

From the Highlands of Scotland to the Eastern Shore of Maryland: A New Chapter Unfolds for Ross Brannigan

By Jen Roslon



because of the cost of living and location. You guys are also in good touching distances of Washington D.C. and Baltimore.”

JEN: “Did you know anyone prior to coming here?”

ROSS: “Actually strange enough I was at the gym one day back home and saw a guy with a Salisbury Seagulls tee on and we got to talking about it. He studied abroad here at SU last spring and told me about it. There is another

Scottish student here with me as well.”

With the start of a fresh semester comes the promise of new courses and classmates. Some of the surrounding students are old friends and others are unfamiliar. One unfamiliar student struck me the most; Ross Brannigan.

When Ross first raised his hand and began to speak in front of the class, his thick Scottish accent was undeniable. All the heads in class immediately whipped around to lay eyes on the owner of this foreign voice. Questions swirled around in everyone’s minds; who is he and what is he doing at Salisbury University? These questions and more became my mission to unveil.

His name is Ross Brannigan and he’s an international

exchange student from the University of Stirling currently studying politics and journalism. His hometown is Tillicoultry, Scotland which is located an hour away from the city of Edinburgh. Coming from a wet-weathered area that experiences four seasons in a day, is located on the foothills of the Highland mountains, and situated next to a Loch; Salisbury is a leap of a difference. Ross is going to be 20 years old come November and is a junior standing.

JEN: “So first things first, how did you end up at Salisbury University?”

ROSS: “I was between schools in Kansas, Canada, and Maryland but in the end Salisbury was the best fit

JEN: “As your first time in America, what were some of your first impressions?”

ROSS: “Everything is really big. As my first time here, it’s a bit of a culture shock. The accents are just like the movies and it is just cool to have things like a drive-thru at Dunkin Donuts- its so bizarre!”

JEN: “Have you done any sightseeing yet? Or have any plans to?”

ROSS: “We [my dad, uncle, and myself] did the whole sightseeing tour in Washington D.C. and it was pretty cool. We went and saw the Washington Nationals play and that

was my first time ever at a baseball game. Seeing that type of stadium was amazing. I would also like to see an American football game as well.

JEN: “Being so close to the rest of the United Kingdom and Europe, what is a typical vacation like for you?”

ROSS: “For me, I prefer to go hiking in the Highlands. I’ve done more than 100 of them. I’ve also been to places like Berlin, Poland, Paris, the Alps and stuff like that.”

JEN: “How does the University of Stirling compare to Salisbury University so far?”

ROSS: “Stirling is lot smaller than Salisbury, it is only about 2,000 students. Even with fewer students though, the lectures at Stirling can be like 200 people. I like how they have classes here with a small group of people a couple times a week. It’s easier to develop one-on-one relationships with professors here. You guys are also a lot further ahead with the online stuff.”

JEN: “What is something that has surprised you about Salisbury University so far?”

ROSS: “How expensive the books are! I actually wrote a blog about it.”

JEN: “What is your blog about?”

ROSS: “I have a political blog that’s called ‘RbncBlog’ that I update to keep up with politics and current affairs.”

JEN: “Interesting. What classes are you taking here at Salisbury that relate to your interests and blog material?”

ROSS: “I am taking classes in media design layout, political communication, and democracy.”



JEN: “How do the classes you’ve taken so far stack up against classes at home?”

ROSS: “The outlook looks like its going to be difficult because it’s a lot of continuous assessment. It’s still pretty early though. The finals also aren’t as big of a mark here as they are in Stirling.”

JEN: “How have your interactions with American students been so far?”

ROSS: “Everyone is pretty chill here. I don’t notice too many differences except that we obviously don’t have frats at home, that is just something we see in the movies. I do think that people here tend to be more optimistic about their futures though and have a better attitude about university.”

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JEN: “Do you plan on getting involved in any kind of clubs or organizations here at SU?”

ROSS: “I’ve joined the Lifting Club and I’m interested in joining the Flyer. I’m game to get involved in more activities here but I was surprised by the small number of clubs there was bring a larger American University. I’d also fancy helping the Asian international students learn English.”

JEN: “Do you have any disappointments so far or anything that has fell short of your expectations?”

ROSS: “Chipotle! I had it for the first time the other day and it wasn’t worth the hype. The rest of the food is nice so far though, eating out is so cheap. I also forgot the drinking age was 21. I’m a barman back home and it’s rubbish that I can’t drink here since I am only 19.”

JEN: “Dissing Chipotle are fighting words here in America! One last question, what is the number one thing you hope to take away from your time here in the States?”

ROSS: “I would simply just like to see and experience everything I am able to. I want to see more sporting events and live in the culture. I’m also excited to participate in Halloween and Thanksgiving. We obviously don’t celebrate Thanksgiving, and Halloween is just another day so it’ll be cool to see the difference.”

International student Ross Brannigan will not return to the other side of the Pond until mid-December, giving him plenty of time to live life as an American student this fall semester. And you never know, we might see Ross again someday on BBC News if he lives out his aspirations of becoming an investigative analyst.