

Time to Think

Open University Journeys in British and Irish prisons during the years of conflict, 1972-2000

Oral History interview clip transcript

Name of Interviewee: **Margaret Gray**

Interviewed by: **Jenny Meegan**

Date of interview: **29/08/2012**

Important

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Clip title: A memorable graduation ceremony

Duration: 00:02:22

Clip start point in full interview: 00:17:32

Clip end point in full interview: 00:19:22

Interview identifier: 096_O_01

Description:

Margaret Gray, Senior Teacher in the Maze and Long Kesh Prison, describes unexpected events when arranging a graduation ceremony in the H Blocks.

Transcript:

And of course, we had graduations. Two, I think, in my time. Maybe they had more later, I don't know. But we had two when we would have—

The Regional Director.

Yes, the Director would come and any tutors that there were and ourselves. We would have permission to bring some food in and we would have quite a little party. And the graduates- there were two at the first one, I think two at the second one- and their parents would be allowed in, which was really a tremendous thing for them, a very moving event and the Regional Director would bring gowns so they could be properly attired and look the part, and they were thrilled with this so it was very good. But, Jenny, I remember one day I had been to Belfast to collect the gowns for the graduation, which was to be in a day or two, and I had them in my car along with other things belonging to me and I left them in the car park in Lisburn. And I came back and the entire car had gone.

Oh no.

Yes. Not the first time cars were stolen - well, they still are. It had gone completely, and I remember having to tell Harry Hughes that not only was my car gone, but the gowns were gone for the graduation. It was very embarrassing and well, we had to get more.

You were in charge of the books as well?

All the books that they needed yes. I had to go to the University Bookshop, which I think is gone now.

Yes.

And get the books, get them back to the prison, get them taken in and then eventually distributed to the men and then we tried to collect them again when they had finished the course with

Margaret Gray Clip 01

sometimes more success than others [laughs]. Sometimes it was a goodbye to them, you know, but anyway