

Pride History Group Oral History Interview with Greg Tucker

Interviewer: Bruce Carter

Date: 15 January 2007

Location of interview: Leichhardt

Reason for interview: Early social groups

Restrictions: None



Time	Summary	Keywords
	TAPE 1	
0040	Gives name, age	
0041	Born Melbourne, Australia	
0114	Grew up in Footscray, Melbourne, but attended Catholic boarding school – St. Patrick’s, Sale.	Footscray; St Patrick’s School; Sale;
0254	Father ran pub – Wellington Hotel, St Kilda Road, Melbourne. Later bought milk bar/mixed business in Footscray. Lived at back of shop, “got to meet lots of people because I would serve in the shop”	Wellington Hotel; St Kilda Road;
0424	Did well academically at boarding school and was good at sport. Describes culture of boarding school as “a masculine Christianity”.	
0620	Gained entry to Monash University in 1969 with scholarship. Began to accept sexual feelings towards other men. Did BA in geography and history, then a Diploma of Education.	Monash University;
0750	Following university, gained entry to Army training college at Portsea, training as officer – “I loved it, absolutely loved it”. Says this required being “very closeted”, though gradually got to know some other men in the army who were homosexual. Describes living in officer’s quarters as “a hothouse environment...very difficult to have a secret life”	Army Training College; Portsea;
0935	Had girlfriends to maintain cover as straight.	
1020	Would go into Melbourne city for encounters with men, and when visiting Sydney would seek out contact with men.	
1035	First trip to Sydney was in 1972. Went to Rex Hotel, Kings Cross. Met a footballer for Western Suburbs who took him to Barrell Inn. This was “first engagement with what you might call the leather scene as it was a leather bar”	Rex Hotel; Kings Cross;
1126	Remembers Barrell Inn – “loud music, lots of leather guys... it was fascinating because I wasn’t part of it...and every time I’d go in I’d be regarded as fresh meat”, because he was an occasional, not regular, visitor.	Barrel Inn;
1248	Was attracted to the scene at the Barrell Inn because “to a large extent it came across as masculine and rugged, whereas the Bottoms Up bar at the Rex had a liberal sprinkling of drag queens and much more stereotypical effeminate guys who didn’t do much for me at all”	Barrel Inn; Bottoms Up Bar;

1258	On visit to Sydney in 1981 visited the top bar of the Midnight Shift, Oxford Street – Oxford Street was “just taking off”. Met two men called Rick Davey and Rick McLelland who were bikers and founding members of the Dolphin Motor Club.	Midnight Shift; Oxford Street; Rick Davey; Rick McLelland; Dolphin Motor Club;
1448	Was “love at first sight” when he met Rick Davey at the Midnight Shift. Two weeks later, Davey visited him in Melbourne. Wore full service dress when meeting him at Melbourne Airport – “I looked good”	Rick Davey; Midnight Shift;
1525	Describes “feeling of oneness” with Davey as being a turning point in fully accepting his sexuality. Was aged 30 at this time – “it was a match made in heaven”.	Rick Davey;
1600	Decided to leave Army, two weeks after meeting Davey – “a huge, life changing decision”.	Army;
1635	Came out to close cousin. A difficult thing to do, though this was “a great liberation” as was first time had come out to anyone in his family.	
1800	Informed parents he was leaving the services – “the biggest shock”. Didn’t want to tell them the reason why, but did tell them was moving to Sydney to share with a mate called Rick Davey.	Rick Davey;
1930	Three months after moving to Sydney, took Davey to Melbourne to meet parents – “they just fell in love with him, because he was a man’s man, he’d been in the navy, he was a great cook, he loved horse racing, football, gardening...they connected”	Rick Davey;
2015	Returned, with Davey, to visit parents in Melbourne for Christmas. They were automatically given a double bed, and parents called Davey ‘son’. “They spared me the trouble of having to come out”	Rick Davey;
2247	Lived with Davey for first two years in waterside apartment at McMahon’s Point, then moved to Cabramatta. Was working at Liverpool Council at this time as Economic Development Officer. This was in 1983/4.	Rick Davey; McMahon’s Point; Cabramatta; Liverpool Council;
2520	Dolphin Motor Club (DMC) – 24 voting members – it was “hierarchical, traditional... president was seen as being a leader, not necessarily a democracy at all. Loyalty was impressed upon people”	Dolphin Motor Club;
2600	Describes DMC system of novice members ‘tyros’, who are expected to demonstrate to regular members for 12 months “your commitment and loyalty” to the club.	Dolphin Motor Club;
2637	DMC has always had a 75% rule – to become a regular member, tyros had to commit to attending 75% of club events over a 12-month period.	
2750	Describes police entrapment, illegality of homosexual acts and thriving beat scene that this illegality perpetuated.	Police Entrapment;

2920	Joined DMC in 1983. DMC had a weekly bar night at Beresford Hotel, Surry Hills at this time. "Back in those days, the gay pubs were packed every night of the week"	Dolphin Motor Club; Beresford Hotel; Surry Hills;
2940	DMC's favourite location for club 'runs' was Hartley Vale, just past Blue Mountains. Runs would be fully catered with bunk accommodation, "mainly social". Says "provided a discreet social gathering for guys, outside of Sydney"	Dolphin Motor Club; Hartley Vale;
3100	A feature of DMC runs would be a formal, 5 course dinner on Saturday nights. People would spend their time at runs playing cards, preparing for the dinner, sitting around the bonfire, catching-up with friends.	Dolphin Motor Club;
3137	Talks of different motor clubs around the country, and networks that existed among clubs. Club members would attend different clubs runs, so a whole calendar existed nationally that like-minded men could tap in to.	
3233	DMC was a break away from the South Pacific Motor Club (SPMC). Six men broke away from SPMC to form DMC because "they weren't given support" by other members of SPMC. As a result of the split "there was bad blood between the Dolphins and SPMC" for many years. DMC formed in 1979.	South Pacific Motor Club; Dolphin Motor Club;
3328	Believes that when DMC was formed founding members wanted a club with no specific emphasis, although "since most members were great cooks, the club's strength has always been the quality of the food and drink at our runs" says this has emphasised a "conviviality and socialness about the Dolphins".	
3415	believes all the motor clubs had commonalities – wearing club overlay vests, for example, but there were differences. Eg SPMC "was leather oriented" and "each club became a product of the personalities, the location, climate, aims...each club had a distinctive personality"	South Pacific Motor Club;
3449	Describes some original aims of the DMC – "to treat all fellow members with respect, to be not only good members, but to be good men" Founding members saw importance of developing goodness in members. Believes this has "borne us in good stead, because we are still here, and most of the other clubs have gone"	Dolphin Motor Club;
3700	Club named Dolphin because "Dolphins are group oriented, they have homosexual relationships, they will protect their weakest, put their own life on the line to protect a wounded dolphin, and since ancient times dolphins have been regarded as very special animals, the symbol of peace and that sort of stuff"	Dolphin Motor Club;
3733	Founding members Rick Davey and Adam King designed DMC logo. Club motto is same as US Marine corps – 'Semper Fidelis' – to be always faithful, true to yourself.	Rick Davey; Adam King;
3837	Says the club motto demonstrates that the DMC is about "what is above the chest... more social... our events are like projects"	Dolphin Motor Club;

3900	Describes 'associate membership' for those who either can't commit to full membership, or do not own a motorcycle – "its like one big family"	
4100	Associate memberships have always existed. Currently number of associate membership is about 20 people.	
4142	Describes club structure – president, treasurer, run captain – "the person who actually runs events... they plan, organise and do... the president is the leader"	
4300	Dolphins first club of its kind to incorporate. 1985	Dolphin Motor Club;
4350	Describes DMC as "a structured environment". Believes in "leading by example, then you will get the result you want"	
4451	Says there was a "golden period" for Sydney's gay scene in 1980s, particularly after decriminalisation in 1984.	Decriminalisation;
4600	"Devastating" impact of HIV, and impact on DMC and gay community in general.	HIV/AIDS;
4645	By 1991 the only gay motor clubs left in Australia were the DMC and the Rangers (Adelaide). Says the motor clubs were a product of the 1970s, and provided a "discreet social network", where "you could spend every second weekend" going to club runs around the country- "a great social network".	Dolphin Motor Club; Rangers;
4820	DMC still averaging two runs per year, although only one planned for 2006. Describes "crystal glass, starched table cloths" and "club formal" uniforms that are part of run dinners. Tyro members work as waiters/stewards at the run dinners, serving full members. "It is done in a formal way, there are speeches, there are toasts, we toast the Queen, Australia, absent friends". Toast to absent friends comes out of military "you don't see that toast much in the general community".	
4955	Run site is now in Mudgee. Last run to Hartley Vale in 1990 following the site being sold off	Hartley Vale;
5000	Describes "camaraderie" and "friendship" of Hartley Vale days.	Hartley Vale;
5120	DMC will celebrate 28 th anniversary in 2007. One member has been active for 28 years, Tucker himself has been a member for 23 years.	Dolphin Motor Club;
5129	Very few gay groups that have managed to stay active for such a long time, and believes that DMC's longevity is something to be proud of. Believes club has lasted because what the club stands for "is not very vulnerable to fashion – good events where people enjoy themselves. There is no secret to it" Also believes club has had very strong core members "who have kept the faith, and stayed, and provide that link with the past"	Dolphin Motor Club;
5400	Believes the "sort of members we want in the club are people who are going somewhere in life" and have 'achieved'. Believes the club is most attractive to men in their 30s and 40s. Club has	

	“very few” members under 30; “that may be a problem in the future”.	
5447	believes gay men in their 20s in 2007 do not see the relevance of clubs such as DMC ; “the young ones have no concept of where we have come from”. Says the “ones who have a lot of the knowledge are dying off”, and stresses importance of recording history for future generations of gay men.	Dolphin Motor Club;
5619	Says DMC has given him “family.. a great hobby..a chance to use my talents..these are great guys, they are my family”	Dolphin Motor Club;
5820	In 1999 DMC went through “a SWAT analysis” to decide on future direction. Folding the club was one option considered, however “in the end we decided to go back to our roots” – a club that is “a pure motorcycle touring club”. This became effective from January 1, 2000.	Dolphin Motor Club;
5900	Says this decision “gave us an absolute focus”. Club has moved to a monthly schedule of motorcycle runs.	
5945	Describes interviewing process to consider new members. Potential members are interviewed by entire full membership, and asked questions such as “what skills can you bring to the club, do you know the commitment, have you read the standing orders” etc. Potential members are sponsored by a full member.	
10229	Manacle is the DMCs home bar. Club shield and honour rolls are on the wall at the Manacle, including a list of DMC members who have passed away – “close to 40” men.	Manacle; Dolphin Motor Club;
10330	A <i>Dolphin Award</i> is given each year to recognise service to the club. Members vote for this by secret ballot. This is awarded at the club’s yearly anniversary dinner on the Queen’s Birthday long weekend (though the Club was actually formed on April 4 th 1979).	Dolphin Award;
	TAPE 2	
00035	Says motor clubs “pre-dated” any organised leather scene.	Leather community
00110	believes DMC is part of the wider gay men’s leather community “because we ride bikes”. Stresses DMC is not a fetish club.	Dolphin Motor Club;
00325	Believes in the past club members saw themselves as ‘special’ – an elite. Says this fosters a “group solidarity”. Danger can be that group can be seen to be elitist and isolationist.	
00450	DMC has not participated as a group in Mardi Gras parade for some years, due to members involvement with other volunteer groups, e.g. as marshals.	Mardi Gras;
00555	Members in the past have been expected to participate in 50+ events per year. This includes club nights at various bars, including Beresford Hotel, Stronghold bar, Barracks, and Manacle, and also included regular runs out of town, dinners, beach days, barbecues and business meetings – “you can’t do that now”.	Beresford Hotel; Stronghold Bar; Barracks; Manacle;

00700	Believes such a schedule is no longer possible because “society’s changed. You don’t have to seek out a gay group these days to socialise with...it is basically okay to be gay... a lot of gay people these days in Sydney are what you would term mainstreamers... a lot of people I know couldn’t give a bummer whether there was a Mardi Gras these days; been there done that...”	Mardi Gras;
00810	Oxford Street “used to be the golden mile, the gay strip...try walking down there on a Saturday night now, and you’ll either get stabbed or bashed... it’s dangerous, it’s just not there anymore. A lot of people don’t need the gay scene or gay community” like they did 20 years ago.	Oxford Street;
00850	“The irony is if all you want as a gay person is equality, if you want to be treated no differently from anybody else, what that means is that over time you are just going to be part of the community. Where does a specific gay community fit into that when it is okay to be gay outside it?”	
00950	Talks of corruption that illegality fostered in the past; pay-offs, protection rackets “but the establishments justified their high prices... once we were decriminalised that was supposed to stop, and yet it will cost me \$5 for a rum and coke” at a gay establishment, and \$3 for the same drink at a straight establishment a few doors away – “I don’t understand why gay pubs and clubs have to rip off their own people to make money”	Police corruption;
01220	Believes “there will always be a gay community of some sort”.	Gay Community;
01240	DMC currently has 45 associate members, and under 20 full members.	
01325	believes success of DMC has been that it is socially focused, not events driven like Mardi Gras or Leather Pride. Believes that is why Polly’s have enjoyed longevity also.	Dolphin Motor Club; Mardi Gras; Leather Pride; Pollys;
01525	“Our gimmick is motorcycles, and all that flows from that”	
01825	“the more we become on an equal footing, the less people will see the need to have a specific gay community”	
01900	Believes Mardi Gras may have become stale, and people are bored with “same old, same old”	Mardi Gras
02040	Now “it’s ok to be gay”	