hope to meet. We had lots in common and made lots of homecoming memories together. You would find out that in meeting somebody like John Bobby Healy, you were meeting the John Galliano of the class of 1963. Bryan Duffy's words began this article and I'll let him finish with the conclusion of his address which was in fact taken from the song sung from at last year's baccalaureate service and again at this years. "Friends I will remember you, think of you, pray for you, and when another day is through I'll still remember you." It's never changed for me.