

Pride History Group Oral History Interview with Stephen Allkins

Interviewer: John Witte

Logged by: Christopher Lukins

Date of interview: 15 December 2012

Location of interview: Darlinghurst

Reason for interview: LGBTIQ DJs

Restrictions: None



Time	Summary	Key words
00:00	Introduction	
00:33	Outlines early life. Born 1960. Had polio and early vaccine cured it. Moved to Wentworthville. 3 brothers all gay. Sister a nun. Youngest in family by 8 years. Influence of having an older brother who was gay in the 1960s. Earliest memory of attraction to boys and liked playing with girls.	Newtown; Wentworthville; gay sibling;
02:54	Age of 7. Became best friends with his cousin who was also gay. Similar tastes. In 1975 cousin moved from Catholic School to Public school. Introduction to and exploration of music, fashion.	Fort Street; Rocky Horror; David Bowie; Lou Reed; Roxy Music;
05:02	Guilt felt in 6 th grade about his sexuality fleetingly. Images on Roxy Music and Lou Reed albums were exciting because of representations of gender and sexuality. Influence of these on his "coming out".	Lou Reed; Roxy Music; David Bowie; Rocky Horror;
08:50	Parents never tormented him, cousin big influence. First sexual experience with a man was an older school teacher. Safe environments allowed him to explore sexuality.	Parents; Fort Street;
10:26	Leaves school at Year 10 and gets clerical job in tyre factory in Auburn. Hangs with cousins' Fort Street friends at night.	Chinatown; Fort Street; Kings Cross;
11:11	First time at Patches in 1976. Describes experience of feeling at "home". Integral nature of music to his life. Describes "types" of people within Patch's, fashion styles and music. DJ Lee Reiger, first musical influence, got music from US.	Patches; clones; disco; Clutch purses; Lee Reiger;
15:40	Cousin Lewis "fancied" Peter Tully and started dating. Met many influential people who were also involved in politics. Artistic people. Started going to Patches 6 days a week.	Peter Tully; David McDiarmid; Bill Morley; Glen Lewis; 3D; Richy Finger; Cindy Pastel; David Martin; Alan Booth; Jeffrey Stewart;
19:22	Got government clerical job with tax department. Continues to be influenced by new, unique music – disco and rock – from people like Bill Morley. Spent all his money of records. Got a job at Palms DJing on a Tuesday – "queeny" place.	Donna Summer; The Clash; Palms; Kraftwerk;
23:30	Basement Restaurant in Strand Arcade wanted to open a club (Stranded) did not want people to play disco. Pushed by his friends. Influence of Bill Morley expanded his musical taste- borrowed his music to play.	New Wave; Stranded; Bowie; Madness; Marianne Faithful;
27:05	Stranded owner Walter; also owned the Caprice in Double Bay. Sandra was manager – fierce, unique woman. Stranded fostered unique fashion tastes. Sense of "dress up", that people did themselves.	Caprice; Stranded; The Oxford; Kinsellas; Tony Billsons;
33:08	Got sacked from Stranded because they wanted a change, then became a regular DJ at Patches'. Started Monday and Tuesdays. Took over for regular DJ. Change of music and management around 1978. Alcohol started to be watered down.	Dawn O'Donnell; Patches; Rod Stringer; Mandrax; Midnight Shift;
38:38	Complained about pay with Dawn. Dawn's management impact on the club, gay's left and straight suburban types to "gawk" at gay crowd. Crows flocked to Midnight Shift	Midnight Shift; Tropicana;

	(previously Tropicana). Name of “Midnight Shift” reference of Donna Summer song. Types of gay groups – clones and those who wore Hawaiian shirt – “clutch purses”. Only clones allowed into Midnight Shift (circa 1979 -1980). Women not allowed.	
44:23	Midnight Shift firebombed. Dawn O’Donnell’s demise and eventual leaving from Oxford Street and moving to Newtown. The Beresford as a leather bar. Conditions working for Dawn.	Midnight Shift; Dawn O’Donnell; Flo’s Palace; Roger Claude; The Newtown; Beresford; Barry Cecchini; Flinders; Albury;
50:33	Fired from Patches’, started doing gigs (e.g., Flinders, Midnight Shift, Oxford). DJ style forged from freedom of Patches’. Reputation started to grow. Jameson Street nightclub – straight “megaclub” – called him for work. Describes club and its patrons. Well paid at this club. Opening up of Oxford Street to more conservative aspects of the gay community. Discusses use of “partner”. Narrowing of acceptability of spectrum of gay types.	Jameson Street; Nightclub; Clones;
1:00:30	Arrival of AIDS in Sydney. Sydney as epicentre of gay life in Australia. Mardi Gras as a reflection of gay wit and culture. 1983/1984 – HIV and its impact on clubs. Clubs – arts, politics culture, etc. Creation of gay community. Memory of talk of a “gay cancer”. Bobby Goldsmith as one of the first to die of AIDS related illness.	Mardi Gras; Sleaze Ball; Stephen Cribb; AIDS; GRIDS; Bobby Goldsmith;
1:09:35	Impact of AIDS on sexual behaviour. Speculation about its cause rife in community in the time. Public perception of gay community shifts. Sydney as epicentre for AIDS in Australia. Lack of social support for those who became sick from AIDS. Community “organisations” rallied to support these people. Beginning of organisations like ACON. Needle exchanges. Oxford Street as a community that responded, Julie Bates and sex worker coalition. Grief caused by loss of large number of friends.	AIDS; Don Baxter; Bill Whittaker; Fred Nile; Andrew Morgan; ACON; St Vincents Hospital; Julie Bates; Robert Racic;
1:22:21	Public health and gay community response to deal with AIDS crisis. Rampant Documentary – leads to meeting with Julie Bates. Julie aware of him because she danced to him. Talk about his role as a DJ in the midst of all this. Theorises about changes in nature of the gay community and gay identity.	Alex Wojcek; Lloyd Gross; Rampant;
1:36:39	Went to marches with friends. Doris Fish in drag in public demonstrations. And then went dancing – link between clubs and activism. Politics wasn’t a separate entity to gay life. Went to a CAMP meeting and didn’t like it.	Peter Tully; David McDiarmid; Bill Morley; Doris Fish; Jacquie Hyde; CAMP;
1:42:05	Went to many marches but didn’t go to first Mardi Gras. Was at Patch’s, picked up by Bobby Goldsmith. Went past police station and saw many people out the front and stayed in solidarity until morning.	Mardi Gras; Bobby Goldsmith; Patches;
1:46:55	Discusses gay marriage and state of modern gay activism and advocacy.	Gay marriage; activism;
1:53:27	Ann Street crew – early Mardi Gras. The importance of the inner city to gay culture and politics. Was cheap to buy in area of “gay ghetto”. Peter Tully starts the workshop. Discusses creativity and wit of the parades. Early activism as vital to survival, not done for money or resume.	Ann Street Crew; Peter Tully; Jeffrey Stewart; Bill Morley;
2:06:57	Reconnected recently through Lloyd Gross. Discusses generational divide in gay community and with gay activism. Civil rights movement as an influence for Australian gay scene.	Lloyd Gross; Paul van Reyk;
2:12:22	Beginnings of dance parties in Sydney circa 1977 in a warehouse. Overseas DJ brought out for the first one. Wrap party – art component of party with a cabaret component.	Bill Morley; Balmain Bijou;

2:17:20	Showground parties for Mardi Gras. Were held after Mardi Gras parade. DJ'd at first Sleazeball. Evolution into more elaborate sets for party. Themed parties each year which people dressed up for. Recounts the Diana Ross drag show at Sleazeball. Discusses some of the theatrical components of the parties.	Stephen Cribb; Sleazeball; Peter Tully;
2:29:13	Records purchased for DJing (and prior to DJing) at import stores such as Angel Records. Sold a variety of music including a Soul/Disco section. Growth of record stores in this period. Read Top 100 dance charts and then listened to music and bought what he liked. Personal philosophy about what to play.	Angel Record; Record Plant; Anthem; Red Eye; Disco City; David Hiscock;
	First heard David Hiscock in Melbourne at Union Hotel in 1977. Had more commercial taste and following.	David Hiscock; Union Hotel; Newtown Hotel;
2:35:40	Robert Racic approached Stephen and asked him to listen to his reel to reel and he later heard him at Butts Bar and was amazed by him. Became friends and edited to tape. Did remixes for commercial groups. Started to create his own music but passed away from AIDS related complications.	Robert Racic; Patches; Bill Morley; Butts Bar;
2:42:00	Steve Cribb had a big following at the Midnight Shift. Steven was his first encounter with AIDS. He was sick in a hospice and wanted to see Stephen Allkins.	Steve Cribb; Michael Glynn; Midnight Shift;
2:47:06	Bill Morley had very eclectic taste, never mixed as a DJ. Addresses Blue Danube Mardi Gras story- drug and alcohol use for about 18 hours. Played full version of Blue Danube. Outlined some of Bill Morley's style and venues he played at.	Bill Morley; Mardi Gras; The Oxford; Gilligans;