

Exit Interview with Mary Lynn Hartzell

On September 14, 1978 at 3:00 p.m. Marie Allen of the Presidential Papers Staff conducted an exit interview with Mary Lynn Upperman Hartzell. The location of the interview was Room 492 of the Old Executive Office Building.

Born and reared in Washington, D.C., Mary Lynn had worked in the White House Correspondence Unit for occasional summers since 1972 and full-time since November 1976. Officially her title is clerk-stenographer in Robert Anderson's Reply Processing section of the Presidential Correspondence Office. During the Nixon Administration, Mary Lynn worked in various offices replacing vacationing secretaries, and enjoyed especially her rotations in the Counsel's office. She also remembers answering phones in the Press office on the day President Nixon resigned, having no specific instructions on what to say. In the Correspondence unit, Mary Lynn has typed letters on manual typewriters, used the MTST (magnetic tape Selectric typewriter), Xerox 800's and is now doing photo typesetting for printed and mass mail materials. She summarized the work of Bob Anderson's office as consisting primarily of mail reply, but also including the typing of executive orders, proclamations, statements, and outgoing correspondence for White House staffers. Anderson's office also maintains a secretarial pool for details in various White House offices. Mary Lynn described the correspondence handling of the Carter Administration as being disorganized and committed to computerization. Her feeling was that the quality of the typing decreased as computers took over.

Mary Lynn is moving to a small town in Connecticut to get a graduate degree in art and pursue a career in oil painting. Her husband hopes to pursue a career as a musician.