

Oral History Interview with Heather Harris
Conducted by Bridget Brownlow on January 17, 2011
Transcribed by Alison Froese-Stoddard

BB: So, today's date is the 17th of January, 2011. My name is Bridget Brownlow and I'm here with Heather Harris, commencing an interview at approximately 10:10 AM. So Heather, could you please state your full name?

HH: Heather Jean Harris.

BB: And your date and place of birth?

HH: December 19, 1942, Halifax.

BB: And could you describe your educational background?

HH: Oh, high school – QEH. I went to Dalhousie in pre-Med – I have no mind for science at all, but it sounded good. And then I went down and worked, and started chipping away with night courses at Saint Mary's, simply because Dalhousie didn't offer them.

BB: What years was that, when you were at night courses?

HH: Probably '65, '66, '67, somewhere in there. And the night courses – I would have had some courses at Dalhousie, so that all filtered in. And I was working at, I think, Imperial Oil, and they had a deal where they would supplement [tuition] if you went back to University if taking courses, which I had forgotten about. So that was a nice arrangement. Anyway, my vivid memory I took from Joanne Nugent who died, probably last year, and let me see...her nephew is now a Prof here. Is it Mark Beaubien or Louis Beaubien? Mark, I think.

BB: Sounds familiar.

HH: So his aunt would have been Joanne – Joanne was probably one of the first female principals in Halifax, and she was teaching Literature. And it was interesting what the component parts there were, because there were a lot of teachers who would be upgrading their licenses in this evening course. So what interests me there, Bridget, because this is more what I'm in for this morning, is to really go through what the times were like there. You have Dalhousie saying that the only courses you could get would be at 4:00, or 4:30, so Saint Mary's had somehow moved into the niche thing of the evening courses, and in those evening courses were significant women. Ok? Which to me then, is why – I don't know when the B. Ed. program started at Saint Mary's, but when women would have come in, they would have had an audience who were already user-friendly to here, and who found The Mount – The Mount was referred to as Hungry Hill....

BB: Hungry Hill? Why?

HH: Because it was women, and the men were at Saint Mary's.

BB: And the perception was that the women were hungry? To meet the men?? Isn't that hilarious. Hungry Hill. (laughs) I hadn't heard that before.

HH: I just remembered that. That's why, to my mind, I'm just taking the routes it went in. It seems to me that Jeanne Larson was at The Mount. She did homecoming in '73 with me. Al Keith and Terry Donahoe and I shared homecoming in '73. And '74 it was just hilarious. Terry was junior partner at a law firm, and I was working here from '72-'73, which added yet another dimension to my experience here. I lived in Highrise Two. And any of us from that era would refer to them as what they were, we referred to them as Highrise One and Highrise Two. And I lived on the 12th floor, and David and Elizabeth Chard were on that floor as well. And Mike Quinn, who was on the hockey team, was across, and wife and his then young daughter, and we'd all be trying to get dressed and out the door at the same time, so anybody whose buttons that were undone, everybody went down the hall fast and everybody else... It was a hoot and a holler.

Anyway, so to me there was already a... There would have been people who would have wanted to do degrees at Saint Mary who were of the female persuasion. In '65, I was taking American History – 1865 to the present – the present being 1965. And in walks Mrs. Chard.

I say Mrs. Chard because David Flemming, who was the grand organizer of materials for the Saint Mary's High School Alumni, would have had her when she first came, when she was Miss Hutton. So when I was a Board Member of the Saint Mary's Hall of Fame, and I got David on, because I'm a past president of the national organization which was the Canadian Association for Sport Heritage. I wanted him on, because at the national level we were big on conservation, and on CCI, the Canadian Conservation Institute and PARIS, Pictorial Artifact Retrieval Information Systems, so I wanted someone on who could talk with authority in those areas, and David came on. He ended up as chairing, probably was the second Chair, unless he was the first one. And he would be here. (taps table). Elizabeth would set up the offices in the Sport Hall of Fame Committees, I'd sit in the middle, and we'd both – the conversation would go on and we'd both say, Gee. It looks like there's a significant gap there, and he'd say, "Exactly! I'd say that it was a significant gap." And back and forth we'd go on "significant gap", and then Elizabeth would start hooting because that was her signature phrase, you know? "Well, we both have a significant gap here" and we'd both taken history from her, you know? What's neat about Saint Mary's is that family sort of thing I feel has gone straight through from when I was here, and Ken Ozmon and Betty really worked at that, and Colin and Carol the same. So even though the University is much bigger physically and everything like

that, it still has that thing where you can come in and talk to the director of Student Services without all the probably great respect that the Chief Poobah deserves! (laughs)

Anyway, back to then. She had on a black... She had on what is properly called Oxford Stuff. She was incredible. So that was fine. Anyway, what happened to me was I had an opportunity to go full time, and so what I did, was I came in '68, '69, '70, so I would have gotten that first degree, that BA, in 1970.

BB: So you were in with the first group of women?

HH: Yeah.

BB: Which was the fall of '68.

HH: Yeah. But the way that happens again, as I mentioned, John Bruin who was with the Alumni Association would ask me first, and I said you have to be very specific about what first you're talking about. If you're talking about the first women, or the first woman, Mike Larson is going to say Joslyn Grassby..

BB: Yes.

HH: But there are others that would say Aileen O'Leary Carroll. And please do interview her. She's very articulate, and her story's an interesting one. She was an MP in Ontario for Paul Martin's...

BB: Did she live in Halifax?

HH: No, she lived in Ontario for Paul Martin's , and she would, her area that she was really concerned with was Darfur. So she would have had a posting in Paul Martin's [cabinet]...been involved in that. She's an interesting person. So each of them would have been the first in a particular instance.

BB: So they were all evening students?

HH: No, they were daytime people. So when you're talking about first women, there would have been Joslyn, who was doing Science, and Aileen O'Leary I'm not sure, what she was doing, but they are technically the first. Were they here at exactly the same time - I don't even think they were. There would have been perhaps a year and a difference, or something. And I think one was in Science. I think Joslyn Grassby might remember. And Aileen, if you ask Mike about Aileen O'Leary Carroll, and Jeanne, they would probably be able to orient you more quickly than I can, but the end part of it is that when we did the reunion, she sent messages and that kind of stuff, and kept in touch with Elizabeth. Elizabeth was really good at keeping in touch with everybody. So, but the first actual group [of women] would have been that 1968 crew. But the defining of the "Belles" would have been those in an out. For instance, Chris Parker Butler would have been, and

Mary Evelyn Ternan, her dad was the reg- no, not the registrar, who was Jim Ternan? Could have been student services.... I don't know. Or was that Leo MacDonald.... Don't know. Anyway, Mary Evelyn Ternan's father was Jim Ternan, and it was either student services or stuff. It would have been all over the main building, Loyola. And that crew, the crew that came in in various parts so that you would have those who came in in '68 who probably graduated in '69 or '70. So I would have done that BA in '70. And then there were people who came in in '68 who graduated in '72, who did it like that. So you have areas first, and I think it's really important to understand. But the crew who are thought of as the "Belles", the first 50 [female students].. I don't know whether what the student population was, I just remember that all the guys were very happy to have us in classes.

BB: Oh yes. I wanted to ask you about that. So what was the... prior to that, you had already been assimilated to some degree, but you had been taking night courses.

HH: Yes. But not really, because the day students didn't really take night courses, not too many. They would take probably even something like English 100 or that level - They probably even at that time were offering it in the day and in the night. I'm not sure. And who would know, of course, is gone, who is Kevin Cleary. Kevin was registrar, and what was interesting about Kevin Cleary was he knew everybody's name. And so if you were not around for a little while, you could get a call saying, "How're you doing?" He'd do that kind of thing. So...

BB: So did you have any apprehension about being amongst this first group?

HH: Absolutely not. I mean, the big thing to me was, that I was able to go right in. You know, so that I didn't have to go to The Mount. It was great. I love adventures.

BB: And why would your preference have been Saint Mary's?

HH: Because when I was chipping away at it, they were there.

BB: Right.

HH: I'm very loyal on that kind of thing - if you prick blood, it comes out maroon and white. And that was it. To me, you got the attention... I can actually remember going to Dal at the Registrar's office to enroll in an after work [class] and it was very much, "We don't do that kind of thing. You can come to a 4:00 class or a 5:00 class" and I phoned Saint Mary's and it was, "Yeah, come on down and see what we can do." So my experience was... I'm big on little engines that can, and so Saint Mary's said that, and to me, it wasn't a factor of anything except that they were there.

BB: Accommodation.

HH: Exactly. And of course, it was great when classes started and everything like that. I think that people... Jen is going to be interesting to talk to because she was in engineering so I have no idea what her experience was. Ann MacGillivray and I were on the Alumni Executive at the same time. I think Maryann Hotchkiss might have been the first woman to be on the Alumni Executive.

BB: Now can I ask about – was there any religious consideration in terms of your attending Saint Mary's or not?

HH: Me? No. I'm not Roman Catholic.

BB: So was there anything that was related to...

HH: You had to have a philosophy course, and I had gotten that at Dal, so that wasn't anything. But no, at that time I became very friendly with Father Hennessey, who was just a sweetheart. I enjoyed the Jesuits because the Jesuits' big thing is education. And really driven in that direction and I think Saint Mary's standards for academics, I think, were so engrained because I think the Jesuits, it's 15 years of training?

BB: Yes.

HH: So this was a really neat bunch. In night courses, I would have done Joanne Nugent in English and done Elizabeth in History, but I also took a course in Art History from Father Czako. Father Czako and Burke-Gaffney were experts in floral, and depicting... Anyway, Father Czako I can remember, and this course influenced me so much, because I've done a lot of volunteer stuff with the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia, and my own interest in art would have stemmed from that. It was absolutely incredible. He taught us I remember it was Art History, so he taught us Jan van Eyck's, the Marriage Contract, which is the husband and the wife, and there's a terrier at their feet, and it hangs in the National Gallery in London. When I went to England many years later, I went to the National Gallery and asked where that picture hung, and they said, well you can take a tour – and I said, “I only want to see that!” And I went right to it, and I sat on the bench in front of it, and I looked at it. I knew the terrier, I knew that van Eyck had painted himself in the mirror with the Stations of the Cross, and I looked at that and knew I was an educated person. And that went back to Father Czako. And at that time, there was a famous painting at the Vatican or something of Christ or whatever, and he had little copies of it. And he handed them around, and he asked, if anybody is not a Roman Catholic, I will give it to you if you wish to have it. And I remember that, because I thought, oh, isn't that interesting. And probably wouldn't have happened if it was so conscious, he was a priest, of course - but he was really conscious of that, that people in his class may not all be Roman Catholic. So that was very considerate. I thought it was.

BB: So would you have known of others who were not Roman Catholic in your classes?

HH: There was never anything... I grew up in Halifax. Your neighbours were Jewish, Roman Catholic, whatever... To me, it was just the neighbourhood. That's the way it's always been for me. I've been really fortunate. I've rolled around – a third of our family is Jewish, but that didn't happen until much later after Saint Mary's, that was just my great fortune to have been brought up in a home which.... Halifax is very small. I don't know where you grew up.

BB: Yes, here in Halifax as well.

HH: Well, that was it. It had to do whether you were a good person, and good in your faith, what your faith was didn't matter as much. So there wasn't anything along that line. Still isn't. If I'm in town, I'll always go to the Mass at homecoming, which they brought back, which I thought was great. And I have always gone to... my favourite spot for quiet time if I'm downtown working on anything is to pop in the Basilica. Actually, I go to the Cathedral and to First Baptist, and I always pass by the synagogue on my way to First Baptist! (laughs)

BB: Just to make sure you've got your bases covered!

HH: All bases covered! All bases. It was a significant group in my education because everybody was Jewish went to QEH, so I would have gone to QEH, so therefore, I'm covered on that. The only significant Roman Catholic thing in one fell swoop, coming to Saint Mary's would do it. So that kind of thing.

In the daytime, nothing interested me except...people were looking for... I know Ann said in her area when she was doing Commerce, she would have been, maybe she was the only one or two. I would be the only one in Sociology.

BB: The only female?

HH: I think so.

BB: What was that like?

HH: Well, the teacher was Jenny Tarwell, so I mean, it was nothing to me! I didn't think that way. My cousins, except for one, were all male – but what interested me was the course, and who was teaching it. Stuff like that. And I did my Masters with six guys, and the only thing I thought about that was it was great. One was captain of the hockey team, Brian O'Bourne, and the other one was the captain of the basketball team, Dennis Reardon, and they thought it was great. And I thought it was great. They were all tall and big, and we used to just walk down there and of course, I'm tottering around at 147.5 cm, and looking Dennis intently in the kneecaps. And Chard was the chair of the History department, Elizabeth. So that... I'm trying to think of anything that would have been... I don't rattle

too easily, or I wouldn't have paid attention to it. There was a Jesuit teaching me French 101, and there were just two of us. Don Harper was a classmate.

BB: Was he?

HH: And I used to tell him, "It always bothers me that you don't remember me, and I remember you, because Father Devine always called the roll, and of course, you have H-A-R-R, and H-A-R-P – and he never remembered me and I remembered him. I tell him that every time I see him.

I don't know if it was just his manner of teaching, or whatever, but we had to write a French exam to see where we were. And Father Devine announced the results, and he said to me, you know, you failed it so badly that you don't even hit the scale. And I thought... but that might have just been his teaching style. I certainly wouldn't have thought that was because I was a female, and he thought....

I think the reason why I think he didn't think that way was he sent us to an institution. She was called Millie Harrington. Millie Harrington did remedial work and taught Latin, French and Math. And we got in there – and she was an institution. She died many years ago, but anyway, Millie said to all of us that were doing remedial French. Bottom line is, I don't speak French, and I don't know French, but I went from below zero to 92 at Christmas. She used to throw chalk at us, and God help you, she put the fear of God into you. She was typical of the stereotyped teacher that you would have had in elementary school, you wouldn't have breathed until you got out of her class.

But I didn't hit any [sexism] or I was in the work force too long, or I was in an area that didn't matter, but I thought it was great. I was living off-campus too, which I think would be a lot different from if you were living in residence. The residence experience would have been a redefining of how living arrangements were going to be. But when I lived at Saint Mary's that year, in '72, '73, I would have been on the 12th floor. It was great. Had a good view of the football field, all that stuff. And Clarky, Ken Clark and Keith – the jobs around campus were campus police, and also you'd be on the desk at Highrise Two. And Keith would have been on the desk at Highrise Two. And Ken Clark. So these guys got to be my buddies in instances that you have in another instance. And then, in '72-'73, I worked for Dr. Carrigan, and again, that brought me in very close proximity with everybody, so for me, there wasn't any of that kind of experience. I was geared totally to the education end of it. You know, and I went on to work with these people. And Keith went to work at Saint Mary's right after he graduated.

BB: Can you recall any thoughts or feelings of a discriminatory nature?

HH: None.

BB: How about any of your female friends at the time?

HH: No. No, there was none of that. But again, I think you've got somebody who's grown up here, who was working, who came at it from a different way, so I think that anybody who was at any other institution of the female persuasion at that time certainly would have thought it was great to be one or 50 of several hundred which the rest were all male! (laughs) That's the way everybody looked at it!

BB: Was it?

HH: Oh, of course! Eat your heart out! That was it. So it was nothing, really, and we knew as far as the guys go, everybody knew they were in 7th heaven! I mean, here they had been at this all-male school at a very hormonal age, so... no. And as far as the Jesuits go, I think because the Jesuits' goal was education – I saw them more as teachers – and that was a big difference between Saint Mary's and Dalhousie, and still is in some ways, is that Dal is so research oriented, and the professors there were often thought of to get a teaching load in order to get their research grants. Saint Mary's was always a teaching [institution] the Paul Cormiers, that kind of person, David Hope. These people were teachers. So that was very much apparent to me at that time, it certainly was. And that's why I think Saint Mary's, when the ducks were all in place, why it was able to take off. It was a very short history. I mean, women in a very short time the integration took and I don't recall any kind of – I mean, people were concerned with – we needed a common room, we needed washrooms... It was practical stuff like that. Where were we going to go? Like, all the hangouts were already established, so there weren't unisex bathrooms. So that was one of the first things that Elizabeth did was find us a... we used to call it the Room for Common Women, as opposed to the Common Women's Room.

BB: And where was that on campus?

HH: Don't ask me. I think we were on the... it would have had to have been in the main building. Probably on the second floor or something like that. When I first went there, when I was taking night courses, the library was on the top floor of the McNally building. Very nice staff, but when you walked in, there was a creak – so your presence was always announced.

And then of course, things moved around, when I was doing the ... Ken Ozmon, when we wanted to set up a Sport Hall of Fame, and I said "How do you want this to come to you?" and he said it would really help if there was a historical justification. And I said, "Once a prof, always a prof" because he taught at UPEI - so I went to write the earliest written history we have, which is late 1800s, early 1900s, it really starts to come. And as I went through that, I would hit all these people, like Dr. Dalton, who, when he was a student here and that. I had him as my political science prof, he was one of the four. And Peter Aucoin, who went on to a distinguished career nationally and internationally, and...

who else... Oh, Ed McBride. Bucky McBride. He had a White House connection, so he was the one who either worked in the White House when Kennedy was there, or he had a Kennedy connection. And so, Bob Beson was the other one. I met Bob years ago at the Sobey's Lacewood, which is like Grand Central Station. Anyway, what I used to do... And McBride was a super teacher. He used to say, "you see, you see, you understand?" and his word was "strictarctical". I always remember the key words. Strictarctical.

BB: How do you spell that??

HH: I have not a clue, because spelling's not my thing. I always thought catholic was spelled catlick.

BB: (laughs)

HH: So Ed McBride, Peter Aucoin, and Bob Beson said "you'll go to any means, won't you?" because I had every major book published on Kennedy at that particular time, tucked under the arm, with titles facing out, including White House Nannie, by Maud Shaw. And I would parade around with those, and I told this to Ed McBride years later, and I said, "those guys just thought I got it because I had it stacked", and he said, "no, it was absolute brains." He did that, and he has been in ill health for the last couple of years, and that team of everybody he would have taught are just a great support team. He lost his wife a few years ago, Maryanne. Elizabeth said she was one of the best history students she ever had, and Maryanne taught there. So what it is is cross-generational whatever. That sense of family and sense of association.

Mary Sun, Dr. Mary Sun, Mary taught me Asian studies, and she taught Keith as well. I remember that Keith and Marianne got married, I was in Vancouver teaching, and I sent a telegram because it used to drive me up the wall – you were supposed to say, "Hung Chu", and I used to say "Hang Chow!" so I signed my telegram "Hang Chow Heather." So Keith I would have known from the desk, and from Asian studies.

See, what was so neat, Bridget, it was that the takeoff point – that's why I say the pre-history leading up to this, all the ducks were on the pond. And to me, the "Belles", the women came in, that, that to me, the guy that's publishing this sport history book that we're doing at the sport hall of fame – Frank something or other, he sees this as the big defining thing. In sport – it kind of was. Kathy was the first woman whatever. BUT. The ducks were lined up in so many areas, that to me, I saw this as one, but the secular presidencies,... You know, you have a whole lot. When you're doing your dissertation, to me, it's really important to get those other threads in. So you see, I think that everything fed off of everything else.

BB: There was a great deal of angst – I'm not sure if you would have been aware, given your situation, but there was a great deal of angst from The Mount's perspective.

HH: Oh! Ha! I can imagine. Absolutely!

BB: Can you help me understand anything you might remember about that?

HH: Oh certainly, there would be because entrenched in the town, and leaders in education would have been the Sisters of Charity. And more power to them. I took music from age four at St. Theresa Convent at the corner of North and Oxford. When I was in high school, the Mount limousine used to pick me up at 1:00 on Fridays because we had Friday afternoons off at QEH, and take me off to the Mount because I had to see my music teacher, because I did a lot in all the Halifax music festivals and all that stuff, so I would have gone out there for my music lesson and then I would have come back on some blue bus, whatever, like that. But Father Hennessey used to say, "Oh dear, feed them three bowls of rice a day, you're all set" but the Jesuits...

BB: What does that mean?

HH: Well, he just thought, you could keep them so cheap. And see, it was a separate school system, so with a separate school system, you had a crew of extremely highly educated, because as Father Hennessey would have said, "What else do they have to do, except add on degrees?"

BB: This was the Sisters of Charity?

HH: Absolutely. The think I always laugh at with Brian Downie, Brian Downie's father was Chair of the Board and everything like that, associated with my uncles, but anyway, Brian and I laugh about, (unclear) cemetery, and Brian used to say, I'm a Halifax boy; I don't want to be buried out there. But I said to Brian, "You know, that place, if you go out and go through it, the headstones for the Sisters, and for the Priests..." And to me, the Sisters of Charity, I mean, unbelievable. The separate school system here, I think that benefited greatly from particular... "History is the science of people and time", that's Mark Block who's my favourite historian. He was gunned down as a French Resistance Jewish person in the Second World War. Anyway, they're phenomenal at the Halifax Infirmary. I was born at the Infirmary, and in those days, people of Protestant parentage would have been born at the Grace Maternity.

BB: Oh, interesting.

HH: But I was born at the Halifax Infirmary, which was the Catholic [hospital]. Everything around here was always done in such a way that, I know my cousin in law, she just couldn't believe it, alternating between a Catholic and Protestant Lieutenant Governor. The heads of the fire department, all the major jobs, the police, they were all done that way.

BB: I forgot about that.

HH: That's why I'm saying that my chief reason for being here with you this morning is the social context, because I think that's really important. You not only have the Saint Mary's with the 50, the first 50 [women students] was really a small part of the whole community that was at a take-off point, and that's what I think is a guiding statement. Saint Mary's was a whole, but that's how it worked.

We're having Christmas dinner, and my cousin-in-law was there, and this was when they were just courting, she and my cousin. She said, oh, how quaint, and he said, puffing on his cigar, "well, it works for us." And it did for a long time. So some of it you didn't get riled, because that's the way it was.

I think also, with Nova Scotia – and I lived in BC for many years, so I certainly have a good comparison there and I think a good deal of it has to do with where you are – we don't tend to sensationalize stuff. I did a book with my sport history writing partner, Sandy Young on *Maritime Sports Stars on Parade*. It was on my uncle Alec Nickerson who was an editor of the Chronicle Herald for quite some time, and Bob Chambers, who was his really good friend. Bob Chambers was Bruce McKinnon's hero. He [Bob] was the predecessor, he did the cartoons, and he would have been, when Robert Stanfield was living at The Oaks. I remember when we interviewed Mr. Chambers, he said, "You know how we worked in our town. I would be coming from my home, and I would often meet Bob Stanfield coming up from The Oaks, because everybody walked to work." And he said, "You know, how you did cartooning in those days is you made your point", and his are classics, I have an original, which is quite exciting to have. But that would not be the tone of the town, to lambaste or whatever. If people took their own life, or if there was something that would affect the family, the reputation of the family, you know, these things were ... It wouldn't appear as a sensation, you know, the story – breaking news, etc. etc. It was the tone of the time. And none of it changed abruptly. And I think that's part of the Nova Scotia character. We're not into sensationalism in that way. We define stuff within our own experience.

BB: So, along the lines of the secularization of Saint Mary's, in the journals during that time, there's virtually nothing. From what I could tell in my research, it was virtually not discussed, not the way coeducation was. The Journals were filled with articles on coeducation, both pro and con. Could you give me some insight into that in terms of what you noticed or didn't notice about the university becoming a secular institution?

HH: Well, it would have been... What were the dates?

BB: 1970.

HH: I can remember Father Labelle, but you see here, again! It's really important to look at who the major characters were. So Edmund Morris would have been interim [president] when?

BB: 1970.

HH: So and Carrigan came in...

BB: After that. '71, '72.

HH: So here you have a person in Edmund Morris, a devout Roman Catholic, absolutely devout, his son is the priest at St. Mary's Basilica. He had his father's gift of the gab. I always say Edmund could never say in 500 words what he could say in 5000. And that's the way he spoke, and that's why I'll often say, "If you knew Edmund Morris..." Sometimes if I get on a story, I'll have to stop myself and say, "Ah, I'm doing an Edmund Morris." What you had in Edmund Morris was an experienced politician, who was vastly networked. So to me, the smooth transition came because he was a Roman Catholic, therefore sensitive. There wasn't an abrupt [change] there. Because he was of the community, extremely well networked, a devout Roman Catholic, but politically astute. And that's how my observation would do it, and I remember when Allen, Terry and I were.... What was Edmund's term again? 1970 to '71...?

BB: Yes, It was fairly brief.

HH: It was brief enough that when we were planning homecoming '73, he then went into a special something or other at the university because I can remember Terry, Allen and I sitting in the.... Where were we... the cafeteria, which would have been over yonder. And we were looking at... We were having these people come. And he said what, and we said a barbecue pit. We need people to have a barbecue. And I remember, we hired Billy Robinson who was ..., you know everybody was looking for jobs. And he said, "You know, I was thinking that, you know, as we move towards..." And here was another move, Bridget – towards establishing those residences, paying [for them], to have conferences, ok? You know, to have people for conventions and that. "I was thinking the other day, and I was sort of looking over in that direction, and I was sort of thinking that what we really need is a... Barbecue Pit!" And Allen, Terry and I said, "Oh, it's interesting that you bring that up!" And the next thing you knew, we had that barbecue pit.

And it was great. I think the Great Gods were smiling down, because of course, being a historian, I certainly went through all the stuff where the McNabs had to buy seats at St.Pauls in order to do business when Halifax was first founded. So you have an interesting thing here, where Catholics – I'm a member of the Charitable Irish, I don't know how Irish I am, but I'm hoping I'm charitable. Keith is too. So I certainly historically was well aware of where the Roman Catholic would be. But I'm also very well aware of the... what was called the Lace Curtain Irish, which would have been Terry's family. But it was Lynn's family, the Cosgroves, who were actually first cousins to Mary McAleese, who was the president of Ireland. When she was given her honorary

Doctorate, she referred to her cousins in the front row and said, “You’re just along for the ride, Terrance, aren’t you!” He said, “I know it”. But the key to how things happened, to me has to do with how one another treat one another as people in this community. And I’m not saying that there wasn’t this, that, and the other thing there, but how we handled it would have been different than other communities . I often refer to it as being Japanese, because Japanese put every effort into saving face. Everybody has a politesse, they would say down in Sainte Anne’s. A politesse. And that’s what was here – though again, to me, if you weren’t picking or identifying a person to do their transitional role, that would have been it.

BB: He would have been key. Fascinating.

HH: Absolutely. How that came about, I have no idea. I have no idea. But you can see what I mean. Prominent, well-connected, but also very well known for his faith.

BB: Fascinating. Right. Could I jump back for a minute to the level of awareness that you would have felt at the time about the Mount’s alarm at Saint Mary’s becoming coeducational. There would be a lot, in my research, in the local paper as well as here in The Journal...

HH: I just thought it was a hoot. I thought, “OK, gang, you’re going to have to...”, which they did. They immediately started specializing in courses for women or whatever along that line, but really, I have no idea when you talk to anyone else, but I just thought it was great. And as far as The Mount went, I had gone there to music, I’m a huge admirer of the other thing that was happening along the line there too, Bridget, was the fact that they were defrocked. So I remember distinctly a Sister Blanche, and anybody I know who went there at that time remembers her. And she was a great big gal with a huge cross, and she’d be coming down that corridor, with bat swinging... You know when Sister Blanche and her crew went into civvies, that removed a lot of the mystique and... So you have that...

BB: The Vatican II things changed things.

HH: Absolutely. So physically, you have people who wore... I mean, priests wore their collars, like ministers, etc.. Although Father Czako and Father Burke-Gaffney, who was just a sweetheart, they would have a black suit on, and that. But the ladies had the swinging gowns; they had the full gowns and the headgear. Who was it... Sally Field. The flying nun! You know, you’re there with that whole habit on. That could shake, rattle and roll anybody. There, at that time probably, or somewhere around there, they would have moved into civvie habits, and it doesn’t matter when it happened. It’s always interesting to me, historically, but if you’re getting this place set up to have women come in, and you are also making such an extreme change in the habit that you wore, which to me, was very, I mean, you established a presence. You just swished in.

BB: Mmmhmm!

HH: So that was another factor. What my target was this morning, and we'll reconnect again, because I'm coming to you this morning less as a "Belle" and more as a historian, and what factors were in the community.

BB: Yes, and I'm very grateful for that, for the comprehensive nature of your interview.

HH: I just think there were a bunch of things. Sometimes people take something that is significant, which was the admission of women here, but not see it in the context of the time.

BB: The historiography around it, yes.

HH: Absolutely. So to me, you know, it was an exciting time because so much was happening. And at induction in the fall, I said to Colin [Dodds], "this is really neat. You're sitting in front of me," because I always suggest to him, and Keith was speaking this year, because Ethics is now under student services for a bit. "This is a point that should be made". And they're laughing, but I said to Colin, "It's so neat, Owen [Carrigan]'s standing there, and Ken [Ozmon] is standing there, it's the family." Cross-generational. I bumped into Florence and Owen in the shopping centre a week later, you know, he just said the same thing. It's so interesting. He's really interesting. Did you talk to him live?

BB: No, not yet.

HH: Well, you want to talk to him. He's really interesting because he...

BB: He wasn't here during the specific timeframe that I'm looking at.

HH: But he was the one... But again, one of the things that happened outside of there was that he was the one that really pushed for the coeducational athletic program. And that's really, really, really important. And why he is interesting, is that you don't always have somebody that's successful at a job, and he would have been the first secular president. And then goes into the history department, has a highly successful teaching career and writing career. So he's an interesting person.

BB: That's wonderful. That's a wonderful piece of information I wasn't aware of, the coeducational nature of ...

HH: That's why, I don't know who the name of the person who directed you to me in the President's Office, but I said to Keith, why are you here. See, Bridget, How did that come about? I said, "Funny, she said the Presidents' office" so I said, "the Lord works in mysterious ways!"

BB: Yes! (laughs)

HH: “Bridget, just press your ‘on’ button.” (laughs)

BB: (laughs) No, this is wonderful! Ok, it’s 11:00 so we’ve come to the end of the timeframe for this particular interview, but I’d like to review what we’ve discussed, and then meet with you again if you’re open to that.

HH: I’m very open to that. Because what I want out of it is eventually is when you come up with the names of those first fifty [female students], that would be kind of neat.