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## TRIBUTE

# Ruth Fowler in Edinburgh: A personal reminiscence

It was thanks to Ruth Fowler that I became a physiologist. At the end of our first year as undergraduates at Edinburgh University, Ruth said she'd like to do Physiology with Zoology II and asked if I'd go with her to see Catherine Hebb who looked after the non-medics doing Physiology as a science subject. Ironically I got on well with Catherine (I became her PhD student), but Ruth didn't. When it came to a third-year choice she found the amount of genetics she'd done in Zoology would allow her to take the Honours course – and there she met Bob Edwards. She was much brighter than most of her friends, with wide interests. I remember when we were frantically revising for exams she was happily reading about John Maynard Keynes' economic theories (I think one of her sisters, Chug or Lid, was an economist.)

One Sunday when she and I shared a flat with two others (Wilma and Mary) she went off skiing. Wilma's family were at odds with a cousin (not sure why) but Wilma thought this silly, so when she'd bumped into her she invited her to come for lunch that Sunday. As Wilma felt family honour was at stake she persuaded us to clean and tidy the flat as it had never been done before. The vegetables were served in dishes, not direct from the saucepans, salad cream was decanted from its bottle and the salt was put in a little glass dish. You get the picture. But it was rudely shattered when Ruth came home early (poor snow). She took one look at our unusual table arrangements and said 'What *on earth's* going on?' It was a great relief and the cousin so enjoyed the relaxed atmosphere that she stayed to tea, making toast at the gas fire with the bread intended for breakfast. I owe a lot of my contentment with Edinburgh to Ruth's friendship.

Ann Silver

E-mail address: [as234@cam.ac.uk](mailto:as234@cam.ac.uk)