

Pride History Group Oral History Interview with Terry Batterham

Interviewer: Gavin Harris

Date of interview: 10 March 1996

Location of interview:

Reason for interview: Mardi Gras 20th anniversary**Restrictions:** None

Log	Summary	Key words
Tape 1		
0000	Terry had been active in student politics and gay liberation since late 1972 at UNSW. Meetings of gay liberation at UNSW of 20 people once a week to discuss politics and philosophy. There were men and women. They would go to the Regent Hotel or a wine bar – “Rise and Fall of Western Civilisation as we know it” for drinks or in summer would go to Nielsen Park. People had a similar social and political outlook. There was a sense of possibilities of gay liberation.	University of NSW Gay Liberation
0450	Stonewall riots. Can't recall it being discussed, although he had heard about it in 6 th form at high school in 1970 watching a program on TV.	Stonewall Riots
0550	Others at UNSW gay liberation were Richard Bigg, Heather Grey, Stephen Harris, Dennis McManus, Lindy Nolan, Terry Bell, John Bridges, Petula.	Richard Bigg, Heather Grey, Stephen Harris, Dennis McManus, Lindy Nolan, Terry Bell, John Bridges, Petula
0657	Sometimes they went to Ivys Wine Bar after the meetings. Recalls dancing there and was told not to dance, not to touch.	Ivys Wine Bar
0802	Values accepted. There were progressive gays and dykes and the rest were called “bar queens”, and they were inferior to you. They would hand out leaflets, with permission and sometimes the people in the bars would given flak. “you are making it worse for all of us”.	Bar Queens
0900	Capriccios. He went with John Roberts in 1976. The shows were fabulous – there were 2 levels. Upstairs would be the big stage show on Fri-Sun and the rest of the week was a disco. The shows consisted of drag queens and male dancers. Revolving stage, winds, several set changes, props. You'd pay a cover charge and you'd be escorted to a tiny table.	Capriccios
1035	Les Girls by comparison. There were Hen's Nights there. The Les Girls performers “set themselves up as a freak show and kept reminding the audience they were really men dressed as women”. Caps by comparison was for queens. Straights wouldn't go there.	Les Girls
1150	Terry finished uni in 1978 and he moved up to the Cross. He was on the dole.	
1220	There was a demo during the day of the Mg. The Strip (Oxford Street) had established itself by then as a gay space. The idea was to dress up, but Terry didn't.	Gay Mardi Gras Oxford Street
1310	People assembled and made its way down Oxford Street. Lance Gowland was in an old truck and they played “dancing in the street”, “Glad to be Gay”. Terry had marched in other demos and had a sense of how it worked. People joined in. The plan was to go to Hyde Park. “We tried to get into Hyde Park but the police prevented us”.	Lance Gowland Hyde Park
1408	In College Street there was a confrontation between “us and the police”. The police had hold of couple and Brian McGahen bit his arm.	College Street
1435	“Someone said 'let's go to the Cross' and it appeared to be a good idea at the time”.	

1455	As we were marching up to the Cross, the police did not seem to be able to get to a point to stop us.	
1517	He saw a couple of queens getting arrested at the top of William Street. They protested to the police 'we're just walking along the street. There is nothing illegal with that'.	William Street
1625	In Darlinghurst Road there was confusion. It wasn't planned and there weren't any leaders. He remembers people going down to the gardens and not knowing what to do next. Some wanted to go down Macleay Street.	Darlinghurst Road
1730	Terry was talking to a senior policeman who was hit from behind and his cap hit Terry.	
1756	People decided to re-assemble and march on to the Police Station. A group marched to Darlinghurst Police Station.	Darlinghurst Police Station
1820	He stayed there a while and then someone went to the bars to get bail money. It was the first time some of the local drag queens got involved in the struggle. He thinks Trixi Lamont was doing a show at Patches and she got up and spoke to ask for bail money.	Trixi Lamont Patches
1855	At Liverpool Street Courts on Monday Trixie and Therese Green were there in drag.	Therese Green
1920	Terry hung around the courts until the afternoon. Police refused entry to supporters to the court. John Terry came out and told the crowd that the magistrate had not closed the courts. People then gave their names to police and requested to enter the court and the police refused.	John Terry
2040	One policeman on the line was goosed from behind.	
2200	Remembers the public meeting at Stanley Palmer Cultural Palace. There was support from progressive groups. Lots of discussion.	Stanley Palmer Cultural Palace
2300	Terry relates his experiences with police. During the Moratorium demos. Premier was Askin. Police ran Sydney and it was a very corrupt city. Gambling places that operated. Gay sex was illegal but there were gay venue and you know that the coppers got paid (off). So the police actions at the first Mg was consistent with what they would have done.	Moratorium Robin Askin
2445	15 July march. It was planned to go over the same route. Civil Liberties were there to monitor the situation. People like Lex Watson and Ken Haller (?Hall).	15 July March Lex Watson Ken Haller/Hall?
2700	The Conference March. Terry said the Conference did achieve a lot. It was the first held outside the campus. Paddington Town Hall was an icon. A number of gay dances had been held there and lots of queens lived down the road.	4 th National Homosexual Conference Paddington Town Hall
Tape 2		
0000	Terry talks about Enzos. Went there with school friends. Almost all men there. The bars closed at 10 and the word would go around that there was a party. You would rock up to the house and the party continued. You knew people at the bar, so the scene just moved to another venue and there would not be any problem.	Enzos House Parties
0130	The Conference was marketed. Fabian ran up some homosexual flags which were hung from the flagpoles of the Town Hall. They looked at other aspects of their lives. There was an artistic component. Terry helped organise the conference.	Fabian LoSchiavo
0250	They booked <i>Rose Tattoo</i> for the conference. But on the first day of the conference it was decided that the band was too male. They were told they couldn't perform. Another live band performed.	Rose Tattoo
0400	Anti-Abortion Rally at Hyde Park on Sunday. The Sparts or IS were organising to go down to protest. We (?conference collective) thought that the Conference had been	Anti-Abortion Rally Taylor Square

	fairly successful and there were police at Taylor Square just waiting. They opposed the march and wanted the final plenary. Terry, Brian McGahen and others waited around. He thought that the marchers were naive. The police arrested the demonstration.	Brian McGahen
0630	Brian McGahen was involved in the organising committee.	
0717	Perception of the mardi gras? It was not a revolution. It was a confirmation of how homosexuals were perceived by society at large – second class.	
0820	Conference organisers were young idealistic, had been through the Vietnam era, Apartheid. Had a conflict model of the world. Left, progressive.	
0958	There were punks around in 1979 and lived around Taylor Square.	Punks
1109	A gay uniform in 1978? Body shirts, tight t shirts. Gay left uniform. Dykes in overalls. He can't recall clones.	
1358	Rise of commercial scene 78-81. He mentions 253, Roman, King sauna, Club 80, Signal, Tropicana, Flos, Palms, Patches, Enzos, Ivys, Rubys, Dyke Bar in Bondi, Rex Hotel, Rex in the City, Cricketers Arms, Beresford, Flinders. Urban gay culture began taking off. Village People.	Commercial scene
1555	Remembers being taken to the Rex. The people were uneasy about the Cross – no-land. Something clicked with the Beresford (owned by Barry and Lionel). It was still a small scene and feel of a community.	Beresford Hotel Barry Cecchini
1900	Barry and Lionel were Qantas stewards and had the money to set up the Beresford and had seen what was possible overseas.	Qantas
1940	Clone culture. Construction worker, leather. Village people.	Village People
2000	Sexual practices in the 80s? If you were young and gay in Sydney in the 80s you had everything going for you.	
2100	He began working in a sex shop 78-79 and noticed how people's sexual preferences began to get more specific. Working there he began to realise the section back from the second door with the hard core stuff it was illegal. The front part was "all tricked up" and most of the shop was totally illegal.	
2235	Realised this when they had to take all the films out of the shop. Hannah Strum was the owner. He had to assess who was buying the film and if legit would ring up Hannah and it would arrive in a cab and he would get a cut. Sometimes he would have to get rid of the animal books.	Hannah Strum/Strung
2345	Realised when police were taking books, that they could arrest him. Detectives would come in and would get a "special price" when they exposed their gun.	
2500	It was a well paid job. Worked 4 nights. And got commissions and extra pay.	
2530	Hannah was up for a buck. It was Hannah and Harry Strung/Strum? She was the brains. European Jews. She had a chain of sex shops. Lived on pills and a hard worker. Preferred to hire queens. And she imported which was illegal. The mark ups were incredible. She would sell the shops off. And then supply the shops with the imports. She would raise the price. The owner had to sell the shop back to Hannah at a much reduced amount.	
2700	Terry talks about the 1980 Mg and his boyfriend Digger.	
2855	The parties. Remembers a party in 1984 in the RHI. There was a lot of space. At one they got Tiny Tina, a drag artist to get dressed up as Divine and the story went out that Devine was going to perform. She arrives in a limo which drives into the Hall.	RHI Pavilion Tiny Tina Divine
Tape 3		
0000	You were there to be seen. Promenading about. Some dancing. Catching up with people. Speed, acid, MDA were fashionable the drugs. At one party people bought from a supply of acid laced with strychnine and were not used to acid. Someone	Drugs LSD

	climbed into the ceiling and the party had to stop so they could get the person down. The medical store was overwhelmed with all these tripping people.	
0300	Drugs were never written about.	
0540	Formation of Gay Identity. Terry thinks Don Finlayson on <i>Number 96</i> did a lot for gay issues more than Gay Liberation.	Number 96 Don Finlayson
0715	At school he felt he was different. He went to school 3 – 4 other gay men. They formed their own group and copped a lot of shit. “We were sissies”. Sex with other boys not with themselves. Referred to each other as ‘girls’ and took on feminine traits. Each had a drag name. Never had to struggle with an identity. He was called, Sheila, Mrs Batterham, Girl.	
0856	When he got involved in Gay Liberation it made sense. There were homosexuals interviewed in shadow on TV, Dennis Altman wrote his book a bit later. But <i>Number 96</i> showed a variety of people living in a block of flats in Paddington. Don Finlayson was not out to everyone because you couldn’t be like that, but you and the audience knew and he was a good person and interesting character. And wasn’t queeny and a central character.	Dennis Altman