

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: **Harry Hughes**

Interviewed by: **Jenny Meegan**

Date of interview: **18/06/2012**

Important

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Clip title: Organizing tutorials despite logistical difficulties

Duration: 00:02:06

Clip start point in full interview: 00:24:25

Clip end point in full interview: 00:26:32

Interview identifier: 092_O_01

Description:

Harry Hughes, Education Officer in the Maze and Long Kesh Prison, describes study conditions and the logistical difficulties of organizing tutorials in the H Blocks after the 1983 escape.

Transcript:

What happened from 1978?

Very little. Whenever the escape took place, or around about the time of the escape, and I just can't put this in historical context, sorry Jenny. But if you can imagine an H Block being, as it is described, an H and each of the four legs of the H housed prisoners and the cross member of the H had two classrooms and the administration area between the two classrooms with classroom A serving Wings A and B and classroom B serving Wings C and D. In theory, there was to be no movement between the two classrooms. In other words, a prisoner from A Wing couldn't go to the second classroom. Similarly, a prisoner from C Wing couldn't go to the first classroom for educational purposes. So really, what you were having to do was organise sixteen education timetables and in the middle of that try to get Open University tutors in and out as well, which was a different argument. Then with the escape, the prison decided that to stop prisoners being able to collude one group with the other, so they would move H2 A Wing to H6 C Wing on a Monday and move H6 C Wing to somewhere else and the net result of all that was that there were maybe about ten or twelve Wing movements a week and you never knew where prisoners were.