

SOHC/OH 760/14

J.D. SOMERVILLE ORAL HISTORY COLLECTION, STATE
LIBRARY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA: INTERVIEW NO. OH 760/14

DISK 1 OF 1

This is an interview with Judith Brine for the University of Adelaide School of Architecture History. The date is 1st September 2008, interviewer Rob Linn.

Well, Judith, could you give me a bit of personal background, please, about your life before Adelaide?

Oh!

Which is very interesting, I'm sure.

I shouldn't have thought so. (laughs) I was educated as an architect at University of Melbourne – as an architect and a planner at the University of Melbourne. I had a young family and a small practice in Melbourne for I think about seven years with my husband, or my then husband, and another partner. Then my husband wanted to do a PhD and we went to Scotland I worked in a large architectural firm in Scotland, building the University of Stirling.

Wonderful place.

It is. I really enjoyed it. I couldn't believe that every week when I went up to do the supervision I went through this brilliant landscape to this wonderful place, it was such a pleasure. And I enjoyed the site work and I enjoyed large site work and I sort of liked the camaraderie of it, I guess.

Then my husband came back to Adelaide to take a reader's post and I came back as well, and very fortunately somebody else had just turned down a minor job in the Department so I got that instead.

So was that '71, Judith, or '72?

'72.

So what was your husband's post, John's post, at the time?

He was going to run the Planning course. In the end he ran it into the ground, but that was another matter.

We'll get there. (laughter) We'll get there in a minute.

SOHC/OH 760/14

And I started teaching construction in the Department – because that, after all, was what I'd been doing in practice – and a bit of design, and then you can't get up the university ladder in construction so I sort of turned into history and theory as more of a focus. And I think I was incredibly lucky in the Department – I'm probably going ahead of myself here – that it was a democratic time, so I could come up through a democratic process in a way I never would have done through an appointments process, so I could get into the administrative side.

Before we get to that –

Yes, I'm sorry, I did jump ahead.

– no, that's good you should say that at that point – you come into a department, though, with your husband John, where the god professor still prevails, and I don't think it's wrong to say that.

No, no, absolutely right.

How did you find Professor Jensen?

It was not only Professor Jensen, it was Professor Jensen and his *wife*. I must say my introduction was absolutely appalling. They picked us up at the airport and Elfreda told me dreadful things about every member of the Department, but I never remembered who was who so (laughter) I was absolutely stymied for months as to who did what or who hated whom or – – –. It was a dreadful beginning. And I think she was an appalling historian, too.

No, Rolf on the whole wasn't bad to me, although when I was mistaken for somebody else and appointed to a Federal Government committee Rolf was furious and went to the Vice-Chancellor and asked that I be not given the job and it be given to him instead. The Vice-Chancellor loved that, being anti-Rolf.

Would that have been Geoff Badger by that time or still Henry Basten?

I think it was Geoff Badger. And so I got the job and he was less cordial to me thereafter, I believe. But I didn't find him as much trouble; and I don't think he interfered quite so much in student affairs by the time I got there, either. I think he was a little softer. I don't remember any *cause célèbre* in the way that practitioners around town talk about their appalling time with [him]. Although I do remember a final-year examination where some poor girl had put a tuna factory on his favourite

SOHC/OH 760/14

walk down at Victor Harbor. He gave her nought, so we all gave her ninety-five (laughs) in retaliation so the poor girl passed, which she never would have done otherwise.

How extraordinary.

Well, he was livid. He was a strange man, he really was. I mean it was a strange partnership altogether.

What did you think of the syllabus that he'd created there, was that a foreign idea to you or it was very much ---?

Oh, no! It was exactly the same as in University of Melbourne, where I'd gone through fifteen years earlier.

So it was that same, what, Liverpool influence coming over, probably.

Very likely. Yes. Brian Lewis and he. It was very similar, and very dull.

Well, was the work ethic expectation the same in Melbourne as Professor Jensen had, would you recall?

Did he have a work ethic?

Expectation.

Of the staff or students?

Students.

I don't know, I really don't know. I can't remember it being an issue. I think students *did* work harder then, I mean they didn't all have to have jobs, or didn't all *have* jobs. I think most of them were full-time students and I think therefore did produce more work. I think I probably asked quite a lot of work from my students too, actually.

Well, that's all right, Judith. As I understand it, the course had four posts around which it was built, or four planks that really held it up, and that would have been Building Science, Design, Construction and I'm just trying to think what the other part was.

Certainly wasn't theory; history, perhaps?

Yes, History, I think. But he built it up around that same model which was then current.

SOHC/OH 760/14

Yes, I think that was obvious.

But my memories of that era, Judith, are that he was tiring. He could be cranky at times but also helpful, but I think he was tiring.

Well, as I say, I don't think he was anything like as interfering or individually vindictive as other people speak of him in his earlier times.

What about others in the Department, were they more welcoming?

I didn't have a very good start. Everybody else was downstairs and I was put up in the middle of the Studio.

Yes, so you were!

I was.

You were, that's right.

Eventually other staff also came up there, but it took me years to get down into the mainstream.

That was in those little rooms, wasn't it?

Yes, in the middle.

In the middle, yes.

You know, window way up here. Dreadful. I think most of them were long-time staff members – Neville Hoskings[?], Albert, Derrick.

John Hipper.

John Hipper, yes.

Brian Claridge hadn't been there – – –.

Brian was there, and Brian was a lovely, lovely man. The only person I ever knew who tuned out whenever you said anything nasty about anyone else. You could have coffee with him and he'd suddenly not be there, you were just talking normally and spitefully and (laughs) he just wasn't there. He was a very, very good man, I missed him bitterly when he went.

He was a good teacher, too.

SOHC/OH 760/14

Yes, he was – because he was a very modest man, too, and encouraged students in that sort of way. Yes. He would be the friendliest, I guess, but he was friendly to everyone, it wasn't personal. And I think it was difficult having a partnership in the Faculty. I had a big family, I had three sons at the time and I think I was tired always, but otherwise I would have got out, I think – although I was grateful for the job there because I don't think I'd have got a partnership in Adelaide or anything like it, so it would have been a frustrating thing being in practice as well, I suspect, because that also was a very conservative – – –.

The RAIA,¹ do you mean?

No, I was thinking of –

The firms.

– Woods Bagot, Cheesman Donnelly and so on, and I just don't think I'd have got a job of the sort that I'd had in Scotland.

The wider University, was that a different scenario from the School/Department? Was that more welcoming to young professionals like yourself and your husband?

I think John had a really tough time. There was clearly power struggles between him and Geography and History, that he lost. Particularly Geography, I think he thought geography should be planning. So I think that soured things somewhat.

So that's more further down the track.

No, I think there was that tension right from the time he came.

Okay. Then that sort of comes to a head in about '77 or '76.

It finally came to a head when I was Head of the Department and Dean, which was very difficult. No, the difficulties came earlier but the *coup de grâce* came when I was Head of Department.

Would you mind if we talked about this for a minute, Judith?

Not at all.

Because the way I've seen it was that when Town Planning was introduced – and it was introduced at Jensen's behest –

¹ RAIA – Royal Australian Institute of Architects.

SOHC/OH 760/14

Yes.

– because originally, although it had been hoped for, it wasn't an essential in the Faculty, and he'd introduced it – but he almost made a rod for his own back. He couldn't cope particularly with the theses side. That's how it appears to me.

I think it was understaffed. I think also at the time – well, it was a model of a Planning course that I still think is the best one, where people had a base degree and practical experience and then came in to do Planning, which I think is much better as a mature-age [student]. But they were bright, they were very clever, the students were, and now have some of the best positions around town – although almost retiring now – but they wanted a better course. And I think that's what happened. They were really good students and there was not the resources to service them properly.

All sorts of ideas have flown around about what happened and I can't say that I found anything conclusive about what's actually

The students did go to the Vice-Chancellor in the end.

Yes. Oh, no, I found that out, yes.

Yes. And there was some kind of an inquiry, led by I think Barnes in Mathematics.

I think Hugh Stretton also had a hand in that.

Yes, well – I don't think I'm oversensitive – I think it was a stacked committee. It was those persons who had been unsympathetic. I can well remember, I think it was Barnes saying, 'Well, it's not really a discipline, is it?' No, it was a profession. So they were cut off because they weren't, in *his* mind, they weren't a discipline. But it was totally and a dying view of what universities were about.

Judith, there seems to have been that misunderstanding of architecture/town planning from the outset.

Yes. Never sat comfortably.

No.

And I think it was much to do with the idea that this was the superior university. Because it was superior it was about disciplines and research, and therefore Architecture and Music always had a terrible time as well, perhaps even more so,

SOHC/OH 760/14

because they were even less politically able to defend themselves. So it was never very popular.

Derrick told me that he felt people like Harry Medlin had more sympathy and understanding on a Faculty level, at least, and that that helped him.

Probably because, like Albert, he was a maverick who liked being in opposition, (laughter) as much as anything else.

I think that's probably true, too. But I have noticed that Jensen remained largely disappointed to the end of his career at the University. He never succeeded in gaining the funding he thought he should have had or was promised and seemed [that he] perpetually felt let down, as I've read his letters to the Vice-Chancellors.

Well, I don't think he was a sympathetic, attractive figure. Somebody else would have done better – although I think, as we said, the University was not sympathetic to the project at all. I think they stomached Medicine because it had been longstanding and also it had a research base.

Well, I think they had to stomach it –

Indeed.

– because so much depended on the success of that school.

And Engineering, too, had been of long standing. And Engineering were scornful also, I think.

That's interesting.

Yes. We had a better relationship, perhaps, with Civil Engineering than some.

Would that have been Professor Bull in those days?

No, I think he'd gone before I came. He and Jensen were bulls (laughs) in their opposition, actually.

Well, he appointed Jensen.

Yes. Presumably felt sympathetic at the time, until he got into action.

Yes. I think that's quite true, actually, having read his letter describing why they should go for Jensen I would say that's exactly right. It didn't turn out like that on the field of play, so to speak. Judith, with Professor Jensen's departure, was the Department really in turmoil for a year or so or not so much? Did it just get by as it always had?

SOHC/OH 760/14

Well, I hope it wasn't in turmoil; I mean, that was when I was in charge of it.

No, I didn't mean it in that sense; it just appears to be people manoeuvring position, in a sense.

Well – (pauses) yes. Was I in charge of it, or am I mixing it up with the Tony Radford thing?

I think you are.

I think I might have been. Yes, I'm sure.

The earlier period, Albert wrote a paper – as he always did – but suggesting that this was *the* turning point at the time. Now *I'm* getting mixed up. No, sorry, we *are* talking about the later period. The period when David Saunders comes in is not when you were looking after it.

No. Who was acting then?

I think it was Derrick.

Might have been, yes. Probably was in turmoil, then. (laughter) Yes. I mean certainly John and I were pushing for David Saunders's appointment.

That's what I wanted to ask about because David is such an interesting and accomplished person –

Lovely man.

– who doesn't seem to be, even now, fully understood. I was going through some of his papers this week and I had no idea he'd won a Nuffield Scholarship –

Yes.

– and that he'd been interested in density housing –

Absolutely.

– and making the old parts of Melbourne live again.

I did a paper on him for the Architectural Historians last year and I also went through some of the papers. Lovely sketches –

Yes.

– that was a surprise also to me. And a very impressive network of friends, which he kept going. And he was such a prickly man, it was surprising that he had these long-

SOHC/OH 760/14

term friendships which were obviously warm – perhaps more warm when he didn't see them than to the face.

Was it? See, I have only got these memories of him being so friendly and thoughtful. I didn't have to work with him on that other basis.

I don't think he was an easy person to get close to. I have a very uncomfortable memory, it's probably too personal for your records, but when he was dying I went to see him to say goodbye. And he said, 'You've got to do three things for me', and one of them was keep the Architectural Historians going, which I did, and the others I don't know what they were. But then I kissed him goodbye and he looked surprised, and I was so sorry that he thought I wouldn't have done. So obviously he hadn't thought I liked him or whatever, and I was really sorry about that. That was quite shocking to me, because I admired him. He gave wonderful lectures, they were beautifully-delivered and beautifully-researched. (laughs) I think we would have come to grief over my PhD. I only had one supervision thing with him and then he died – I hope I didn't kill him. I mean, we were very different, from a different historical [viewpoint]. I saw mine in a social setting; he saw his as a separate stream, as it were. So it was probably a good thing.

Those two views still prevail.

Oh, they do. They do, absolutely! Absolutely.

So, Judith, when he came into the Department, you've gone through this Liverpool University ethos of how an architecture faculty should be handled and David comes in, and for a time did he just let things roll?

No.

No?

No, he began on a review and he was clearly set on putting a more theoretical model into place, because there was no theory and damn all history, really –

True.

– of any sort of quality whatsoever. I mean, David was still operating. So no, and I think he'd been very much affected by his time at University of Sydney in the Arts Department, I think he did see things perhaps more as a discipline, in that sense, and I think the University would probably have liked that. I think it's fair to say that

SOHC/OH 760/14

he had little support from other staff in putting such a model forward and very little support from the profession when they found out that design was to be downplayed in the earlier years.

Well, both Derrick and Albert have told me that, despite liking him personally very much, they fought tooth and nail against his ideas.

They did.

Derrick succumbed, eventually.

Yes, because he's always been sycophantic. I didn't say that. (break in recording)

No. I mean, you might have thought that Albert would have been more sympathetic to a theoretical, but in the end I think he comes down on the design side and Derrick probably saw his science being eroded by a more arts-based curriculum.

How did you see it, Judith, yourself, with the two-part course that came into being by '79?

I welcomed a chance for more rigour. I think that's really where I stood. And David was also moving towards greater rigour in managing the course, I think, and had a better idea of academic pursuit or academic project. He also was John's and my man, as it were, and I would have supported him through thick and thin, I think, just because of that. But I did approve of and was stimulated by the idea that we could have a more theoretical, more academic course.

So that's the first part we're talking about was more -- --.

Yes. I was also stimulated by there being possibilities of different ways of teaching design other than just doing it, that one could do it with a theoretical base, and I was very happy running my second year under that basis and I think I did some interesting academic work as a result of being given that space.

Obviously others in the Department really struggled with that idea of the academic course.

They'd have struggled with *any* change, I think. They'd gone on teaching the same thing for years and years and years. Yes. I mean, absolutely.

The thing for me, as an outsider looking in, that became obvious so quickly was that suddenly research grants are coming into the Department.

Yes.

SOHC/OH 760/14

Never been seen before.

People were writing.

Yes.

Yes. And David was very good to me about that, I mean he shepherded me into research and writing, and I'm deeply grateful for that, too.

And that's a massive change for the Department as a whole, I would have thought.

Absolutely. Absolutely. And I think the profession still sees it as an unfortunate time in the Department, where design was not pursued. They'd still talk about it as a failure.

And yet the quality of the people who came out through those courses is, I would have thought, undisputed.

Is better. Yes. Well, sometimes you wonder what you do as a teacher: they go in smart and they come out smart, and you wonder what you do in between.

But the concept to me, Judith – and I wasn't involved – where you're bringing in outside influences into the Department, that must have been a healthy invigoration.

Well, it was good because we had Terry Williamson – I mean, he brought two people from the University of Melbourne – and Deborah[?], both of whom were better performers, academically and pedagogically.

So what did the likes of Terry and Deborah actually bring to the Department?

Well, youth, for one thing – well, comparatively speaking, youth.

Well, it was then.

And I think both of them were committed academics and were not just churning out the same thing year after year. And then, when they arrived, they also were committed to David's leadership, as they would be.

And that would have been a help to you, too.

Yes. Well, that sort of evened the numbers up somewhat.

Indeed, yes. But David's time appears to me to be relatively short and his death so untimely –

SOHC/OH 760/14

Yes.

– and I wonder whether he too achieved everything that he was hoping would come out of it all. As you said, the profession didn't accept it.

Didn't like it. Well, the problem persisted when I then became – no, I became Head of Department before David died, that was unfortunate, I think was a bit mean about that. Now I've forgotten what I was going to say about it. What were we saying before?

I've just got to get my threat back again. We were moving towards the fact that his death was most untimely and he hadn't achieved perhaps everything he'd set out to.

Ah, that's right. And the problem persisting when I became Head of Department. Really, the older people had to go. I mean before there could be any *real* change there had to be a change of people. They'd been there too long, they were too stuck, they didn't want to do anything differently, and the times had moved on. So I think he probably did find that very frustrating because he wasn't in a position to appoint *that* many new staff, although we certainly had – I think Stan Fung came in at that time, too, and that was a bold step. Stan was incredibly esoteric. Unintelligible, really, and very bright. Scary. So no, I don't think David would have felt he ever achieved a comfortable situation. I can't imagine he would have done.

What's interested me, Judith, is that during Professor Jensen's time relations with the profession actually were pretty good because they'd wanted him there – well, in fact they'd wanted somebody else there, but they got him – – –.

Well, not to be too unkind to the profession, the course they liked best is the course they did, and that was fine. And that goes through any of the succeeding years, too. I think it's very hard for the profession to understand new academic projects.

I'm looking as an outside again and seeing that during David's time in fact the Department became involved in other aspects of the community than it ever had been before, and not just the professional side, and suddenly there were historians working there, there were other types of planners coming in with different backgrounds, and there was an inward and outward movement of ideas and people that certainly hadn't been there in the past.

Absolutely. It was a much more dynamic mix at that time. But I think – well, perhaps I'm prejudiced because I came in later, too – but I do think it was dragged down by the oldies, as it were. I think Terry Williamson had a better idea of building

SOHC/OH 760/14

science than Derrick did, I think people who are much-denigrated like Wally Dobkins had more of an idea of design and was a better designer than Albert ever was, and so on. And Neville, really, I don't know what he offered; his construction was years out of date.

Well, he was another generation, in a sense.

Absolutely, yes. And he and Derrick were very much part of that English – – –.

Well, they were friends.

The lab assistants were also part of that thing. They'd come into my office and they'd hold their cap in their hand and twirl it round while they spoke to you. It was terrible, it was terrible. I couldn't believe it. And that must have been going on for twenty years, too. I mean, in some ways it was a very English system, and Albert was a good foil to that and I think that's partly why students liked him.

Yes.

He was Continental and so on.

Yes, and I suppose he had his bridge out into the art world, too.

Yes.

He certainly added a dynamic to the Department in his own way.

And students were very fond of him. I've never quite understood why, but they were. (laughter) I might as well be candid about it.

So, Judith, was David Saunders still a professor in the sense of leading the Department, or was he also interested in building a team? Because Terry said that to me, that it's much more of being a team rather than having a person on top saying, 'You will do this and you won't do that'.

By the time David was appointed we'd become the most democratic university in the country and deeply committed to that sort of system, and I think that that was the system in which people worked and which one expected to operate. So instead of his authority coming from his professorship his authority came from his deanship and his head of the department or the chairmanship, as it then became. And we did have interminable staff meetings where there was a supposed democracy working and so on. I don't think he was an autocratic man; in some ways I think he was a shy man –

SOHC/OH 760/14

Yes.

– and not a very personally-forthcoming man. A team? I think it would have been almost impossible to build a *real* team out of that. I think he built a team out of his supporters, probably, and that's why Terry would feel it was – Terry and Deborah, I should think, and myself would have been supportive and felt like a team.

Well, it's really interesting to hear you talk about those years because I've seen them from what I've read, and it's only the official stuff I've read, of being a time of really great furtherance of the academic side of the course. But I had no idea how the profession viewed that and obviously it wasn't all that happy with it, from what you've said.

Never was, no. And they still speak of it disparagingly, and I always found that hard to forgive. It was the most theoretically-oriented course in the country.

That's what I wanted to ask. Okay.

Yes.

I haven't really had the time to compare it to anything else.

It was clearly the most theoretical, and it did manage to achieve recognition – they were periodically reviewed by the RAIA – because I think in the end the student work was fine. It would be hard to gainsay it in the sense that the product was okay; in fact, I think the product was better.

Both Albert and Derrick have said that they saw a change in the type of student coming through in the late '70s into the '80s and that it tended to be more conservative than they'd been used to in the Jensen era, but that may be – – –.

(laughter) Because they were all in opposition to Rolf! I should have thought that was exactly what happened. I mean they were all militant – although there was a militancy in the early '70s, wasn't there?

Oh, there was, absolutely.

Conservative? I don't know. I think I would say rather that they were professionally-oriented as the world increasingly became and then professionally-oriented changing into job-oriented, and then educating for jobs. I think it was part of that long-term spectrum, really. I would have said there were other changes that were stronger, and certainly the idea of a job ticket became increasingly prevalent,

SOHC/OH 760/14

and I don't think that was exactly conservatism; I think it was much more to do with the economic –

Pragmatism, perhaps.

– pragmatism and ascendancy.

Yes, I think I'd agree with that.

And then there's this peculiar phenomenon now where the students, very few of them work full-time at their course; they're mostly working full-time somewhere else, and that I think has been a profound change in the way in which one can interact with students, and whether that's to do with fees or whether it's to do with them feeling they need an economic base that they wouldn't have if they didn't work I don't know. I think that's an open question of why students have worked more and more over the last fifteen-year period. And I certainly think it hasn't done much for the standard of schools.

Did you experience that in Canberra as well?

Oh, yes.

During David Saunders's period as Professor, was the course that he set up and had running by 1979 altered? Did that change, in effect?

Subsequently?

Yes.

It certainly did over a period – probably not really till after I left.

Oh, okay, that's what I wasn't sure of.

I think I hung onto it, as it were, because I was committed to it. But I think increasingly after that there became more and more design in the earlier years and hence less – and with people like Stan leaving I think there was a less theoretical staffing, possibly.

Was Stefan teaching in the Department while you were there?

Stefan Pikusa? Yes. I'd forgotten about Stefan. Yes, sorry, I haven't been mentioning Stefan, nor Zig Kapelis, neither of which were politically interested, were not really political players. I think that's probably why I haven't been

SOHC/OH 760/14

mentioning them so much. And I think they would sit sort of middle-of-the-fence. Zig, of course, was a David Saunders appointment, I think – or was he, or was he just before? Stefan was before.

Yes, Stefan was before, had been a student.

Stefan came in before I did, yes.

Yes. I think Zig was just before Jensen left, I think.

Yes, I think he came after I did, that's right.

But two very interesting people, nonetheless.

Yes.

And Stefan too has that interest in history and historic buildings, at least from the Adelaide perspective.

He does, and did.

Well, I think it's ongoing.

Yes, probably more so, I think. And Zig, of course, became – ironic: first of all he wasn't publishing at all, and then became tied up with the archaeology and produced these huge volumes and was our chief publisher. (laughter) He was never a verbal person, but he sure did – – –. Yes, I was fond of Zig.

So right up until the time that David got ill, Judith –

Yes.

– was there that sense of division in the Department or difference of opinion – 'division' may be too strong a word – certainly intellectual difference?

It's hard to remember exactly how it felt now. I think I became increasingly estranged from the Department. I think it was difficult for me when John was being pushed and I certainly had almost no support when I applied for the professorship by the time I left, almost none.

From within the Department?

Yes.

So was that made plain to you personally, was it?

SOHC/OH 760/14

It was made very obvious.

You applied for two other professorships – Perth and Canberra, was it? I can't remember – at the time?

I don't know if I ever applied in Perth. I could have got a job in Perth very easily.

No, I only remember applying for Canberra at the time.

And was that just wanting to get away?

Yes, I wanted out. Yes. But also I think it was a typical career of women of my age at the time. I mean it took me a long time to go up the ladder to anywhere at all, as it did with women looking after families and so on.

Was it difficult in the wider University of Adelaide too to do that, Judith, in that era?

I think there was always – I think it was as much a resentment of architecture, which we've talked about before, as it was about me as a person. I think on the whole I got on rather better with the people outside. But again I certainly had no support for the professorship; indeed, Mathematics was still doing us down, probably on both counts.

I don't quite understand where Mathematics fits in Planning, actually.

I think they were on the floor below us or something, I think it was a matter of university geography or something.

Oh, really?

I think so.

Oh, goodness.

I don't know. It was very strange. It was just odd. I never understood it.

I've got to say I don't understand that at all.

No.

And it doesn't appear in the written material – and you'd have to be awfully good at reading between the lines to pick it up, I've got to say. So was John severely affected by what happened then?

SOHC/OH 760/14

Yes. I think he had a breakdown and never really regrouped in the Department, and was certainly not treated well by any of them, I think. Indeed, I think there'd been tremendous opposition to him before his demise, as it were.

And now, ironically, the Planning course has come back to the School.

C'est la vie.

I must say I don't understand, I've read a lot of the material that the planners produced that was published, which is really excellent stuff, and I'm not quite sure what the problems were, other than it was student-initiated, who were complaining.

Yes. As I say, I think they were too bright for the course that was offered.

Is it a matter of staffing, though, Judith, in the end?

There was also terrific sniping within the Department. I don't know why. Relationships were never good with Albert or Derrick. They had great affection for the person who was there before, apparently, Wally van Zyl.

Oh, yes.

I just don't know.

Wally wasn't there for very long.

Well, perhaps that's why they had great affection, I don't know. I didn't ever meet – well, yes, I may have met him once. I don't know how good John was or wasn't, either. I have no idea. It's very hard to say from that point of view.

So were your professional lives quite separate in that sense?

We talked a lot about departmental politics. My sons used to complain. But not so much, I think, academically. I was in the architecture and he was in the planning, and really the whole mess struck me out of the blue. I didn't realise it was as difficult as that, and I don't think we discussed that at all. So it was at a very difficult time for me, actually, looking back on it, I think.

Yes. Did it effectively do John out of a job, in that sense?

Yes.

So the position became more or less redundant.

SOHC/OH 760/14

Yes, and then he was sort of floating round, lecturing on this and that. I don't think he was a very good lecturer, actually, judging by the bits I heard. I just don't think he was.

Well, I can't comment on that, I wouldn't have a clue.

I don't know, either.

So, Judith, overall, what were your impressions of the time within the School. It sounds to me like it was really quite difficult for you in many ways, (a) being a woman and (b) just the setup.

I really liked teaching. I had no idea I would, but I really did like it and I think I had good relationships with students. I still have nice relationships with members of the profession that went through the course. And I enjoyed preparing lectures, although looking back on it I'm not sure how rigorous they were. Probably more rigorous than the other people's. I enjoyed the stimulation of getting into history and theory, and pedagogy, I was really interested in what one taught and how one taught it. So all that was personally very satisfying, the actual job. Then when David introduced me to writing and research I enjoyed that very much, too; and my PhD was a personal great – I nearly said 'comfort', but it was deeply satisfying to me, doing a PhD, personal and satisfying. So all those things were a plus, actually. But I don't think I felt very warmly towards many of the staff; but then I am highly competitive, so (laughter) it's probably half my fault at least.

Well, Judith, thank you so much for being willing to talk about those years. I found it quite hard to get a lot on the Saunders era because you have to dig an awful lot to find little, and he's a man who left a great deal of material but not a lot about him, if that's the way of putting it.

I was amazed to find he copied all his letters to his friends and he kept a record of them. They're all there. I find that most peculiar. I mean, you keep your business files, but do you keep your letters to your friends? Copies, handwritten copies of?

No.

I found that very interesting. Well, not only interesting but absolutely baffling, really. But he had deep friendships with the people who he'd been working in Sydney with and the people he'd been working in Melbourne with, and possibly he had less when he was in Adelaide; and for somebody who sort of relied on that – –.

SOHC/OH 760/14

I mean, he was an excellent host, had us round to his parties and his wife did the right and proper thing by him. But I think perhaps he did miss that kind of academic camaraderie. And he had it with Donald – Flinders?

Johnson?

No.

Langmead?

No. At Flinders who ran the arts course, who he'd been in Sydney with. He had a close relationship with him. I think it was Donald.

Not Paul Burke.

No. I'm not going to be able to produce it for you. But he was running a very avant-garde art stream at Flinders and David had this long-term friendship with him, which I think was important to him.

I'll be going back to check it.

You'll have to, because that will be the best I can do.

Well, thank you so much for your reflections, Judith, it's been wonderful to talk to you. Stimulating, as usual.

Well, I don't know that I've added much to your knowledge.

You have. You have indeed. So thank you.

END OF INTERVIEW.