



Whatever Happened to Mary Dickie Cooper

Then	Capsule Summary	Now
	<p>Born in: Detroit, MI Grew Up in: Detroit, MI High School: St. Mary of Redford High School, Detroit Undergraduate Degree: BS Math, Marygrove College, 1967 Entered Purdue: Fall, 1967 Purdue Degree: - MS CS June, 1969 Lived/Worked in: Detroit MI, Plymouth MI, Livonia MI, Lafayette IN (current residence)</p>	
Purdue Highlights	Career/Personal Highlights	
<p>There were not many universities with a Masters program in Computer Science in 1967. I chose Purdue over the University of Wisconsin because the Grad House was an easy answer to the question of where to live. What a lucky decision that was! I arrived in a Plymouth Valiant which cost \$250. I would take the Wabash Cannonball home during winter vacations and the conductor would announce "Laugh It Up, Indiana" when the train arrived in the station. I loved my two years at Purdue and the lifelong friends I made. I remember meals in the Home Ec dining room, grad meals at St. Tom's, parties at 222 W. Lutz, canoeing on the Wabash, football and basketball games, watching Laugh In with friends every week, concerts at Elliot Hall, a ride on Denny Frailey's motorcycle down the steep hill next to Ross Ade, Dick Smiley appearing whenever someone said his name, late night meals at the B & G (Barf & Gag) which was located on the present site of the Computer Science Building – how ironic. My recollection of the classes is a little hazy – a self-compiling compiler in a huge deck of punch cards, logic (which I took 2 or 3 times before finally getting a B), Information Storage and Retrieval where Ed Trischmann and I spent a semester assembling a database of the textbooks in the Chicago Public School System, a class that used the Greek alphabet instead of numbers and Herman the German seemed to be the only one who knew what was going on.</p>	<p>My first job after Purdue was at Ford Motor Company in the Advanced Operating Systems Section of the Computer Science Department. I had previously worked there two summers while attending Purdue. I left in July, 1972 to raise a family. Four children and fourteen years later I returned to the workforce. Before returning to work, though, I realized that my computer science knowledge was very outdated. A number-cruncher at heart, I returned to school and received a Professional Development Degree in accounting from the University of Michigan and worked at the Michigan Association of CPAs. After moving to Lafayette in 1996, I was employed in a business office of Civil Engineering at Purdue. Though my job was mainly accounting, I did end up being a webmaster of one of the websites. I did all the coding in HTML which was like being back in school (without the punch cards.) I retired from Purdue in 2009.</p> <p>I've been married to Jim Cooper since 1971 and have four children, ages 33 to 40 and four grandchildren, ages 3 months to 5 years. My children have lived in Colorado, New York City, England, Sweden and Australia so Jim and I have traveled a lot visiting family. My oldest daughter received an MS in Computer Science while living in London so the tradition has been carried on to the next generation!</p>	