

James Gillespie's High School Oral History Project Interviews

Featuring: Margaret Jamieson

Former pupil of James Gillespie's 1925-38 - the 'Brodie years'

Margaret Jamieson recalls her years spent at Gillespie's with great fondness. A former head girl, she believes the teachers she was privileged to have at Gillespie's were one of the reasons she has such fond memories.

She was not taught by Miss Christina Kay (rumoured to be the Jean Brodie of Muriel Spark's novels), but clearly recalls standing outside Miss Kay's classroom, wistfully looking in: "The walls of her classroom were covered with posters and reproductions of famous artworks which she acquired on her summer travels. Miss Kay had a presence in the school; her students were very fond of her. She had a slightly more interesting way of dressing."

Margaret was not sure that Muriel Camberg Spark based Jean Brodie on Miss Kay. "I sometimes walked home from school with Muriel. She had lovely golden hair. She stood out even then because she wrote poetry. Her poems were published in *Wand of Youth* in the early thirties."

Students from the 'Brodie years' still meet in the spring for their annual lunch; Margaret has often served as organiser for the event. Margaret lives in Peebles now and enjoys her weekly painting classes.

