

Oral History Interview with Kendall Lovett

Interviewer: Ken Davis

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Location of interview: Preston, Melbourne

Reason for interview: Pioneer/Activism

Restrictions: None



Log	Summary	Key words
Part 1		
0.23	I wanted to start early-ish and see how far we could get; you were born in Tasmania	Tasmania
0:28	Moved to Melbourne in 1952	Melbourne
0.50	Did you think you were heterosexual at the time that you moved?	
	No, I never thought I was heterosexual	
1.00	So in Sydney prior to 1952 were you involved in any way in social activities with homosexual men?	
1.10	No, I wasn't. I actually had had my first homosexual experience probably when I was about six years old.	
01:30	In Tasmania?	
	No perhaps I'm wrong there. It would have been when I was about nine years, In Sydney	
1.45	In North Bondi	Bondi
	How did that happen? Did you know the person?	
2.00	They were playmates. We built a cubby house in the sand-hills. Now most people don't believe there were sand-hills in North Bondi. But ether were in 1930 when we moved there when I was seven years old. And they were still there when we left.	
2.20	When did you leave North Bondi?	
2.28	About 1938 or 9	
	Apart from childhood sexual activities, did that continue into adolescence?	
2.50	Yes at a later stage. I mean I was involved during the war years in church activities, so that meant that....	WWII
	What sort of church?	
	Baptist	Baptist church
3.15	In Baptist church activities during the war; so were there military people?	
	Yes, my parents used to have Australian, UK and American. But very few – I think only one American – came. I can't remember what they called it, but parents, adults used to invite servicemen and women to their homes	Serviceman
3:48	Particularly at Christmas time or when they were on leave. That's how we came to meet numerous service people. But none of those service men did I have any sexual relations with.	
	But did you think about it?	
	Yes of course I did	
4.18	What came later?	
	When I had my first adult experience in the late 1940s, with an actor, a friend of my sister's.	
4.38	So this was someone you knew socially?	
4:48	It actually happened....Parents used to take us for picnics between Christmas and New Year. That period, when most people usually did that, on holidays. Early January or late December about 1947 or 8.	

5.18	How old were you then?	
	I can't remember actually....I was 17 when in 1941, but I wasn't acceptable for war service for any of the services because I'd had rheumatic fever when I was about 11 or 12 years old. Consequently I had heart murmur which ruled me out immediately along with flat feet.	
6.06	How old were you when you finished school?	
	I was at high school when....I must have been 12, I'd already done one year at high school... because I was off for the best part of 12 months. I refused to go back to school. Because I had to repeat...	
	What school?	
	Sydney Boys High	Sydney Boys' High
	After that what happened?	
6.45	I got a job eventually; that would have been, oh crumbs! It was sometime in the year after. I was almost 15 when I got my first job. I was sent to Grafton by my parents to recuperate, and I was up there for some months.	Grafton
7.25	What sort of jobs?	
	My father got that for me was at STC radio components; I hated that	STC
7.45	Was it clerical work or factory work?	
7.50	Factory work. I was the butt of all the jokes of the men there because most of them were young men...and very heterosexual	
8.02	And they realized you were not entirely heterosexual?	
	They knew, they very much knew that I was not one of them, I was different	
	And how long did you stay?	
8:24	Three months.... I put up with it for three months and then I didn't go to work one day without my parents being aware and I went and sat in Hyde Park	Hyde Park
	I used to have to start work at half past seven	
8.38	I got the tram into the city, I got out of the tram at Hyde Park South... I can remember it very clearly, I went and bought a Sydney Morning Herald I sat in the park ether and looked down all the jobs vacant for boys of my gae I found one I thought would suit me I applied for that at Anthony Hordens. And AH was a fairly big and important retailer, now where the World Square building is...	Anthony Hordens
	Between Goerge and Pitt and Goulburn streets	
9.40	Yes, it wasn't quite the whole of... it extended from Goulburn... Up to a lane which I think is still there, before you get to Liverpool St. So it was a fairly big area	
9.58	So at AH did you do a range of jobs?	
10:10	I was interviewed and they took one look at me and they said this guy is no good for work as a parcel boy... Who just hopped off and delivered parcels; Its actually what it said in the advertisement, and I thought well that will do me. But they decided otherwise. They stood me aside and some of the more burly ones got the jobs that were available. I think there were about four jobs available, and they stood me along with another one about my size, because I was fairly small. The two of us were stood aside, and we were told that they were happy to employ us as parcel boys, but in the shop. Different sections required somebody to take parcels and run messages... So that's what I did in the Haberdashery Department for about 18 months to 2 years.	

11.28	You were staying with your family still?	
	I was going to night school to get my Intermediate and then I eventually was... because there were so few males left in the shops, you became rather an important accessory. I was moved away from Haberdashery up to the... They had an animal clinic on the fourth floor where the Agricultural Department was. While I was up there I decided to do... I actually wanted to do a writing course. I decided I wanted to be a journalist. But there wasn't much hope of that during the war, because the newspapers were reduced to single sheets just about.	
12.55	Really?	
13.00	And so I did an advertising course instead. That was when the advertising department at AH wanted me. Actually fought for me with the boss of the animal clinic.	
13.20	Well its nice to be fought over	
	It was really funny; eventually they got their way	
	You better go back	
Part 2		
0:16	We left it at the point where you were being fought over by Agriculture and Marketing in AH	
0.30	I had enrolled. Anyway the Advertising Dept. won in the end.	
0.36	So how long did you stay in advertising?	
0.43	I stayed at AH in Advertising to 1946, because in 1946 the personnel that had been employed were returning. It meant my job became more or less redundant, as the others were due to come back to take over	1946
1.19	And all of this is before the interaction with the actor?	
	Yes	
	But at the time you knew that you were attracted to men?	
	Oh yes	
	What did you think about that at the time? Did you know there were other similar men?	
1.54	By that stage I was in denyment, denial	
	So you realized there were attractions there, but you were denying the significance for you....until you had the interaction with the actor.	
2.16	Yes that would have been about... Well, rather going back a little bit. I then changed my job, because I In the Advertising Department of Grace Bros on Broadway. I worked there for a while until there were advertising agencies being set, new ones, up by returned soldiers	Grace Bros
2:50	I'd completed the advertising course at a private school and got reasonably good marks. There was a small agency being set up in Challis House in ...	Challis House
3.15	In Martin place?	Martin Place
3.20	And I applied there while I was still at Grace Bros. Of course the same problem had occurred at GB. I really wanted something that I would enjoy, and thinking in terms of how long I was going to work.	
3.48	And I applied and I got the job as assistant to the owner of the business. I worked with them for a couple of years.	
4	We moved premises and that, and it had always been my desire to go overseas. Because I sort of felt Sydney did not offer me much scope, and besides I felt I was so different from my brothers.	
4:48	So that was my idea to go overseas. So I eventually handed in my notice in 1950. I went to work at the Australian Glass Works rolling bottles so I had time to go down to	1950 Australian Glass Works

	where the overseas ships came in, in Darling Harbour. I didn't have any money of course to go over to England, so	
5:30	What people used to do was to go down... People who worked on ships in different capacities would jump ship in Sydney	
5:43	And the point would be to try and get their jobs?	
	Yeh, and that's what I tried to do. However rolling bottles on the basis of one week on one shift, next week on a different shift, so it was night shift, day shift...afternoon, evening shift. Around the clock and that really didn't suit. So I thought I'm not going back to advertising, because that's just as difficult to get down early mornings to the shipping offices	
	So I managed to get a job in a hotel. I leant the food trade	
6:45	Which hotel?	
	I became a waiter. I worked in that about 18 months. I'd already had the experience in 1947 with the actor. I only ever had it the once, but I decided that was for me, I wasn't likely to change.	
7:10	Before you had the experience with the actor, what did you know about men who were attracted to men?	
	Nothing	
	You never saw (in any workplaces...)	
7:30	I suppose I did, but I didn't ever follow anything up. Not until... while I was still working at the advertising agency, I had and experience with a young guy who was slightly older than me but only by a few years. I met him by going to the cinema.	
8:00	I had leaned during the war... there were news theatrettes where you could go in and see newsreels and sometimes there was a short film of some description. And I found out then you could pick up.	News theatrettes
8:35	Just by eye contact? By sitting next to someone? How did make contact in the cinemas?	
8:50	With the knee, that was the easiest way.	
8:55	Were they big cinemas?	
9:00	No very small ones. It's really funny now you get these complexes...most of the ones we visit in Melbourne are really small intimate cinemas. They were just like what was the newsreel theatrette	
	Seating maybe 50, or 100?	
	It was continuous, you stayed for what you wanted to see and then you moved out.	
9:45	You were conscious that was a place... What words were used for homosexual men then? Even if you were in denial, what words were current?	
10.00	I can't remember any specific word. I think "queer" was one that was used in those days. Probably that arose during the 40s, during the war, because of the number of foreign/overseas service personnel, but anyway I was aware of that, I discovered that.	
10.30	Anyway that's how I met...	
	There used to several quite big cinemas in Castlereagh St. We had, the agency had moved office and we were in Market St	Castlereagh St Market St
11.00	Because I still lived at home, I'd stay in town, and that's where I met my first lover	
	When was that, how long after the actor approximately?	
11.27	Two years. About 1951, three or four years....	1951
11.38	Who was he, what sort of person?	
11:50	He was very much a queen. He picked me up and I suppose I quite literally fell in love.	

	<p>It must have been early in 1951 because I was still working at the Agency. No it must have been... Well I'm not sure... it must have been somewhere around that time. We decided, I was probably having an affair with him for the best part of six months or more. He lived at home as well, so we would go for car rides to the back blocks of Sydney</p>	
13:08	What sort of places?	
	Mostly in the south west of Sydney	
	Then, that would have been past Bankstown?	Bankstown
13.25	I don't remember any particular suburb, apart from the fact that	
13:30	We often used to go to National Parks	
	What work did he do?	
13.40	He worked for the government. He worked down at the Quay, at...	
	Most of the government departments were down there, like Education, Agriculture, Health	
14	It wasn't education, it was to do with....	
	He was a public servant?	
14.15	<p>It was public service. It was possible for him to get a transfer. We worked out we were never going to get anywhere living at home, or in Sydney I was already wanting to go overseas, I can put that aside, so we'll go and live in Melbourne</p>	Public service
	So you did that?	
	That's what we did in 1952	1952
14:50	<p>For quite some time we were working out what we could do. He would have to apply for a position in Melbourne if one was available I was working at the Hotel, so it didn't affect me.</p>	
15.15	So you did move to Melbourne in 1952 with him?	
	With him.	
	Did you live together? In an apartment or a house?	
15:30	We had a flat. We went and live in a hotel for a week or so until we found something more permanent. It was in South Yarra.	South Yarra
	What sort of work did you get?	
16.20	Well I had put on hold my idea of going overseas. That's what you do when you fall in love. We actually found this apartment in South Yarra and went to live there. We lived together for two months and I realized that with me it was just an infatuation. I couldn't see myself staying with him at all. But I thought I've made my bed, I better lie in it for a while, until we work something out.	
16.44	Did your family know?	
	What do you mean by "did the family know"?	
	Well did they think "well Kendall has fallen in love with a man and moved to Melbourne"?	Melbourne
17.25	<p>No I don't think they thought that. They were quite happy for me to come down to Melbourne. I had developed asthma, through the 40s I would have these bouts of asthma. I actually did a course with the Royal North Shore Hospital to find out what was causing the asthma. And it turned out according to them it was pollens and native grass seeds.</p>	
17.57	Isn't all of that worse in Melbourne?	
18.00	Well they recommended I should try some of the other states where I wouldn't suffer from these bouts. Because they were pretty horrendous. I had an aunt and uncle in Melbourne. My parents also had some friends in Brisbane. So first I went to Brisbane	Brisbane

	when I was on holidays from work. I was worse off up there. I think it had something to do with the humidity. I then came back. So I came back and the next chance I got I went to Melbourne	
19	So your family thought this is good because Kendall will be healthier in Melbourne?	
	And he's with my aunt and uncle.	
19.15	And you got work here?	
	I joined an advertising agency down here.	
19.20	You were a copywriter?	
	Yeh, I had my own set of clients that I serviced. I did layouts.	
	For newspaper ads?	
	Yes. I also did quite a bit of radio advertising. I wrote the scripts for some of the programs because they often did, they had a program and you wrote the continuity between... I had to write the continuity to fit in with what the program was. I did the same thing when television came in. I had one program with channel 9, either channel 7 or.. which was the children's piano contest with Carnegies, so I wrote all the continuity for that, between the... First we had do all the choice of the kids, the pianists to go on, and that meant weekend work. I had to go and arrange the set of kids.	Radio Television
21:27	So back to the relationship: you'd moved to Melbourne, and he'd transferred, but after a couple of months you were less enamoured...	
	Well, eventually, he did quite a bit of overtime at night and so I did some entertaining. And he came early one night when I had a friend there	
22	Where were you meeting other friends? How?	
	Actually, they were... This was one of the things that turned me right off. He had a whole set of friends in Melbourne anyway, and that's why he was quite happy to come to Melbourne.	
	And were they homosexual men/	
	Yes all of them	
	What sort of people were they? Public servants?	
	Much the same as gay men are these days. Mostly white collar workers	
22.49	Did they refer to themselves as	
	They used to meet at a pub just around the corner from where we lived	
23	What was it called?	
	I can't remember the name but I think it is still there.	
	What's the name of the Street that runs alongside the Botanical Gardens here?	
	St Kilda Rd?	
23.40	But anyway around the corner and he used to go there every Saturday and talk about various relationships	
23.56	Did they describe themselves as queer or camp or homosexual?	
	They were a camp group, but I don't think they described themselves other than they called themselves by female names mostly.	
	But if they wanted to say "he's..."	
24.20	"One of us", or you know, or "I knew he was"...Not "queer". It never occurred to me to call anybody by a label. Labelling to me was quite unnecessary.	
24.55	But your partner at the time had a social network, that used women's names?	
	Yes	
	Did everyone have a name?	
	No	
	You just got given a particular women's name?	
	One of the would name any new person	

	You established a new set of friends?	
26.00	Yes, we didn't do that straight off, we did go to their homes for parties. I got fed up with them, because their talk was so... of no interest to me. But I used to go around with Allen to these... as I'm not a beer drinker which was what they did there... they always went into the, not at the main bar, sort of lounge	
26.40	And did they have particular interests in terms of sport or music?	
	No. That was what turned me off, they didn't have any interest outside themselves and what they talked about. I said to him you go with your friends but I don't want to come and meet with you.	
	How did you meet friends, homosexual men separate from this group?	
27.25	We went to some parties They were more to my liking because they had something worthwhile to talk about.	
	Was there anything more than parties at people's homes, any informal social groups?	
27.45	Not to my knowledge, we are talking about 1950...	
	I was asked if anyone here had records of the Boilers	
	I don't even know if they were around in early 50s, more into the 60s somehow	
28.18	You set up an apartment with him, but starting to go your own way socially	
	He came home and he didn't like the person that had come to visit and we had a row, and he said I'm going back to Sydney.	
	Did you stay in the apartment?	
28.45	No we had it jointly, I couldn't pay for the rent on my own because it needed the two of us. We weren't being paid a great deal. Rent was still fairly high. If we were living in Preston, I think the rents out here much smaller. We eventually decided. He applied for a return to Sydney start in January so that is when we split up, he went back to Sydney, I went up on holidays because that's what I used to do, to go home each Easter. When I came back we gave the flat up and distributed any things, because it was a furnished flat anyway. Than we came back I had to find somewhere	
	So where did you live after that?	
30.15	I got a room in Toorak. Just off Toorak Rd: Williams Rd	Toorak
30.20	How long did you stay in Melbourne til?	
	That was only the first year that I was down here. One of the friends I had made previously introduced me to some friends of his. That's how I came to meet my second lover here in Melbourne; he was also a public servant from NSW originally, and we hit it off first off. He wanted me to leave the room that I had in Toorak and go and live with him. Because of my first experience I said to him straight out "I'm not going to live with you. Lets give it a chance" It was only a month after I'd come back that I'd met him and like d him and we'd got on well and we, he kept at "why can't you?" and after 6 months I agreed and I gave up and lived in Caulfield	
32.11	What was Caulfield like?	Caulfield
	Much the same as it is now.	
	Mixed, with a Jewish community?	
	Yes. But I didn't mix, nor did he mix, with general community. He had his own set of friends.	
	And they were all homosexual?	
	He had two very good friends who were lesbians and I liked them and we used to get around a fair bit together.	

	I'd also made contact at work. My friendship group had broadened.	
	And they were what sort of people?	
	Even some of the clients I serviced would invite me to things, the boss of the agency would invite me to things.... and I would take Ken	
	Families? There was no trouble with having a man friend?	
	No that was acceptable in the circles I was moving in, and it wasn't just homosexuals	
	So there was no trouble with police? Were people fearful of police activity? In Melbourne then what was the situation?	
	There were beats in Melbourne and mostly you stayed clear of... you know down here which we didn't have in Sydney, lots of little urinals sort of metal...	
34.50	Like in Europe?	
	Yes, usually you stayed clear of them	
	Because of entrapment?	
	Yes.	
35	What did you think were the differences between Sydney & Melbourne? In culture, tone?	
	No I didn't find much difference as far as the culture was concerned. Because I had so early got into relationships, that was a different set of people who went to bars. I was never a person who went to hotels, pubs	
35.50	But when you lived in Melbourne your first partner was socially attached to a particular bar in South Yarra? Did you know of venues that had a camp or queer clientele?	
36.10	The only one I knew about which I never went to was the Australia Hotel, they had a bar that even in the 50s everybody knew about, some of the people too, that I got to know socially did go there and knew people and that's how I got to know about it. However it never appealed to me.	Australia Hotel
	So the social life of you and your partner and your lesbian friends, was just at people's homes?	
36.55	Or at some of the cafes that we would frequent where some of our other friends would go as well.	
	Were there sort of cafes that were more accepting of more homosocial...?	
	I don't think I was sufficiently aware in those days. I don't know that any of the places were homos-acceptable. You just didn't flaunt yourselves or none of the people would attract attention because of their antics. Like from work there was always the Advertising Arts Ball each year that I would go to but usually with friends from work, who weren't homosexual at all, where it was acceptable to dress up, You went in fancy dress. I've got photos	Advertising Arts Ball
	Cross dressing?	
	Not to my knowledge. Cross dressing was at the Arts Ball. I often thought I'd love to go to it.	Arts Ball
38.30	Who ran the Arts Ball?	
	Don't know	
	Was it big? Where was it held?	
	Yes it was big alright. Just trying to think of where some of the Advertising Arts Balls were held. I don't really remember. There were venues that catered for.... Ken worked for taxation, and every year they had a Ball	
	Balls were the thing	
	The Advertising Arts Ball...	
39.45	Cross dressing was quite famous at the Arts Ball, and the papers followed that, like "the Truth", there were always things that happened that caused a furore	The "Truth"
	The Truth and the Argus and the Age would have articles covering the	

	Aswell as the Herald.	
	And were there arrests? For cross-dressing?	
	No. Because of people getting drunk.	
	So did you go to the Arts Ball?	
40	No only to the Advertising Arts Ball and the Taxation Ball. Because my partner at the time was one of those who did the various arranging.	
40.30	And so in the early 50s you are in Melbourne with partners and socializing at work, but people were conscious of police activities?	
	Talking of police activity, before I left Sydney, that first partner and I used to meet after work. At the hotel I'd work breakfast in the early mornings, lunch and dinner at night; I finished the lunch shift around about 2.30 and I didn't come back on until 5.30 most nights and so I used to meet my partner at that stage before he went home and before I went back to work, and that's how we planned what we were going to do the following weekend, and when we planned what were going to do by going to live in Melbourne and we used to meet somewhere in the street in one of the seats in Martin Place and other times if it was reasonably good weather we'd just sit on the grass verge up in Macquarie Street.	
	Martin Place was a street with cars then?	
42.30	Yes it wasn't until the 70s that they changed that. He was working at the Quay. It was easy for us to meet in Martin Place. I was working in Clarence Street. What's the street? Between Market... King St It wasn't far from the hotel I worked at, so that area was easy for us to meet at. When it was reasonably warm in summer time we'd sit on the verge on the grass. You reminded me talking about police activity...	
44	While we were sitting there one evening it was getting dark and suddenly a search light was focused on the two of us sitting there and talking and we looked up and it was a police car parked just down there and they had their light focused on us, and two police guys came up. One grabbed me and another grabbed Alan, and took us apart, and wanted to know what we were doing. We said "talking". To me it was quite a shock. To have the police separate us. They wanted to know our names and how long we had known each other. "You shouldn't be sitting there talking at night time". I said "but it's not night time, it's daylight", I argued with them. They wanted to know where we lived and what we were talking about. I was quite open, we are going to move to Melbourne, we were just planning how we were going to do it.. Well they said "you go home now and don't you dare talk to this guy in this manner". He was going to Wynyard to get the train and I was going to work, and I said where I was working. "We don't want to see you meeting, you go your way and he goes his way".	
46.10	You hadn't been showing any affection?	
	No we had just been talking. It was a really bad experience for me. I called out "ring me at home", which he did.	
	So you moved to Melbourne and you didn't think it more liberal than Sydney?	
46.40	I thought it was more liberal than Sydney, but of course it was no better in Melbourne.	
47	In Melbourne in the early 50s was there any pressure from the medical, psychiatric or church...?	
	I didn't have any church interests down here.	
47.15	You didn't notice any pressure in public life?	
	Not really, because everyone I knew who were normal people, not different like myself	

	and my friends were, they accepted it was OK for Ken and I to live together. We were flat mates.	
47.50	They didn't assume it was a sexual relationship?	
	I think they did. But they didn't mind.	
	It didn't merit investigation?	
	If you did your work you were accepted as normal people.	
48.20	How long did you stay in Melbourne?	
	Until I went back to Sydney in December, Christmas, that's when I finished up work with the agency. I had already said to Ken, I had told him what I wanted to do, I had wanted eventually to go and live and work overseas in London. He was quite happy about that because he'd like to do that as well. But by 1959 I said to him "look next year I am going whether you come or not", because what he wanted to do was take long service leave and we would go together then. So he said "alright", and we decided 1960 would be the year we'd go. Midway through the year, before that... We booked to go on 22 January '61.	
	By ship?	
50	By ship. This must have been in May or June when we did that, in July he came home one night and said "guess what there's a job going in Australia House". And "maybe I should apply". I said "I think you should". He came home and said "Look I don't think I have the qualifications". I said "if you don't apply you won't know". He decided he would. He applied and he got right through; he was chosen but he had to withstand four appeals against his choice. The first one, the second one, was finally dispensed with. The third... There was just two, he and another guy, and that was only three weeks before he was supposed to leave, the fourth one hadn't been decided, so we were really up in the air about it, but anyway he came home and said "I've got it".	
	He was travelling officially?	
	He had to go in September. We had already moved from Caulfield to St Kilda Rd, where we were when the Olympic Games were on in '56. From there we'd moved to Queen's Rd, which was rather odd.	Olympic Games, (1956)
	What changes in relation to same sex activities, attitudes, during the time when you were in Melbourne? Was there any impact of the Olympics? It was a time of rapid change in a lot of areas...	
52.30	Interruption	
	No not obvious changes, I think it had become... the changes were not so obvious, I think police activity had increased as far as homosexuals had increased.... After the Olympics	
53.30	Interruption	
	Were there any high-profile scandals?	
54	"The Truth" was the scandal paper. The Herald wasn't much better, I can't remember any particular ones. If I was to go through the Truth of the period, some of those stories would jog my memory. There is no particular one that I can remember off-hand.	
54.40	To summarise the Melbourne period, you came with Alan, and then most of the time was with another partner, Ken, and then together you went to London.	
	He went first because I retained my original booking, but they flew him over. I had to tie up the flat business, get rid of furniture. That's one of the things about my boss that was so good. When I actually handed in my resignation, he gave a big office party for me. While I was in London, he used to come over, he and his wife, and he'd let me know	

	beforehand, and I used to meet them, we'd go to the races, because he was a racing man.	
	Interruption	
56	He and his wife must surely have recognized that Ken and I were homosexual, but it didn't worry them. That was sort of the heterosexual environment I was used to here in Melbourne. That was in 1960.	1960
	How many years did you live in Britain?	
56.50	Seven. I came back in 1968 to Sydney	1968. Sydney
	Do you want to briefly describe your life in Britain.	
	That was really really good, I didn't want to come back to Australia.	
	You were living in London?	
	Yes in London proper.	
	For how long with Ken?	
57.10	His appointment was for four years. No way am I going back to live in Canberra, so I stayed in London.	
57.25	You had your own circle of gay friends in London?	
	We had, and I retained those friends	
	Was that different to Melbourne?	
	I was taken to venues after Ken went back. Mostly it was very similar when I was there with him, we went to people's houses. I had become separated from him, so they felt they could ask me to go to various things they couldn't before because we were a couple. So I went to the ABC Club in London, then another one, it was a very snooty one, which was a club for homosexual men.	ABC Club, London
58.40	What was the homosexual social life in London? Was it mixed in terms of race and class and gender?	
	It was very similar to what I was used to in Melbourne, the only difference was most of my friends would go to the Continent on holidays. I actually went to Spain with a friend whose particular lover decided not to go, so he said... I was on holidays, and he said "why don't you come too?" We were there for a fortnight in Spain.	
1.00.00	From the time you arrived in Britain to the time you left, how did your thinking change?	
	I realized the political nature of homosexuality. When Ken went back, some of the friends had become involved with a group, I would need to go and have a look to get the correct name, it followed the findings of the 1957	
	Wolfenden?	
	Wolfenden, they were trying to get implementation...Would have been 1966 I suppose. So I've got some of their booklets	
	When was that?	
	1965-66?	
1.01.28	Were they big meetings?	
	No not very big. There were no such things as street marches or things like that. It was a lobbying group.	
	What words were used in Britain?	
	For homosexuality? Just "homos" I think. People referred to "another homo"	
	Did people still speak Polari?	
	I think that's where I heard "queer" used, in Britain	
	And "camp"?	
	Not "camp", it was used here, I always thought it was spelled "KAMP"	
1.02.30	And culturally, were the venues in London were very different from Melbourne and	

	Sydney?	
	They were similar. When I got back I found that wasn't the case, because when I came back some time in '68, I was taken to the Bondi Junction...	Bondi
1.02.50	Ivy's?	Ivy's
	Ivy's. It amazed me	
	Was there a drag show?	
1.03.15	No, not to my knowledge, there was a regular gay dance; you walked straight into a dance floor with gay men dancing	
	Was that your experience in London?	
1.03.40	It had been in London, both those clubs, moreso the ABC Club that was a dance venue. The other was more a drinking club.	
	It was a time of law reform in London in the late 60s?	
	It was happening, but it happened after I came back. '67-'68 that particular year was a bit traumatic for me because my father had been invalided out from PMG then because he.. coughed up blood.	
1.05.06	TB?	
	He had a really bad ulcer, that he finally died from but twenty years later.	
1.05.30	You had to come back?	
	He was given six months to live, but I didn't want to come back. It was to me, London was where, I had a good job..	
	What sort of job?	
	In advertising. I was also writing, I'd had a number of short stories published, and read on BBC. I had been writing the whole time I was over there, it was just coming good for me.	
1.06.20	When the world was starting to change in places like London you had to be back in Sydney?	
	It was just terrible when I came back here. My mother wasn't well, and certainly father wasn't. But anyway he wrote and asked me to come home.	
1.06.53	And so when did you come back?	
1.07.09	I arrived back here sometime in Sept '68. But I came back by ship.	
	You stayed with family first?	
	Oh yes, that was the whole point.	
1.07.25	How long did you stay with your family?	
	About two years, and then I said to Dad "look, you're fine, you're not going to die".	
	Where was this?	
1.07.43	Willoughby	Willoughby
	You were working in advertising again?	
	No. At that stage I decided I wanted to find a place of my own, I was proofreading for Pink Pages, the phone-book	
1.08.20	What was your social life like?	
	It was good by that time, but at home it was just with the family.	
	You weren't going to gay venues? You didn't have homosexual friends?	
	Oh yes I did, because one of the things in Melbourne was our friends had a restaurant. Ken and I had actually gone to this restaurant in South Yarra. We both realized the guy who was the waiter and the guy who was the chef were quite obvious to us as homosexuals. We went back a second time and we were introduced to the chef, he came and sat at the table with us, and he said "why don't you stay on and have coffee?"	
1.09.45	You realized they were homosexual?	
	Their mannerisms, it was obvious.	

	You are back in Sydney in 1968?	
1.10.50	They said they had a restaurant, but they also had an outside business, catering for dinner parties, it was their main business. We got talking, they found out I had waited, I'd learned how. They wanted to know if I would work for them. I said "no". "We only mean working for us on our outside catering service, probably only at night time on weekends mainly". I said "I'd think about it" We went home and Ken and I talked, he said "Why not?" "You are going to need more money than you are saving from work". I was doing it as an extra from work. Their clientele were all fairly well off, some of them were down Mornington way, they'd pick me up, and take me down in the car. So it was quite interesting until they rang me at work and said they had this party -- they had a few other people working for them -- at Hawthorne, we'd like you to do it. "That's my boss's home!" I couldn't possibly go there, they'd find out I was, you know... It just didn't seem to fit in. They said "Do they know Ken?" "I don't think they have met him". "See if he'll do it instead of you". So I rang Ken.	
1.13.50	That's how he started there. So the two of us were doing that extra work for a couple of years actually. When I came back from London, they'd separated. One had stayed in Melbourne, the chef had come to Sydney. He had opened the first wine bar in Crows Nest and he wanted somebody to work food there.	
1.14.23.	So you were living in Willoughby and working at a wine bar in Crows Nest... what sort of clientele at the wine bar?	
	A very young clientele	
	But mixed in terms of women and men?	
	It wasn't gay by any means.	
1.14.44	You had some friends from that network? You were constrained because you were living at home for a while. Were attitudes different from when you had left Australia?	
1.15.30	I would say the church-going people that I had known were not accepting of gay people, but generally I wouldn't know what the general population thought.	
1.15.44	What words were being used for homosexuals then in 1969 in Sydney? You said "camp" was more common here than London.	
1.16.09	I can't really say, it was very close to the 70s by then. As far as I was concerned, what changed as far as Sydney was concerned was when I went to live in Woolloomooloo in 1970, and I got involved in Resident Action which to me was really important. At the same time what we were seeing and hearing on radio and television was a new interest in the gay communities	Woolloomooloo
1.17.15	When did you move to 47 Crown St Woolloomooloo? You were renting there from 1070 onwards. You got involved in Resident Action, but in Britain you'd made a link between homosexuality and politics, and Sydney was starting to change rapidly...	
	I was going to street meetings in Woolloomooloo, and they were the start of Resident Action in that area, it was also in other inner city suburbs	
	Explain why it was important?	
1.18.15	I felt what was happening to Woolloomooloo as an inner city residential area was the CBD was gradually taking over residential areas. To me residential areas were important, because I'd lived in an inner city area in London, and I could see a similar inner city situation... I'd lived in the inner city in Melbourne too. I found the suburbs outside the city to be not --- it had something to do with homosexuality too.	
1.19.20	And nightlife? Anonymity?	

	Acceptance really. You seemed to be acceptable more in the city area, because of the nightlife.	
	What was the issue around Wolloomooloo, other than the expansion of the CBD?	
	The houses were being bought up by developers, because what was planned by the Commonwealth government, for a Commonwealth center, the area would become office blocks	
1.20.20	Other than residents who was opposed?	
1.21.15	Because the same thing was happening in the Rocks, Glebe, Darlinghurst, Kings Cross, Surry Hills, and further over... that's when we formed our own groups, we didn't amalgamate, but we had... what would you call them? Like you know the conferences drew together the different groups, that's more or less the same sort of assistance to groups in other areas, similar to the way the gay groups worked.	
	You moved into Crown St in 1970, prior to that you'd been at Willoughby, was Resident Action already active?	
	Not as such	
	You were part of helping establish Resident Action in Wolloomooloo? And at the time you were socialising with homosexual men	
1.22.30	I'd gone to live in W because of another gay man I knew from way back, Ron Owen. He lived at 49 (Crown St). He was going to Melbourne to do a show down there. He was an actor as well as a filmmaker. He'd be in Melbourne for three months. He asked if I'd stay in his flat because he didn't want to lose it. I jumped at the chance, it was means of leaving home without causing problems.	Ron Owen
1.23.25	Were you still working in the hospitality industry in the wine bar or catering?	
	At that stage I was working at Pink Pages, running their proof-reading department. I had become very friendly with Ron's friends. Living in his house. I'd helped him on some of his shows, he'd put on in Sydney.	
1.24.25	Helped him how, by acting?	
	I didn't act, I'd done sound for him. But I met other friends like Garry Stonehouse.	Garry Stonehouse
	What sort of world would you describe that, is it related to performance art?	
1.25.00	Yes. I didn't see the actual television program where the two Peters, Bonsall-Boone and de Waal, caused him to be sacked by the church at Mosman. Garry wasn't an actual member but he had some connection with CAMP inc	Peter Bonsall-Boone Peter de Waal CAMP
	You hadn't gone to any meetings?	
	No I was already too involved in Resident Action	
	RA was taking up a lot of your time?	
	And so was work. Garry said there is going to be a demonstration outside the church he has been sacked from. It was on the Sunday morning. He said "How about us going?" Two lesbians that he knew, that I also knew, the four of us met at 9am in the morning... we sat on the floor and wrote placards we were going to carry. Then we got in the car and went over.	
	Which was?	
1.27.15	1972	
	Still in this period of 1971-72, you said you	
	Yes, there was another one, late 60s, I went to a regular Friday night dance at the Maccabbean Hall	
	Did it have a name?	
	Presumably Jewish social events don't take place on a Friday night	

	No it was	
	Who ran the dance	
	Goodness knows.	
	Did it have a special name	
	No.	
	Over what period?	
1.28.30	I suppose 12 months on and off; I didn't go regularly	
	How many people on average?	
	I would say 50-100 people there.	
	What sort of music?	
1.29	Not sure. I wouldn't like to say it was a live band or just recorded music.	
	Women and men?	
	Yes	
	Equal numbers?	
	Quite a small number of women.	
	Drag?	
	Don't recall any drag. Same as I don't recall nay drag in London.	
	Performances?	
	There must have been. They could have been drag shows.	
	MC?	
	Yes. Maybe once a month perhaps	
1.30.05	Any community personalities?	
	No. There was one I went to, in that same period. Early 70s down near the area below Goulburn St	
	In Day St?	
	Yes, near the Trades Hall	
	The Communist Party hall? Mural?	
	Not sure about that, there was a hall, with a drag show, with a single woman	
	A hall not a pub?	
	I only went the once, Garry had said this particular singer, must have been a drag, it was the name of one of the well-known Hollywood actresses, early 70s	
	Lana?	
	No	
1.31.50	Were you conscious of social groups?	
	No	
	Beats?	
	Which ones?	
	Not sure I knew any particular ones. A bit later. There was one where Choice was, it has been pulled down.	
	Where was Choice?	
	It was in Regent St, near the funeral station. I went to photograph it in the time of GSG early 80s.	
1.33.20	Politically you were involved in RA but there was a connection to who you were, a lifestyle?	
	A lifestyle that accepted	
	In RA were people accepting?	

1.33.50	I never felt the need to come out. When I was arrested, they all said we knew you were	
	When were you arrested?	
	'78	
	That was before there were conflagrations around W, Kings Cross when Juanita Nielsen was killed...	
	'75	
	That's in the lead up to some very big fights, in terms of the union and police and corruption	
	We broke away from the other group	
	Which other group?	
	WRAG, that was in the eastern section from Burke St east, whereas we were from Burke St west	
	Burke St west the group was called?	
	ROW	
	West was?	
	WRAG:	
	When was the break-up?	
	Right at the beginning. 1973	
1.35.45	Direction in RA politics, and Green Bans, not putting gay stuff, demo in 1972, From 1972 did you become more involved?	
1.36.15	Yes, I was writing letters to politicians, and getting friends to write letters.	
FINAL	Came about	
	Moss Cass?	
	And the Liberal, Gorton, who was PM for a while. So I had a campaign among my friends to get support.	
	You were doing that as an individual activist with a lot of friends?	
	The only reason I knew about gay lib, I thought it was something simply used for their banners, It was mainly gay lib banners at the Mosman do. I was approached to join Camp after that demonstration, and invitation by Bonsall-Boone himself, but it was actually eth church group	
	Within CAMP, the sub committee looking at religious issues?	
	By then you weren't a God-fearing Baptist?	
	This is what I was trying to escape from	
	What you didn't like was the religious side?	
	Garry?	
1.39.00	He wasn't really involved. He was friendly with some of those who were involved. But he was a teacher, he was moved at different times, so I didn't see him regularly.	
	Where was the meeting of the church group?	
	Not actually Glebe.	
	Forrest Lodge?	
	Forrest Lodge.	
	You went to the demo, tried a meeting,	
	I thought I could do far more with my friends	

	You're still	
	That gets passed, but	
	What's the good?	
	You're still	
	When you are working, and I was working to provide myself with the wherewithal to keep going with RA	
1.40.53	Apart from RA, how were you socialising?	
	Still with my circle of gay friends. There were three households, 47, 49, and 52 in Crown St was another group of homosexuals, and we used to have a Christmas party, and there were accepting friends as well, like Elizabeth, an editor at one of the fashion mags, she lived in the flat below Ron, and she was accepting of all that was going on.	
	By the early 70s, more information, visibility of camp in mass media?	
	Not so much in mass media, filmmakers only up the road in William Street	
	The Co-op, ran it's own cinema and independent production, showed avant garde films	Filmmakers' Co-op.
	That's why I loved that area	
	What were the other attractions in the area?	
	The people were so varied, in Dalrymple, in Kings Cross, because we were there fighting with the people in Victoria St.	
	Were Kingsd Cross and Dalrymple, up the Hill, not so far, w	
	The same sort of thing with developers, we had friends and we supported the other groups in the Rocks, some of our people were arrested.	
1.44.05	Apart from yourself and the political struggle how would you describe street life	
	Everybody got to know each other	
1.44.30	But by 1970 there was a lot of American servicemen	
	No. I wasn't aware that they were anywhere involved with us down there. They weren't part of our attention.	
	Aware of drugs in areas like Dalrymple?	
	Oh yes, we suffered moreso later in the 80s from the drug situation.	
	In what way?	
	People coming down to Woolloomooloo and living in derelict houses. We hadn't much to do with them.	
	Were you aware of gay venues within a km of where you lived?	
1.46.10	Yes. Oxford St, I was aware of the venues there.	
	Which ones?	
	I went a few times, but they didn't interest me.	
	Capriccios?	
	Yes	
	And in early 70s in the Cross, any coffee shops or winebars or pubs	
	Certainly there but I didn't frequent them, I didn't get interested	
	None of the gay men you knew?	
	I didn't talk to them about them. If you don't have an interest in that sort of venue it doesn't have any impression on you.	
	You are self-consciously homosexual and living in Woolloomooloo, but you are completely unconnected, even though near to where you are?	
	True	
	And were you aware of areas of prostitution?	
	They weren't in Crown St, not in W. No one wanted to go down to W because of the	

	whoel business there.	
	You mean the struggle with the developers?	
	The three levels of government.	
	City, State and Federal?	
1.48.30	Yes	
	Still doing geography...Boomerang St near the cathedral	Boomerang St
	That was the most famous beat in the area. If you wanted sex. The last place I'd go.	
	When finished?	
	Had it finished when we had the demo for Kelly?	
	Archbishop Stella Gilroy?	Archbishop Gilroy.
	And the Fountain, were you aware	
	No, I didn't know the Fountain was a beat, but I suppose if I'd thought about it, I'd have guessed it because there was a loo there.	
1.50.10	So you are working and you have a social circle and you've been to the demo at Mosman, and you have what next gay political thing that came your way?	
	The big one was that we as resident group... the one held in William St, it was an an Inquiry into	
	Tribunal into Homosexuality and Discrimination?	
	No one before that. No the Inquiry into Human Relationships in 1975	
	What issues were important to you as a group?	
1.52.15	The transitional situation that had always existed with itinerant workers, we thought it important that be retained for the area, rather than gentrification of the area, that was the basis of our submission. I learned there was a submission from Camp about homosexuality.	
	What did you think about that submission?	
1.52.44	I don't think I did anything about it, I thought it interesting, I wanted to know result. I found out much later.	
	As the resident struggle escalated through the mid-70s...	
	Continued through 80s, while I was in GSG I was making submissions fro our resident action	GSG
	There were some big events in that struggle, the Green Bans, killing of Juanita Nielsen, Tom Uren	
	All part and parcel	
	Still in 70s, were you still very active as a resident, how did you see interactions gay politics and local politics you were engaged in?	
1.54.40	I'm not sure how to answer that. It was a gradual ongoing thing, I was coming across people outside our area who were involved in sort of gay politics as well as resident action. I was discovering quite by accident someone who I knew was involved in gay action.	
	Like who?	
	I can't remember specific people.	
	Your attitudes to police?	
1.55.45	We couldn't rely on support from police down there.	
	And the Union was supportive, the Builders' Labourers' Federation, were you conscious that the BLF had taken action around Jeremy Fischer?	BLF
	Yes because what disappointed us with the police was the number of people who had been arrested for striking up for	Jack Munday Joe Owens

	Jack Munday and Joe Owens were being arrested	
	Leaders of the Builders' Labourers' Federation?	
	Our people and other areas like ours going there to support the residents, being arrested, being dragged across... Then seeing the same thing happening to us. I'm really sorry I didn't know or didn't follow up like, gay liberation	
	Or mainstream of Camp	
	I never knew about 1973 demonstration in Sydney.	
	National Gay Pride Week?	
	That was only 12 months after Peter and Bons	
	Run by different people, but many arrests, similar to struggle in Wolloomooloo, Kings Cross, Glebe	
1.58.30	That was if you weren't politicized before you should have been then, that's why I'm sorry I didn't know about that demo and I could have if I'd started to get involved	
	Because then Kings Cross was a bit of a hot spot for gay social life, as was Darlinghurst, so you weren't geographically isolated, and there was stuff going on in the Domain.	
	Across the road from where I lived. I didn't know about first Mardi Gras until I saw it on television at my parents, my father had it on and went to turn it off don't turn it off, yes I am	Mardi Gras
1.59.50	In the period 1970-87, you moved to W, mainly working in proofing Pink pages	
	Left PP in 1974 and started work with Choice magazine in 1975	
	Very involved in Res politics in W, interaction gay politics, high points are demo at Mosman, inquiry into human relationships, Camp submission, social circle in Crown St,	
2.01.10	Missed one thing, my involvement in 1973-74 with lobbying around Moss Cass motion	
	Up to 1975 were you personally involved in gay political activities?	
	No. After I saw that, I said to Ron Owen and Garry "why didn't you tell me about this?"	
	Had they been involved in MG?	
	The thing was, "why didn't you tell me it was happening?", they said "we thought you knew."	
	All through the 70s you were hardly closeted?	
2.02.20	Certainly not.	
	Maybe leave MG for another, at family home, coverage of arrests in KC, your father says "switch it off", you're saying "hold on a minute", where did that conversation go to?	
	He left it on, I can't remember what we said after; why didn't I know? I've got friends down there.	
	Did your father know you were gay or homosexual?	
	I never said to him	
	It wouldn't have been a shock?	
	No, they knew I was involved in RA demonstrations	
	What did you see and how did you feel?	
	This is by the police and by the government, the government was just as involved in the Mardi Gras by allowing the police to do that	
	The Premier was hostile	
	I was hostile to the Premier	
	Did you see the Premier Wran attacking the Mardi gars the first night on tv?	
	Yes	
	That fitted into your feelings about the state government?	

	You'd had ten years of adverse, 8 years of adverse relations with government?	
	Very much so	
2.05.30	In the period, late 60s back reluctantly from Britain, big changes, how changes in Sydney from time your back to `1978	
	In myself, accepting with the government of Australia in the 50s, not being really politically involved at all and then discovering there was some worth in agitation for gays and lesbians in London then coming home and suddenly involved in RA and what governments was really doing so different from what they were really doing That change in me and not so much the outside world at all	
	Your social circle of gay men reinforced that change? Or were they obstacles?	
	My association with a big percentage of hetero world become changed no longer the enemy that they had been that kept us in a secret society	
	When did you feel that?	
	In Sydney too, growing up, all the way through, Melbourne, why should it be so secret, happy to continue on That all changed in me, as much, though it must have changed	
	Media, publications?	
	No	
	Not just gay ones?	
2.10	I suppose yes, publications were not available, like several university publications I'd see on and off, RA publications, I was involved in one myself	
	Any radical papers, Campaign, Nation Review?	
	Nation Review certainly	Nation Review
	Had you sent articles before?	
	Yes.	
	Any other?	
	Didn't see any	
	"Tharunka"?	Tharunka, UNSW
	Yes, not so much Sydney University	
	In early 70s, censorship, women, indigenous, as RA person how did you feel?	
	We didn't make any distinction in our group. A number of Aboriginal squatters, didn't have much to do with them, felt they had a right to be there.	
2.12.25	Visiting gay venues or social groups?	
	Yes, with friends to dances at	
	Macabbean Hall and Day St?	
	No, out at	
	Mascot? Pollys?	
	Yes, down there, they had door prizes when you went in , won a double pass to opening of Ken's Karate	KKK
	Did you go? How was it?	
	I took a friend. We went to it, it wasn't properly finished	
	What year?	
	Must have been mid-late 70s	
	What did you think about ken's	
	Taken on a tour, we went upstairs, they provided champagne, very cheap, tour of the pool, big pool, taken on tour by drag queens who were all there	
	Remember any of them?	
	Remember one in white. Boxes, near pool, not completed, "Changing boxes"; teh	

invited continue drinking, and to go where we liked Champagne Then began to get very rowdy, lots of people getting very drunk, maybe 50 or so people, when they threw drags into pool we left.	
Anything else about 40s-50s, 60s, 70s to first MG?	
The big meeting held in Darlinghurst.	
Stanley Palmer Kultchure Palace?	
15th July March	
Is that the first big meeting you'd been at?	
I was amazed, where had they all come from?	
You'd been to Ken's (Karate Klub)?	KKK
That was social	
To plan?	
Margaret McMann	Margaret McMann
You would have known people, Wendy Bacon?	Wendy Bacon
Yes, from Victoria Street, homosexual?	
Some of them weren't!	
True. Being really	
And angry?	
When it came to the vote, the 15th July because that weekend we were having problems at work and we'd booked Currawong, I decided I'd do a cut out of myself for Ron to carry.	