

Hunter Davies OBE
Doctor of Letters
Durham Cathedral, 1 July 2024

Hunter Davies OBE is a prolific author, journalist and broadcaster and wrote the only authorised biography of the highly successful global band 'The Beatles'. Hunter was appointed Officer of the Order of the British Empire (OBE) in the 2014 Birthday Honours for services to literature.

Born in 1936 in Johnstone, Scotland, Hunter moved to Carlisle when he was 11, where he grew up in the post war era on a council estate. When he moved to Durham to study, in 1954, he was the first in his family to attend university. He was an active member of University College, completing an undergraduate degree in Economic History and a teaching diploma. Hunter began his writing career at Durham on the student newspaper, the Palatinate.

He joined the paper in his third year, initially as advertising manager and then reporter and features editor. In the spring term of 1957, he was made editor. His time on Palatinate was a deeply formative experience which awakened a passion for writing and journalism and led to his future choice of career.

Upon leaving university in 1958 Hunter worked as a journalist writing for a number of publications including Punch, New Statesman, The Guardian and The Sunday Times. At The Sunday Times he was Chief Features writer, and later Editor of the Magazine. For three years he presented Bookshelf on BBC Radio 4.

Coming from a working-class background, Hunter is passionate about comprehensive

the idea of a biography of the Beatles with Paul McCartney. For 18 months, Hunter had unparalleled access to the four members of the Beatles; John, Paul, Ringo and George. The only authorised biography 'The Beatles' was published in 1968. It was a