

**Pride History Group Oral History Interview with Shane Brown**

Interviewer: John Witte

Date: 19<sup>th</sup> March 2016

Location of interview: Benledi, 186 Glebe Pt Rd, Glebe

Reason for interview: First Mardi Gras, Twenty Ten

Restrictions: None

Call no.:



Time	Summary	Keywords
0000	Raised in Masterton NZ, describes family and working class upbringing. Aware of sexual orientation early. Relationship with father who was conservative.	Masterton NZ;
0330	Came out to parents when he was 16 in 1974. Parents reaction – they didn't understand.	
0430	Came to an understanding of homophobia in NZ during his first relationship.	Homophobia;
0610	Came to Australia and stayed with friends in a squat in Bondi. It was too expensive to rent and he had to wait 6 months to get the dole.	Squats;
0715	Explains what squats were and where they were located.	Squats;
0920	Anarchists and members of the Communist Party lived in some squats. The Compound in Darlinghurst. Drug use, especially heroin.	Anarchists; Communist Party; Darlinghurst; The Compound;
1115	Moves to Pyrmont squats and then Glebe.	Pyrmont; Glebe;
1300	1978 and the first mardi gras. Joins the march in William Street with Anarchist friends. Remembers it as a small group of 200.	Mardi Gras; William Street;
1500	At the top of William Street, the march stopped and anarchists discussed with the "bigger group if they should go further". It was seen as being dangerous to proceed further. The small group of anarchists he was with continued along Darlinghurst Road. Others followed. Others stopped. He saw police at William Street end of Darlinghurst Road standing to the side. People with megaphones urged marchers on.	William Street, Anarchists; Darlinghurst Road; Police;
1900	He got to the middle of Darlinghurst Road and was surrounded by police. He was dragged by the hair by the police and pulled by the feet by the marchers and thrown into a police wagon. It was noisy in the van and people attempted to escape.	Darlinghurst Road;
2030	They were taken to the Darlinghurst Police Station. He didn't experience violence in the cells. They were processed and next day at 1pm were released on bail.	Darlinghurst Police Station;
2315	He went to court on the Monday. There were many supporters there.	Liverpool Street Court;
2400	Attended the public meeting at Stanley Palmer Culture Palace on a Saturday. A large meeting of the gay movement to discuss what was happening and support people. Political groups got involved to raise their flag.	Stanley Palmer Culture Palace;

2515	The Communist Party and Anarchist people he was involved with in the squats did not engage with personal politics.	Communist Party; Anarchist; Squats;
2750	Speaks about appearing in “Witches Faggots Dykes and Poofers” footage at this meeting (and earlier getting arrested on the march). He was not experienced in gay movement politics at this time.	Witches, Faggots, Dykes and Poofers;
2815	Did not participate in the Drop the Charges or the National Homosexual Conference. There was no flow down effect in his circle of discussion of homosexuality or personal politics. Shane’s response to this.	
3120	Role of Anarchists during the Drop the Charges marches.	Anarchists;
3250	Gets a job in youth services through Peter Collingwood, Director of the Aquarius Youth Service at Stanley Palmer and funded by the State Government. Employed as an arts worker for two and half years.	Peter Collingwood; Aquarius Youth Service;
3330	Then to Mt Druitt as a youth worker for three years then back to the South Sydney to work in youth services.	Mount Druitt;
3400	Aquarius Youth Services was a drop in centre for everyone helping people who were squatting, on the street, etc. Dealing with drug use, homelessness, bringing the community together with community arts projects	Aquarius Youth Services; Drugs; Homelessness; Community Arts Projects;
3535	Gay Men’s Rap grew out of Aquarius Youth Services.	Gay Men’s Rap;
3545	There were regular performance nights which were political. Shane describes on of his performances.	
3700	Talks about Gay Men’s Rap and how it was the first gay group he had joined and describes how important it was for him. Peter Collingwood helped establish Gay Men’s Rap. Frank Watters attended. It was a very supportive group and was important for the direction of the gay movement. David James (Urquhart), Karl Blonde – a bisexual man who also lived in the Compound.	Gay Men’s Rap; Peter Collingwood; Frank Watters; David James (Urquhart); Karl Blonde; The Compound;
3940	Youth work in Mount Druitt. A difficult place to be gay. Mt Druitt Youth Resource Centre, funded by the Department of Community Services. Describes being robbed and beaten at a beat in St Marys and police did not want to hear about it.	Mt Druitt Youth Resource Centre; Department of Community Services; Beat;
4200	Besides the Gays Counselling Service, there were few services targeted for lesbian and gay clients. He was openly gay and could provide some support.	Gays Counselling Service;
4315	Homosexuality was taboo. Describes an incident with a co-worker which led to him leaving his job. Being gay was seen in those days as being a paedophile predator and this made his job difficult.	Homosexuality; Paedophile;
4515	Belonged to the The Australian Social Welfare Union and was supported by Macquarie Legal Centre during the incident with the co-worker.	Australian Social Welfare Union; Macquarie Legal Centre;

4700	Moved to Redfern and was employed by South Sydney Youth Services in 1986.	Redfern; South Sydney Youth Services;
4730	Talks about involvement in lobbying for Twenty-Ten when he was a youth worker for Aquarius. The Gays Counselling Service was involved. Originally it was a Youth Refuge and got funding to provide refuge accommodation for young people at the old Prisoner's Action Group Building in Glebe. This was the first recognition by Government of this as an issue.	Twenty Ten; Gays Counselling Service; Prisoner's Action Group;
5030	Twenty Ten is no longer a refuge and now provides counselling and longer term accommodation.	Twenty Ten;
5100	Describes the early years of Twenty Ten as rocky.	Twenty Ten;
5215	Worked for three years with Annie Crowe (who worked for the Department of Health) when he worked for Aquarius (prior to Mt Druitt). They would go to gay bars and night clubs to support homeless young people and the largest proportion were young gay men. Patches, Castelllos, were visited every week. They knew the management, and the young people.	Annie Crowe; Patches; Castelllos;
5330	It was a bad period and Shane recalls young women from Detention Centres taken to the Cross for prostitution. They received advice from Jack Munday, because Shane's life was threatened. It was organised by prison officers, police and possibly a Minister for Community Services and others such as the criminal element. He was aware of high profile people having sex with young people at Castelllos and protection money passed hands between Castelllos management and police. Prostitution with under aged boys was more prevalent because of the illegality of gay sex.	Jack Munday; Castelllos; Prostitution;
5600	With the support of Aquarius Youth Services, young people could leave prostitution, get accommodation and a job.	Aquarius Youth Services;
5730	The illegality of gay sex had consequences. Young and under aged gay men had low self image, poor, kicked out of home and were vulnerable to exploitation.	
5830	Describes consequences on the lives of the young men he knew.	
5900	The emotional effects of this stressful life on gay people has taken its effect.	
10035	South Sydney Youth Services now called Weave Youth and Community Services.	Weave Youth and Community Services;
10100	Worked there as an outreach (street) worker meeting young people on the streets of Redfern and Waterloo mainly. At the beginning he was the sole worker. Heroin and drug use was an issue. His job was to talk with young people to find them work, accommodation, sort out family problems etc. He was well known in the general community and the Aboriginal community. Young people then came into the Service.	Redfern; Waterloo; Aboriginal community;
10230	Young people were homophobic and he was openly gay, but he was accepted. Between the 80s and the mid 90s it was acceptable to go "gay bashing".	Homophobia; Gay Bashing;

10335	A teacher at the local school, Wayne Tonks and also another man associated with the area were murdered. Wayne Tonks was murdered in Alexandria Park and the 15 men responsible went to gaol for 5 - 9 years. A young aboriginal man spoke to Shane and they worked on a video project called <i>Truth or Dare</i> with South Sydney Youth Services and Department of Family Planning. It was launched at the Opera House and was controversial.	Wayne Tonks; Alexandria Park; <i>Truth or Dare</i> ; South Sydney Youth Services; Dept of Family Planning;
10535	He was also involved in a forum at Alexandria Town Hall with NSW Police and Sue Thompson, Redfern Police with a panel of gay people. Years 9, 10, 11 and 12 of the local high school attended. Shane sees this as a turning point and gay bashing ceased.	Alexandria Town Hall; Sue Thompson;
10745	The backlash. He sees greater conformity and gay marriage is part of this.	
10845	The current (March 2016) Safe Schools backlash discussed.	Safe Schools Program;
10945	<i>Making Sense of Sex Project</i> . 1992. 50 young people were trained to be telephone counsellors to talk about safe sex, sexual identity, the practice of sex. It was a federally funded project. They received 100 calls a night from young people. It ran for four months. The Australian Medical Association (AMA) complained.	<i>Making Sense of Sex Project</i> ; The Australian Medical Association;
11145	Remembers first reading about AIDS in 1982 and prior to this regularly went to gay saunas. Many friends in his social circle died subsequently. Gay men withdrew from the social scene.	AIDS; Gay Saunas;
11400	<i>The Grim Reaper</i> was successful in stopping unprotected sex and it avoided being homophobic. The AIDS education campaigns important for increasing acceptance of gays. Shane found the bureaucrats were good.	<i>Grim Reaper Ads</i> ; AIDS education;
11630	<i>Making Sense of Sex</i> project was successful and ground breaking changing views. First time young people talked about sexuality in depth. Safe Schools is similar.	<i>Making Sense of Sex</i> ;
11730	From 2000 to now there has been nothing discussing sexuality and safe sex. Hence rising rates of HIV.	HIV;
11830	Discusses ACON's role in this and its lack of direction.	ACON;
11945	Sue Thompson was working in Police policy unit to on Police response to anti-gay violence.	Sue Thompson;
12240	Shane is currently the CEO of Weave Youth and Community Services. 40 staff and large amount of work is with the aboriginal community. Deals with 7,000 people per year. Issues involve homelessness, trauma counselling, community projects community cohesion, women and children services. Won a human rights award in 1996 for <i>Making Sense of Sex</i> . Not for profit community organisation run by a Board.	Weave Youth and Community Services; <i>Making Sense of Sex</i> ;
12500	Description of a day's work for Shane at Weave.	Weave;