

PhD Pioneers: The Living Experiences of The Open University's First PhD Graduates

Oral History interview clip transcript

Name of Interviewee: **Professor Jeff Haywood**
Interviewed by: **Elizabeth Currie**
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Clip 1

[00:18:45-00:20:55]

What are you most enduring memories about studying for your PhD at the OU?

Well I suppose because it was a small, it was a very small organisation, and because it was very new, it was actually a very flexible organisation. You could do almost anything you liked. It was an endless call for volunteers. And as long as the place could be made to work anything was acceptable. So, you had a very small setting, physical setting in which there were people from lots of different disciplines all muddled up together in a way that doesn't really ever happen in a traditional university. It was a very friendly and welcoming setting, unlike trying to find your way around in much larger and much more set organisations. And, I don't know, I suppose it felt like a pioneering setting that you were in. It was the wild west, I think sometimes we actually described it almost as the wild west. You know, it hadn't settled into strong administrative and academic and cultural boundaries. And that was quite refreshing because I had been at a very traditional university and quite conservative and stuffy in those days, and this was a much more free and relaxed kind of place to be.