

Lesley

What subjects did you study prior to arriving in Durham?

History, English Literature, Pure Mathematics



What were the highlights of studying at Durham?

Durham is a beautiful city to live in, I loved the the collegiate system, and it was full of opportunities and friendships.

What was the topic of your third-year dissertation?

I was studying Ireland in the 14th Century and completed a dissertation on The Role of the Butler Family, The Earls of Ormond.

What are you doing now and how did your degree help prepare you?

I am now retired after a career in primary teaching working in Peterlee, Hong Kong, Windsor, Maidenhead, Birmingham and Langwathby near Penrith in Cumbria. For the last 20 years I was a primary headteacher. My degree taught me a number of transferable skills, mainly the ability to assimilate information from a variety of sources, critical evaluation of source material and analysis skills. Teaching is a dynamic profession with many changing priorities both statutory and non-statutory. Critical evaluation and the ability to put across a balanced point of view was an enormous asset as a school leader in convincing staff that an initiative was worth investing time and energy to implement it. Data analysis is now a fact of life throughout the education sector, so another valuable skill.

My history degree gave me the opportunity to study Social and Economic Anthropology, a totally new subject to me. As I result I became fascinated with how people lived and combined with the world focus of the history degree, this increased my desire to travel. Over the years I have travelled extensively throughout the world and continue to enjoy travelling in retirement.

What advice do you have for prospective applicants to History at Durham?

Take every opportunity offered. Enjoy your studies for the sake of the subject, you will develop skills that will be useful whatever you choose to do at the end of the course.