

Pride History Group Oral History Interview with David Urquhart

Interviewer: John Witte

Date: 12 June 2011

Location of interview: Camperdown

Reason for interview: Gay activism late 1970s and the 1980s

Restrictions: None



Time	Summary	Keywords
	TAPE 1	
0000	David was born third of April 1939 in St Lukes Hospital Kings Cross. He was brought up in Homebush. He was adopted shortly after (May 1940). David talks about his adoption.	St Lukes Hospital, Kings Cross; Homebush;
0150	He was adopted by a single woman, Enid James. He was raised by her and her mother.	Enid James
0330	Enid was a nursing sister at Prince of Wales Hospital. His grandmother was Maude Ethel James. He was close to her. She owned some properties.	Prince of Wales Hospital; Maude Ethel James;
0650	Neighbourhood children.	
0735	Went to boarding school in Bowral when he was 4 1/2 years of age.	Bowral boarding school
0916	Boarding school was horrible. Describes being away from home. He was picked on. It was cold. The nuns gave him a hard time.	
1219	He wrote home and addressed Enid as aunt and grandmother as mummy.	
1245	He avoided sport. No strong feelings about religion. Feels that he was rebellious.	
1545	High school at Chevalier College, Burradoo run by the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart. An all-boys school. Describes College.	Chevalier College, Burradoo; Missionaries of the Sacred Heart;
1805	Rebellious at high school because he was sexually abused by one of the priests, John Tyler. Describes the abuse.	John Tyler;
1935	Tyler gave him a terrible time during class. Other priests were brutal as well.	
2055	He had a crush on one of the brothers. Some fellow students were "on to him ". They teased him. Suicide attempt.	
2240	His mother took him away from there. He did his intermediate exams at Christian Bros Lewisham. At that stage he was rebellious and didn't care about school and about what he looked like and he smoked.	Christian Brothers, Lewisham;
2500	After intermediate he went to fourth year and then left.	
2545	Knowledge of homosexuality. A friend and he played strip poker. Sex with another friend at Homebush saleyards at night.	Homebush Saleyards;
2915	He worked a number of short-term jobs. F Mueller's radiators in Camperdown, in a pub in Parramatta, a permanent job with Colgate-Palmolive in the marketing department.	F. Mueller's Radiators; Colgate-Palmolive;

3100	1959 a car accident. Seriously injured. He was 20 years old. His grandmother had died in 1959. He was upset by her death.	
3415	A job in the clothing industry followed with Daylesford Centenary Woollens a Victorian company and he worked in the office in Pitt Street in the city. From 1959 to 1963.	Daylesford Centenary Woollens;
3505	Then went overseas for a year came back and was laid off when the company was taken over.	
3525	His next job was with David Jones. He worked in the city and Bankstown and managed a group of departments.	David Jones; Bankstown;
3635	Headhunted for Jenyns Patent Corset company. He worked there until 1968 selling and marketing women's underwear and swimwear.	Jenyns Patent Corset Company
3725	Camp Subculture. Mother moved to Denistone. Beat at Hunters Hill, Top Ryde, Parramatta. Easy to access with a car.	Denistone; Hunters Hill; Top Ryde; Parramatta;
3855	Describes the camp boys at Bankstown DJs. His attempts to enter their social circles. Party invitation.	Bankstown David Jones;
4020	Describes a party at Parramatta. Sex with Dennis Scott. His gay life took off from there. They were a part of a larger camp circle. One of the circle, Richard Longfield had a relationship with John Handley. John's family had the licence on the Commercial Hotel in Parramatta and that was a Saturday meeting place for them in the ladies Lounge.	Parramatta; Commercial Hotel, Parramatta;
4335	Did not reveal his sexuality to any of the other staff at Jenyns. Beats in country New South Wales. Describes Curzon's in the city.	Jenyns; Curzon's;
4525	Describes the Purple Onion. A small venue. Taken aback by the bitchiness.	Purple Onion;
4730	A desire to be with a camp circle. His camp name was Jasmine.	Jasmine;
4920	Describes the split with his mother in 1968.	
5035	He goes back to 1962 when he learned that he was adopted.	
5200	Describes his mother as shy.	
5325	His trip to Europe was important. Visits an art gallery for the first time.	
5545	Describes his job with Centenary Woollen Mills when he came back from Europe. Sold wool to post-war migrants from Europe.	Centenary Woollen Mills;
5645	Leaving home in 1968, he got a flat in Roslyn Gardens. At the beat at Double Bay he met Tony Old.	Roslyn Gardens; Tony Old;
5820	Later Tony was in Long Bay Gaol. He went to the Wayside Chapel and asked for assistance. Bob May ran the social side of the chapel. They could not help Tony.	Long Bay Gaol; Bob May; Wayside Chapel;
010115	Bob asked David to help with the coffee shop. David describes the people needing assistance at the chapel. He became a regular helper.	
010310	After three months, he resigned his job and helped full-time at Wayside Chapel.	Wayside Chapel;

010330	Met John Jeffrey. He got involved with the theatre there. He met John Webster, Ted Noffs. Got a job as a taxi driver.	John Jeffrey; John Webster; Ted Noffs;
010440	A choice to go along the gay activist path. Had gone to CAMP once. Thinks that the Glebe office of CAMP was owned by Lindsay Burke. The other path was the alternative lifestyle of the Wayside Chapel.	CAMP; Lindsay Burke; Wayside Chapel;
010642	The moratorium. In 1970 got a job at UNSW driving a van. He had been politicised by work at the Wayside Chapel. 1970 organised a concert for peace there.	Moratorium; UNSW; Wayside Chapel;
011010	Jeannie Lewis on the back of a truck in George Street. Describes being involved in the moratorium movement. Legacy of the Wayside Chapel and his Catholic education.	Jeanie Lewis; Moratorium; Wayside Chapel;
011255	Drugs in the cross in the 1970s. His first joint.	Drugs;
011500	Coffee shops the Cross the Adonis. Clients of the Wayside Chapel and Castelllos. Rex hotel, Jim Fishburn's <i>Feathers</i> in Bayswater Road. He shared a flat with John (Estay) Lauder.	Adonis Pancake Parlour; Wayside Chapel; Castelllos; Rex Hotel; Jim Fishburn; Feathers; John Lauder;
011940	Description of Jimmy Fishburn and <i>Feathers</i> . Perhaps on the ground floor of flats called <i>Belvedere</i> .	Jimmy Fishburn; Belvedere
012000	Other gay venues in the city. The older version of the Wentworth near Wynyard in Lang Street (prior to the Menzies). The Tatler.	Wentworth Hotel, Lang Street; Tatler;
012500	Stanley Palmer Culture Palace set up in a vacant church. This was set up by John Jeffrey. Some of the money came from a chain of lingerie shops - Chic Salons through Hopewood Health Foundation.	Stanley Palmer Culture Palace; John Jeffery; Chic Salons; Hopewood Health Foundation;
012855	Resident action groups in Darlinghurst and Woolloomooloo. Brenda Humble was an artist and activist involved with Jack Mundy. She was working for community youth support scheme in the Whitlam years. TNT plans for redevelopment of the Cross. Darlinghurst resident's action group (DRAG). He met Frank Watters, who was also involved and very supportive.	Darlinghurst; Woolloomooloo; Jack Mundy; TNT; DRAG (Darlinghurst Resident's Action Group); Frank Watters;
013150	Gay Men's Rap was a discussion group, a reading group. Gavin Harris organised a reading group.	Gay Men's Rap; Gavin Harris;
013400	David went down the path of the alternative lifestyle. He went to Nimbin. Met Annie Parkinson there and they were in a play together. He couldn't take some aspects of the festival seriously. Lots of mud.	Nimbin; Annie Parkinson;
013550	He was driving a taxi on the night of the Mardi Gras and living with John Jeffrey	Mardi Gras 1978; John Jeffrey; Church of England Glebe Estate; Edgecliffe;
013700	Cross talk about the Mardi Gras parade on the taxi radio. He went to Darlinghurst police station. From then on, he got involved.	Mardi Gras 1978; Darlinghurst Police Station;

014035	Impression of the first Mardi Gras – he was anti-police and would have approved of resistance. These events drew his attention to everything that happened from 1968 to 1978.	Mardi Gras 1978;
TAPE 2		
0000	And then he threw himself into the actions that followed – demos etc. Then Mardi Gras in 1981.	Mardi Gras 1981;
0130	Explains motivation for getting involved.	
0300	Compares perceptions of police by people on the beats with what happened on the Mardi Gras.	
0435	Mardi Gras response meeting at Stanley Palmer Cultural Palace. Police permission to have a march. Virginia Bell's response. Peter Collingwood was running the Palace then.	Stanley Palmer Cultural Palace; Virginia Bell; Peter Collingwood
0618	Remembers gay men's rap meeting at Stanley Palmer Palace. Remembers Karl Krautschnader ("Karl Blonde") being involved. Shane Brown. David produced handmade leaflets per each meeting.	Karl Krautschnader; "Karl Blonde";
0850	Gaywaves - people involved.	Gaywaves; Greg Reading; Susan Hawkeswood, David Abello; Susan Ardill; Graeme Head; Nori Newmark; Uma.
TAPE 3		
0000	Original name was the Gay Radio Collective. Describes how it was organised and what it did.	Gay Radio Collective; Greg Reading; Prue Borthwick
0235	Size of listenership. Maybe it was one of the first gay radio shows in Australia.	
0350	The collective consisted of activists. Didn't proselytise.	
0435	Involvement in the Mardi Gras in the 1981. He met his future partner.	1981 Gay Mardi Gras; David Abello;
0550	Describes the process of moving Mardi Gras to summer. There were heated public meetings. The pink dollar.	Michael Glynn; Pink Dollar.
0720	The role of Northern Hemisphere tourists. Meetings were held at Side Effects art squat where Robin Gibson Gallery is now in Liverpool Street.	Side Effects; Robin Gibson Gallery;
0900	Split between venues and activists. The activists drew new members at these meetings.	
1115	Activists then got involved in the first summer Mardi Gras in 1981.	1981 Gay Mardi Gras;
1445	The reasons behind the ban on established gay venues getting involved in Mardi Gras at the 1980 National conference.	1980 National Homosexual Conference;
1720	He was not a member of the Gay Solidarity group. Gay Centre in King Street.	Gay Solidarity Group; Gay Centre, King Street;

1900	HIV/AIDS. Went to a meeting at the trade union club. AIDS Council (later ACON) formed out of this meeting.	AIDS Council; Trade Union Club;
2055	PLWHA. David was on the committee of the precursor organisation together with Paul Young and (Don Carter). <i>Talkabout</i> magazine came out of this.	People Living with HIV and AIDS (PLWHA); Don Carter; <i>Talkabout</i> ;
2148	Reason for the name of the magazine to convey.	
2320	The audience was that part of the community who wanted to understand what was going on.	
2358	People dying. People did not know they had HIV.	HIV
2455	Describes the early issues of <i>Talkabout</i> .	
2550	Support groups like Bobby Goldsmith. Involved in CSN. Quite happy to do the tricky ones.	Bobby Goldsmith Foundation (BGF); Community Support Network (CSN);
2750	Used his car to take people places. Each support group supported each of its members.	
3230	Names from the 1985 ACON board. David recognises them as community people.	ACON; Ankali
3335	Also worked at times for ACON and PLWHA on publications.	ACON; PLWHA;
3425	Attended East Sydney Tech in 1980, encouraged by Frank Watters and Robert Eady. Had been doing photography. Experiences of first year at Randwick campus. Then went to Sydney College (of the Arts). Photography with John Williams. Then post graduate diploma – thesis was Robert Mapplethorpe and gay male pornography.	East Sydney Technical College; Frank Watters; Robert Eady; John Williams; Robert Mapplethorpe;
4220	His work was around gender and sexuality. An exhibition of portraits of men in his life and a seminar called <i>Sex Pictures</i> . David Abello did a sampling of voices from radio to accompany the slide show. Enjoyed the college.	<i>Sex Pictures</i> ; David Abello;
4700	Donated ephemera and sold photos to the NSW State Library.	State Library of NSW