

John Grube's Interview with George Hislop

February 20, 1987.

J: John Grube, G: George Hislop

J: My name is John Grube, from the Foolscap gay oral history project in Toronto, and a friend of mine, George Hislop, has very kindly consented to give us some information where he can, from his own point of view, about certain things connected with the gay history of Toronto. George, you mentioned you are fifty-nine.

G: Yes.

J: And you've spent almost all your life in Toronto?

G: Yes, I was born in Toronto, and educated here, and apart from one, little over a year, living in England, I've spent most of my life, all of my life,

J: Were you in the forces at all?

G: No.

J: Just missed?

G: Just missed.

J: Yeah. What kind of family did you grow up in?

G: I grew up in a family of three, three, three children, I've two older brothers, my mother was widowed when I was two and a half years old, in 1930, at the beginning of the Depression, so she had, uh, my eldest brother was fourteen, Buddy five and I was three and a half, so she was, my father had worked for the Canadian National Railway, as a skilled tradesman, he was a brass finisher, whatever that is, I was raised in a working-class family,

all my uncles, a large extended family, were, um, tool and die makers, machinists, printers.

J: That is, high paid tradesmen though.

G: Yes, yes, and my father built the home we lived in, in Swansea. My family was big in Swansea community affairs. The Presbyterian Church - my father was Scottish - and there was a large

J: Did he come from Scotland?

G: Yes, from Edinburgh. And my mother was from the North of England. She was a Geordie, Tyneside. And, but most of the influence in the home was Scottish Presbyterian Calvinistic, but not so strict and narrow, I was quite surprised when I grew older, that Presbyterians were deemed to be dour people, and that certainly wasn't the case in our home, and my two brothers are, they define themselves as heterosexual, they have children and ? practically be their grandfathers, and I discovered when I lived in England that I had gay cousins, both on my mother's side and on my father's side, so I grew up in a, a, a matriarchal society, in a way, in a home, my mother loved men, and we had boarders and students and that to help get us through the Depression, and I was raised on the Mother's Allowance. Lots of boys in the neighbourhood, only a couple of girls, a lot of

J: What age did you realize you were homosexual?

G: Um, I knew, I didn't know the label for it, but when I was about twelve but the minute I heard the label, and the definition of the label, I knew that was me and I accepted it.

J: About twelve?

G: Yes.

J: What's the age when you first did something about it?

G: Oh I was having a lot of homosexual sexual encounter from the age of eight or nine, because I grew up in a neighbourhood with lots of boys, and there was lots of homosexual sexual activity, and an interesting thing I recall about that period, or a little bit older, that the other boys knew that I was different, that they were doing it - and I'm talking about when we were fourteen or so - they were doing it because they needed an outlet and I was the outlet and they were coming to me for that outlet.

J: And you would blow them or something?

G: Yeah.

J: And they'd get their rocks off?

G: Yeah. And I recognized that I too, and there was one other boy, who subsequently identified himself as homosexual, and we knew that we were the different ones, and we were just sort of, and this went on into the late teens, and I was having, and I had one young friend on his wedding-night. So it was almost his farewell to that, but he kept coming back, but um, he defined himself as heterosexual primarily and in fact he was. So I had these

J: There was a defined, I'm really interested in the way - not the details but I'm sure they're sensational! - like, there was a kind of social role in the community you grew up in for the homosexual.

G: Yes.

J: In that sense that they used you, couldn't get a woman so they used you.

G: That's right. And I was willing to be used. I had no sense of being used. In fact I thought I was exploiting them! And in high-school, I went to Runnymede Collegiate, um, I would make it known that I was available, in fact a man who's around town now, a retired school-teacher, who was one or two years behind me in the same high-school, said: "Oh I knew about you, I'd heard about you, and I was terrified, but I really wanted to do what you

were doing, which, I was having sex with boys in high-school, but there wasn't the, the hostility and fear of the label faggot, I mean the worst thing you could call a high-school student today is to call him a faggot, and have people believe it, and

J: The word queer was used, though.

G: The word queer was used but these kids weren't as sophisticated, or weren't as knowledgeable in the awareness of the existence of homosexual, of homosexuality, it hadn't become that above-ground structure and hence a little bit fearsome, like, who are these people?

J: But they did know that what they were doing wasn't quite right?

G: Oh yes! Yeah, you did this, you did this because you couldn't get something else.

J: You concealed it.

G: Yes.

J: There appeared to be a social role for the teen-age homosexual. At that time.

G: Oh yeah, yeah, and the big thing was, don't tell anybody what we're doing, and as long as I had their confidence, that I wasn't telling anybody,

J: They never beat you up or anything like that?

G: No! No, and in fact two of the butchest boys in the school, I was very small, right now, I'm only 5' 7" today, but I was very small and very boyish, when I was in the theatre I was sort of performing boy roles when I was in my early twenties, could still get away with it, and so these fellows almost, they weren't protectors, but we had a nice, nice relationship and I was also

J: And if anyone had threatened you in any way they would have intervened?

G: Yes yes.

J: Were there any such incidents?

G: No, no, I was never called names, and uh, I was popular, it was very interesting that during my election campaign an incident that occurred in high-school years ago was reported in Gary Dunford's column, somebody remembered that in the auditorium of the high school, at lunch time, a boy made a noose out of the blind cord, and he dropped it over my head, and I yanked my head away to escape it, and instead tightened it, and turned blue, and the blind came down and I woke up out on the front lawn, with all these people staring at me thinking I was dead, well that incident was reported, Gary Dunford reported that, but he reported it as, even then people were hostile towards me, and I phoned him up and I said 'look, I don't know who told you this story, but there was, I had no hostility in high school

J: It was genuinely fun that turned into an accident. Well, then, were there activities that homosexuals in the school structure were allowed to do, or expected to do, you know, less athletic and that sort of thing?

G: I think just about everyone, well I won't say everyone

J: You said there were a couple of you.

G: Yeah.

J: and, like, you didn't play football, and some of the jocks did, and so on, you had other activities, music and things like that?

G: Yeah, that's right.

J: That's my recollection by the way, so I'm just trying to find out whether it's yours too.

G: Well yes, you were, if you were interested in the arts, you were sort of looked at as being a bit funny,

J: Yes.

G: And potentially that way. Even amongst ourselves we looked at each other as, well he's interested in

J: Music or painting

G: Yeah, or theatre or dance - and nobody was interested in the dance - I mean

J: Then he may be homosexual.

G: He may be. Yeah, you could start putting out feelers towards that person, uh whereas you'd avoid maybe putting out feelers towards the jocks

J: However you did in fact have lots of jocks?

G: Yeah, but again it was always playing games that well, the 'oh my god was I drunk last night!' syndrome.

J: But in fact they acknowledged it was OK for you to be at Runnymede Collegiate Institute, and expected you to take courses in theatre, whereas they were having trouble struggling through their math or something.

G: Yeah, we had, we had a teacher

J: By the way Runnymede had a very progressive principal who was fired around this period.

G: Oh yeah.

J: I remember

G: I was all involved in that! Bruce Clark was his name, and, yes, I was all involved in the student strike.

J: Tell me about it.

G: Well,

J: Because that's your first political experience too I suppose?

G: Probably, probably, although you know, we

J: I remember the clippings, I can remember thinking how thrilling it must be to be involved, at the time.

G: Well, you know the school itself was

J: What was he fired for? I can't remember now.

G: Well, he he pioneered students' choice, and and some students, to come from the structure of the public and separate school system, where they were regimented, in Grade Nine, when you're fourteen, to be suddenly given all this heaviness of you deciding, if you didn't want to come to school, fine, well that

J: He really went that far?

G: Well, all within the framework of the Ontario Truancy Act, and what have you, I mean but it was less structured, much more freedom and choice and everything and that's very radical, I mean we're talking 1941, when the war was on, the Second World War and uh, he was considered just too radical, I mean specially when we were living in disciplined times, I mean

J: Did he have a cadet corps?

G: No we didn't.

J: You see we had, at that time I was in the cadet corps.

G: No, we didn't have a cadet corps

J: Marching and all that

G: and I stayed away from school once for almost two weeks. I played hockey. When I discovered downtown Toronto. That was my first foray into downtown. I discovered.

J: You mean a gay circumstance

G: Yeah.

J: In other words, progressive education led to your discovery of the gay world in Toronto?

G: Well, I'm not quite prepared to make that leap! But uh

J: The fact that you could play hockey for two weeks meant you could explore outside Swansea.

G: That's right. And, because at the age of about twelve, thirteen I guess, maybe thirteen, an older boy had been talking about queers, and I wanted to know what queer was, what was he talking about, well, you know, guys that like to jerk off other guys, and suck them off and everything, and I thought, oh really? Where are these people? And I lived not too far from High Park, Swansea is between High Park and the Humber River, south of Bloor Street to the lake, and so I wanted almost longitude and latitude, tell me exactly where these people are in High Park, because he'd mentioned High Park.

well, why did I want to know? you know, and that was my first awareness that I had to go underground. And I was quick-witted enough to say, well I want to avoid these people, you know, High Park is 500 acres or something, I mean where? So he, he told me about the washroom near Bloor Street, which is still in existence although radically changed. And, God! I high-tailed it over to High Park and started beating the bushes, and it was interesting that older men chased me out of the washrooms.

J: Older gay guys?

G: Yeah, they didn't want me in there.

J: You were a threat, bringing the cops.

G: That's right, yes. Don't get involved with kids. I remember a piece of graffiti, reading a piece of graffiti on a toilet wall, in High Park, that said "stay away from kids, their mouths are bigger than their dicks." So I learned about the park, I also learned about rejection, that some men would take me into the bushes and have sex with me and then avoid me like the plague, because they were, they were generally afraid, of

J: years in jail.

G: That's right. And, and in those days people went to jail. They went to jail for uh, for six months. Which I'll talk about a little later. Well, I mean John Herbert's experience, in Fortune and Men's Eyes. So I knew about the park, then go to high-school, and in high-school again in talking, fifteen years old, fourteen or fifteen years old,

J: We're now in '42?

G: Yeah, I was born in 1927, so I was fifteen in 1942. 1941, when I was fourteen, a boyfriend of mine, a kid who lived on the same street, who was heterosexual, but I was blowing him after school, and he, he, he was a real ladies' man, even at that age, he was always trying to screw some girl, and all that, and I stood in awe of his sexual prowess, and we skipped school, there were four of us, and we went downtown, and we went to the Casino, the Casino was a vaudeville...

J: Yes, I know

G: ...which featured strippers.

J: Sally Rand and her fan dance, and

G: Right! And the Casino, well the Casino was on every high-school student's lips, the Casino, there are strippers, well, they, of course they never totally stripped, they always had pasties on their nipples, and little G-strings, well, I don't know how we got into the theatre, usually asking someone else to buy the tickets, but there we are, as I say I was the runt of the litter, the other kids were, were much bigger, and, you know, but we got into the Casino and um, and I was amused and intrigued, it wasn't, I wasn't responding the way they were responding, but I went to the washroom, and discovered horny men in the washroom, and immediately became excited, and I think someone either jacked me off or sucked me off or something, but I, when I came back to my seat, they you know, where the fuck have you been? you

know, so the Casino then for me, I was more interested in the washroom of the Casino than I was in the stage presentation or the movie, and of course when the movie came on, we had to sit through a movie waiting for the next stage show, because we stayed all day, I mean once we got in we weren't going to leave, and so I kept making forays into the washroom, now that's another thing that has nearly faded from the Toronto scene, is, is the action in the movie houses,

J: The Rio and

G: and the

J: Bay

G: and the Broadway, so the next time, we made a couple of forays downtown, but I wanted to make a foray by myself, I wanted to get rid of this baggage I was carrying, and I went to the Casino and I couldn't get in, I was too small, too young, and no way, so I wandered around, wandered along Queen Street and saw the Broadway Theatre, which had been - just as a piece of trivia - had been the strip theatre called the Roxy, and then they built the Casino,

J: Was it where the Simpson Tower is now?

G: No. No, that, that was where the Bay, the Bay Cinema was there. So I went into the Broadway

J: Where was the Broadway?

G: It was, coming, walking West from Bay Street on the south side of Queen, there was

J: Where the Simpson Tower is there was the Bay Theatre

G: That's right.

J: Then you crossed the street

G: Don't forget there was Bowles' Lunch on the corner which had a place in our history too. and in fact..

J: Bowles?

G: B-O-W-L-E-S.

J: Now was that on the Simpson Tower side?

G: That's right. Right next to the theatre.

J: So the theatre was the second building over.

G: It was Bowles' Lunch. So you crossed the corner, and to people of my generation that was known as The Corners. Because there were a couple of hotels there,

J: Well, there was the Union House and the Municipal.

G: Yes, that's, and walking west you hit the bank and then you had an office building and then you had the Municipal and then I think you had the Broadway Cinema and then the Union House and then further down towards York Street was the Casino. And there was a bunch of ramshackle little shops and things along there, and the Municipal was a beverage room frequented by rounders, in and out of jail, there wasn't a drug culture then, but stolen goods, whatever, similarly with the Union House, in fact hustlers, we used to call it the Chamber of Commerce and the Board of Trade, the two buildings, but the Union House, but I of course was too young, and wasn't even aware that these places might be harmful,

J: So you were walking East, not having made it in

G: and I saw this cinema, the Broadway, and of course they charged something like 25 cents for three features, bring your lunch, stay all day. Open from 9 in the morning till... so here am I, and it is about ten in the morning, ten or eleven so I go into this

J: When this principal is allowing you to play hockey?

G: yeah, so I'm in the theatre, and someone sits beside me and rubs their leg up against my knee, and gropes me, and I sit there passively, and let them jack me off or something, and so then I, I discovered another contact point, and it's like coral, building you know, little grains, building up, so that lead of course to the conclusion in my part, being a whizbang in deduction, I figured out that, hey, if this little movie house harboured this sort of activity, and I could afford it, I could find a quarter, others like it, so I started exploring...

J: Streetcars were four for a quarter at that time.

G: That's right. And uh, so I started looking around, and further along the street I discovered the Bay Theatre, and then, just east of Yonge Street, on the north side, there was a theatre called the Arcadian, or the Academy, one or the other,

J: And that was a cruisy one too?

G: That's right. It's where Budget Optical is today, Peoples' Credit Jewellers replaced the theatre. And then up Yonge Street was the Rio.

J: And you discovered the Rio at that time?

G: Uh huh, and the Rio exists to this day. And people are still 'messin' around' in there. And still getting arrested in there. I had no awareness of, of police activity, there didn't seem to be any, so here was I, a young boy,

J: Fourteen, fifteen.

G: Knowing that I'm homosexual, and searching, looking, for others.

J: And finding them.

G: Yes. I'd graduated from my, from my playmates, neighbourhood kids, to my school-mates, because at high-school these kids came from other neighbourhoods, and so I discovered that in other neighbourhoods there were pockets of people and as I say, I had this one friend who was an

acknowledged gay, I mean now, I mean at that time, he and I used to compare notes, who we'd, who we'd had

J: You were sisters.

G: Yes, who he'd had, yes, and who I'd had, well I didn't hear these terms sisters and that until I got into the downtown scene, and at first that confused me because I didn't identify myself as being feminine, and I at first rejected it, and I still do but there was a great deal of that in those days, of labelling, and I'm quite surprised to find that amongst contemporary kids today, are doing it,

J: Are they?

G: Oh they, they, they

J: Call themselves Mary, and then sisters and that kind of thing?

G: They use the, the 'girl' and 'sister' but not quite in the same way or in the same fashion. 'Get you girl' has survived, and 'girlfriend', 'c'mon girlfriend, let's go.' And still some labelling, applying female names, like I have a young waiter-bartender working for me now, his name is Ron, and they call him Rona as in Rona Barrett, or Rhonda, and yet he's not the least bit effeminate,

J: So you were, you were then, you must have, having contact with these guys, you began to move a little bit in the downtown circles, did you?

G: That's right, and downtown fascinated me. I mean I'd been born and raised at Runnymede and Bloor, and my commercial strip was from Runnymede to around Jane Street on Bloor. And on Sundays we would walk the length of that street, I remember we used to call it 'going wolfing,' wolfing, we were a bunch of wolves, we thought, preying on damsels, and there were about six of us in the pack, and now I had discovered that there was downtown, big buildings, the Bank of Commerce, the tallest building in

the British Empire, and the Royal York Hotel, and, but my awareness, my entrée into downtown was through the box offices of these little movie houses.

J: Did you in fact develop social contacts in addition to a quick piece of ass?

G: No, not then. That started, I left school for a while, and

J: What age?

G: Sixteen.

J: That was the legal school-leaving age.

G: Right. And my family did not put, I shouldn't say they didn't put a value on higher education, they were quite realistic, they couldn't afford that. My brother had left school and was in the Air Force, my eldest brother, he'd worked since he could possibly bring in an income, he was, he went to work, and then he would have been about twenty-three when the war started, and he joined the Air Force when he was about twenty-five. And he married and started a family, so he went overseas with the wife and child at home, the baby and infant, I was sixteen, I remember.

J: So anyway, you, talking about your entrée into the social set, how did that happen?

G: Well I was still, I went through all the motions, of having girlfriends and everything, a) I thought it was the thing to do and b) I enjoyed their company. And I seriously still thought that I

J: It was a phase you were going through and you'd get married?

G: Or that I could, that I could live in both camps. You know, and I didn't know the term bisexual, and I had sex with girls, mostly I was seduced, I mean they would back me into a corner,

J: But you performed adequately?

G: I performed, yes. Yeah, and I was popular, I was a good dancer, I was a good social mixer and I guess that I, in this job, which was just a factory job, a wartime factory job, which was paying good money, and I met some, some people, through the union, I joined the, I organized the company I worked for,

J: Who were?

G: The United Electrical Workers.

J: Oh, very radical indeed.

G: Yes it was.

J: That was Commie run in those days!

G: Well Clarence Jackson is still alive, and I just read something about him the other day in the paper,

J: My God, you had a taste of that

G: Oh, well you see I was greatly influenced, although my mother was a Conservative, and she was a Conservative who espoused socialist ideas, I mean I think my mother

J: a red tory

G: Yeah, I said you

J: So what happened, back to this Jackson fellow and the UEL and everything?

G: Well, through, I was influenced by a neighbour, who was in the CCF, and a gorgeous son whom I was having sex with, but this man really influenced me in my political thinking, and, to my mother's horror, well, that led to my involvement in the union, I thought the union was a good idea, united we stand divided we fall

J: that's where you picked up the organizing the union idea, it was through this neighbour or something?

G: That's right. And my brother, who worked in the same place, and who was two and a half years older than me, um, the factories were being run by kids, and women, you know, they were either too old or too young, you're either too grey or grassy green what's good is in the army, what's left will never harm ye, blah-blah-blah-blah. That was a popular song of the day. And I felt this company was being very unfair. We worked long hours and and I didn't think we were being fairly compensated. And it was the beginning of the struggle for things like Unemployment Insurance, cafeterias, and the companies were very vulnerable because if they wanted workers they had to do some aggressive things, pension plans, you know, I mean such things as time-and-a-half for overtime, people worked long hours and - just as an aside - some of the frustration, when you talk about the young bloods after 1969, post-Stonewall, thinking there was nothing before, union people had that same problem, that the things they fought for, when a young person walked on the stage, they accepted that as given, and the struggle that went to arrive at that point, was not acknowledged or was forgotten. So, and I noted that analogy parallel to the gay movement,

J: But you did actually organize, you and your brother and your friends, and so on? You got certification?

G: Yes, our local and what have you. And I was meeting radical people and I met a woman who was a playwright and in the arts, and she introduced me

J: Who's this?

G: Her name was Elsie Anderson. And she wrote.

J: Elsie Anderson, rings a bell somewhere.

G: Well she's now, she's living in Stratford, she wrote me a letter a few years ago, saying she was moving to Toronto and 'hey, do you remember me?' and I became involved with her daughter, of course Elsie hoped that her

daughter and I would have a thing, she also had a son who I think was a latent homosexual, but she influenced me in the arts, and

J: radicalism?

G: Yes, she was a Communist, she was all involved with left-wing politics.

J: And at that time if you recall the Communist Party was saying there had to be a second front, do you remember all that nonsense?

G: Oh yes! Yes, and then, but the Communist Party was outlawed so they changed their name to the Labour

J: Labour Progressive Party

G: Yes, and Elsie Anderson got me a scholarship to the Banff School of Fine Arts. She was a left-winger and she came out of the Prairie socialist movement, but I remember her saying something about this elderly plumber man, the neighbour who taught me about the CCF, and she was full of scorn about the CCF, they were just

J: Bourgeois deviationists.

G: That's right. Well of course my mother is horrified that I'm getting drawn into this whole left-wing thing, and, but I went to the Banff School of Fine Art,

J: For how long?

G: Well it was a summer course.

J: In what?

G: In theatre. Yeah, we had established - I'd forgotten some of this - we'd established the Labour Arts Guild, and out of that I met Tommy Lima, well Tommy Lima's the one you should talk to in your history work. Tommy was a painter, an artist, that's what he does today,

J: How does he spell his last name?

G: Lima

G: And so I started meeting people at OCA. And I started going to - quote - Bohemian parties, at which there were men and women and there were puppeteers and ? and, as I say, Elsie Anderson, who was a writer and she was getting her radio plays published, both in Canada and in the United States, remember Norman Corwin who was really big in radio drama?

J: Oh I remember him

G: and radio drama was big then, I mean Andrew Allan of the CBC here. And I started, you know, rubbing shoulders with these people, and then I came to the conclusion that everybody in the arts was homosexual and leftist, because that was the world I was presented with. I thought

J: Were there any other gays in the visual arts that you recall at that time?

G: Well, I began to meet people, I joined a group, that did dramatic productions and that used the YMCA. It was called the Belmont Group Theatre. And Ben and Sylvia Lennick (?), She performed under the name of Sylvia, oh dear, her father, her family owned Peoples Credit Jewellers

J: Gersteins.

G: No that wasn't the name she used though. One had to use an Anglo-Saxon name in those days. And her sister was an actress. Their son, David Lennick, does a radio show.

J: But were you then in any case, through Tony Lima, at least, Tommy Lima, and perhaps other people, you've met one, you've met them all, I mean you must have met dozens of gay people, in these Bohemian parties.

G: Yes. That's right. And I started having affairs, and what have you

J: Did you, I mean you were introduced into the Bohemian set, by Mrs. Anderson. Partly, you met her, through your union involvement.

G: And the Labour Arts Guild.

J: The Labour Arts Guild. So there was a step each time? An institutional step really, from one to the other, so that you're now moving at the age of eighteen, with some quite well-known people probably.

G: Yes, well I was moving away from Swansea, my family

J: To the downtown.

G: That's right. Gravitating to the centre core. And I remember parties in sort of lofts at Bathurst and Queen and draughty dusty rehearsal studios, but the Belmont Theatre

J: Do you remember any specifically gay networks?

G: This is coming. This is coming. By this exposure to the arts, with and through Tommy Lima and some other people, I then started, I remember going to the Promenade Concerts in the summer at the Varsity Stadium, Varsity Arena, and meeting some people there, introductions you know, someone knew someone, and walking along Bloor to the Park Plaza, the King Cole Room at the Park Plaza, now I'm, I'm, by this time I'm nineteen, I went to Banff School in 1946, or maybe 1947, I know that I returned and enrolled at the Conservatory of Music, and I studied speech arts and drama there, and here I met people like Jack Marigold, and Jack had also returned from the war, he was in the Air Force,

J: Was he a gay guy?

G: Yeah, and Jack is a well-known stage manager round town, he's had serious illness problems but, and at school I met Barbara Hamilton, Kate Reid was in the same class I was, and theatre was very sketchy then, I mean I was

J: Dora Mavor Moore and?

G: Yeah, and Bill Hutt, I knew Bill, he was at the university, but he was performing at Hart House productions and we were being fed into that

J: Did you act with Gardner or Hutt or

G: Yes, yes

J: At Hart House?

G: Yes, the Drama Festival.

J: You mean the Dominion Drama Festival?

G: Yeah. Bill Hutt and I were in competition for the best actor award, ...I remember Tommy Lima taking me to Queen's Park. He didn't take me, we were walking through, and then he said, well this place is good, and I was very nervous and that bandshell was there then, the Victorian bandstand high up and the washrooms underneath and we walked up Philosopher's Walk, well then this was one more piece of geography so I started to cruise Queen's Park, and Philosopher's Walk, and I, I had met a man who immediately wanted to possess me, and this was foreign to me, I had no idea that people got into, like, affairs, and I remember him being quite hurt because I wanted to play around, I didn't want to become his sole property, I didn't feel about him the way he felt about me. And he in turn took me into a party group, of which there was maybe a dozen people, and I started going to parties every Saturday night,

J: Like, what sort of people were there?

G: There were aspiring young actors but there were also accountants, a friend of mine, for example, Bob Grimson whom I've known - Bob Grimson teases me, he says "I knew George when he was chicken!" well, I was eighteen, Bob was maybe ten years older than me, and we retain our friendship till this day, he just lives down the hill, and I was of course discovering cocktail bars, like Malloney's, which was on the north side of Grenville Street, where the Women's College Hospital addition stands.

J: And that was partly gay?

G: Oh it was very gay, it was a tiny, tiny little bar, no bigger than this living-room, but it no, you could stand, because through some fluke, they had barstools but the fire department made them take them out, or something, because the square footage was zilch, but here was an American, you could stand,

J: And brush against people and

G: Yeah, because at the other locations we were still much in the beverage rooms,

J: Well The King Cole Room, in the basement there, you couldn't really move around very much,

G: Well, we called that little strip Vaseline Alley, after the comic strip, Gasoline Alley, yes there was a narrow side with a glass brick wall,

J: But it wasn't that good for actually moving around

G: No.

J: For meeting people.

G: Well no, you couldn't.

J: You were stuck at a table.

G: Right. And those flat-footed waiters would go and get one beer and wouldn't get you another until you'd drained what you had. I mean they went by the rules. Down at the King Edward Hotel which was then owned, was a Cardy Hotel, the beverage room was very gay, and of course Ontario liquor laws played right into the hands of the gays, because it set up separate drinking facilities for men and women. We didn't have cocktail lounges until 1947.

J: Who introduced you to your first social set then? Was it this guy who wanted to have an affair with you?

G: Well again, I guess it was through the arts group, and meeting people there, and someone, you see the only places we had to go were parties and I was always amazed because there always seemed to be these older men there, who must have been around since God knows when, and then, uh, there were younger people like myself, entering into the stream,

J: Did this guy take you along to a party where he knew all the people? In other words, did he sponsor you in some sense?

G: Oh yes, you had to find out from someone about a party

J: And somebody had to take you under their wing ...you were sponsored

G: That's right. And similarly when I started going to the semi-public places, like the beverage rooms, and then the cocktail parties, I mean I remember when Letros was created. We were in the King Edward Hotel, we were drinking in the beverage room which, the hotel opened, after 1947 I believe you could legally start to drink just as cocktail bars came in, we used to dress to go out, I mean I wore suits and ties, you dressed up, polished your shoes, you looked good. And the King Edward built this bar, called the King's Plate Room, because Cardy was a great horseman and it was named after one of his horses, so we were drinking, if you had a little bit more money you could sit around and drink when you were at the bar, and George Letros talked this popular waiter from the bar in the King Edward to come across the road, and ? followed, because Letros' father was a Greek man who had two or three restaurants and this was his new crown jewel and the son convinced him, or the man was smart, because they had, because they had a restaurant, a sort of beanery, down at the corner of King and Yonge, K-Y Corner, King and Yonge, and people went there after hours it was next to a Bowles Lunch and the action was way downtown, further west was the Sapphire Tavern, across from the, and at that time you could drink until 2 in

the morning, without a sandwich, it wasn't till later that they cut the hours back to one, and extended bar hours to one, because these had ended at midnight, but at, at the bar people would say, oh, we're going to a party, and I remember the first Peter Marshall party I was invited to,

J: Who took you?

G: I think Al - what was his name? - a great friend of Peter's, to this day, he was my age. (end of Side One). He took me, or he asked if I wanted to go, and I went, and then I started meeting what I would call the Rosedale set, you know, the construction people,

J: MacNamara?

G: Charles Redfern and...

J: Harold MacNamara?

G: Yeah, MacNamara.

J: They were both families in construction.

G: Yeah, yeah.

J: How did you get along with them? They'd be a bit older than you.

G: Oh yeah, and I was very impressed I mean they'd, Charles Redfern, had a studio in the Studio Building down on Severn Street on Rosedale Valley Road, and I mean coming from a simple Swansea background, I was very impressed with all this, all this wealth,

J: Was MacNamara part of the Peter Marshall set?

G: Well, yes and no. I would see him there, but he had his own coterie, yes,

J: Of gay people?

G: Yes.

J: I mean, like, did you go to a party at his place? Because he owns the Studio Building I believe. Did you ever go to his place?

G: yes.

J: Let's hear about the Peter Marshall parties first.

G: Well it was just, I was a new face, I was very good at parties, in fact at one point in my life I almost stopped going to parties because I, I was expected to entertain and amuse people. I was a good story-teller I guess, massive file of jokes, and I still am but, so I became almost a must, well we'll invite George and he'll amuse us, you know, and a role I didn't mind playing until I realized that sometimes I was being put upon and I thought, fuck you, I'm not here as

J: Court jester?

G: Yeah, yeah exactly. I'm here to have, have a good time too, and

J: Did you have sex with older guys as a result of meeting them in these places?

G: No, I was

J: Purely social?

G: Purely social and I was having sex with my contemporaries. With one exception when I was about, when I was twenty I met a young man at a performance at Hart House, and this young man who was about twenty-two he was a bit older than me because he'd been in the Air Force, in the armed forces and he was extremely handsome, he had dark eyebrows, and I was smitten and he cruised me in the washroom, and he was very bold and groped me and carried on, and kissed me in the washroom, and this is at intermission, and I thought, oh wow, and he just swept me off my feet, and wanted to see me after the performance and he was with an older man, who I discovered later was his mentor, and was financing him through school, so, they lived in Kitchener, this young man's name was Ron Lowe (sp.?), I don't know whether I should say this, and

J: I'm very discreet.

G: and he, he, he lived with a professor, Dr. Alex Potter, in Kitchener, and the Potters were an old Kitchener family, and I remember Dr. Potter's sister living in the house, it was a huge Victorian mansion, filled with Victorian junk, you know, Jackson? furniture, and everything, wonderful stuff, and Ron invited me down and he was going to Waterloo College, which later became the basis of the University of Waterloo, and he was in residence there, and oh we sucked and fucked away the day and then he took me over to Dr. Potter's house and Alex was not amused, Alex wanted a piece of the action, and, as I say, I was twenty, and I wasn't the least bit interested in Alex, so there was some sort of exchange of words, not within my earshot and Ron and I went to Guelph and we met a man in Guelph who had an impact on my life, a man named Hyde Auld,

J: Who?

G: Hyde Auld

J: H-Y-D-E?

G: Yes,

J: A-U-L-D?

G: Yes.

J: The Auld family? There's quite a family of Aulds.

G: Yes. The Aulds of Guelph. And this beautiful stone house, and at the back of it was a converted stable, with a garage and above the garage was the, was Hyde's studio, and Hyde had had a promising musical career, in opera, and he was badly wounded in World War I, he was a great friend of Edward Johnson's, and knew the Drews, because Mrs. George Drew was Fiorenza Johnson, and Ron and I visited Hyde and in the middle of all this Dr. Potter arrived and grabbed Ron by the scruff of the neck, and took him home, so I was left there, and Hyde was very aggressive, so here was I, sixty miles

away from home, what am I doing? you know, anyway, we had sex and he invited me to come and he was a charming man and exposed me to a lot of cultural things,

J: Give me some examples, I'm interested.

G: Well for example I knew very little about opera. But this man, he taught music, and singing, and I can sing and I like to sing, so, you know, we would listen to opera and talk and develop a certain side of me, he taught me about wines for example, we always had wine, and he had a nice manner of sort of explaining things to me, and once when I said to him, you know, I don't know how to thank you for what you do for me in this, and he says, you pass it on, that's your obligation, and I think I've done that, and he was

J: So in a way he was a kind of mentor?

G: Yes, yes

J: You were twenty or something.

G: yeah, and on my twenty-first birthday he gave me, he gave me a nice ring, he wasn't a sugar-daddy, he was always balanced, and later when I was twenty-seven, twenty-eight, 1954, I was I was in Europe, and I heard that he was, I was in Italy, I was in Europe and I was planning to go to Italy, and I heard that he was coming to Italy so I went in Naples, went around and called on him, at his hotel, and he invited me to join him, he was in Italy for the Maggiore Musicale, in May, so I went to the opera and that with him, and it was a wonderful experience because he said, well, listen, you're staying in pensiones and three-star hotels, and I'm staying in luxury accommodation, you come and stay with me and you just pay me the equivalent and stay here, in other words, he wasn't going to take away my independence, he wasn't going to finance and subsidize me, but we could share each other's company but he knew that I couldn't afford to stay at the Excelsior, but I

could have the experience of staying in the Excelsior, for what it would cost me to stay

J: But you had sex on other occasions, not just that first time?

G: Oh yes, yes, he was quite delightful sex actually, he was an older, experienced man. He had a great sense of humour, we called him Gloria Van Guelph, and there were many, he had many friends

J: He had quite a circle?

G: Yes, and, well, I first met Dave Davies there, for example, if you know Dave

J: I've met him,

G: And John Sparrow, they live in Rosedale. And Ross Beggs. Of course some of these people, he was a Conservative of course, and they thought that I was a ditzy nut, you know, this radical socialist kid running around and, I was going to drama school, I spent my twenty-first birthday on the stage, at the Royal Alexandra Theatre, in Die Fledermaus, so as you can see I was branching out farther and farther, and there was no, uh, organization as such, and it wasn't until I was in my mid-twenties, in my late twenties that I discovered for example, a gay doctor, I remember finding that to be

J: Right here in Toronto? You don't mean

G: Yes I do mean Keith Russell. A man who did a lot of good work, because we passed each other's along to him, because if you went to a, a

J: You couldn't be honest with a straight doctor.

G: No, you lied, and as a result we had no stats on, on venereal, sexually-transmitted diseases,

J: Is Keith still around?

G: I have no idea.

J: So he did, in your opinion, a reasonable job for the gay community as their doctor at that time?

G: At that time, yeah. And uh, but there was no political structure as such, there was no social services, all this emerged as a result of the social upheaval of the nineteen-sixties.

J: But when did you, yourself, feel there should be some?

G: Well, I met a wonderful man, who's still alive, he lives in British Columbia, called Jimmy Egan,

J: I've met him, yes.

G: A wonderful person! And light-years ahead of his time. I mean, if I've made a contribution to the gay community, people can thank Jimmy Egan, for getting me rolling.

J: Tell me about that contact, it's a very crucial one. Because he's done that with a number of people obviously.

G: Yeah, it was, it was 1949, late, Christmas, 1949, early 1950. At the King Edward Hotel I met a young man who was to become my lover. He was a year older than me, and he was very masculine, and worked in a paint factory, warehouse, and I'm not quite sure where or when I met Jimmy Egan, it could have been at a party, and it probably was

J: A gay party somewhere or a 'Bohemian' one?

G: A gay party. Because they gave New Year's Eve parties, Jim Egan was in the business of raising small animals for research laboratories. And they had a house

J: He and his lover?

G: He and his lover, his lover was Jack Nesbitt, Jack was a hair-burner, and Jack had very poor eye-sight, wore very thick glasses, in a way now that I think about it, they must have been among the first, you know about this

time I knew about coupling and pairing and that sort of thing but they had a, they used to have a big New Year's Eve party, out at Oak Ridge, Ontario, which is north of Thornhill, Richmond Hill I guess, and the house is packed with people, Jack's

J: All gay?

G: Yes. Jimmy Egan had a brother, Charlie, who was also gay, and Jimmy's mother lived there, and she was an eccentric, a lovely eccentric lady, and so this lover of mine, Ralph Anderson, we used to drive up to Oak Ridges on Sunday, and visit Jim and Jack, and Jim just fascinated me, he had a library and he wrote to people, like, I think he had correspondence with people like André Gide, and, you know, there was, there was Sartre, there was Cocteau, and all these people who were

J: Famous gay people?

G: Yeah. Right. And he subscribed to magazines, like the first gay magazine I ever saw was The Circle, Die Kreis or something, it was a Swiss magazine printed in three languages, and it had

J: Do you know I've never seen a copy?

G: Really? And Jimmy had these around the house, and he wrote to Donald Webster Cory, and The Homosexual in America

J: Came out about '51 or '52

G: Right. And we'd just gone through the whole thing of Kinsey's book, which came out in '47. And that had a terrific impact on me, and really in many ways I think Dr. Alfred Kinsey is almost the father of the gay movement in some respects. Because for the first time we had a statistical handle on how many of us there were, and how many of us were participating, and how many people were participating in homosexual sexual activities, and suddenly there was, and we weren't as isolated, as few as we thought,

because even though my network was growing, and I knew more and more people, and I knew I wasn't the only one in the world, I had no idea there were so many.

J: Well what about the many you met at Egan's place? Tell me about the parties there and the meetings there.

G: Well, they were, again, his parties were not artistic parties. These people were - what we used to call ribbon clerks. People who worked in draperies at Eaton's College Street, in furniture stores and shoe stores, and offices. There weren't very many blue-collar people. Although the, there was a broad spectrum here, and there also weren't many people from the

J: Rosedale crowd?

G: The Rosedale crowd or the professional crowd. The professional crowd tended to meld in with the Rosedale crowd. And there weren't - visibly - that many lawyers or doctors, I remember being quite astonished, this was bring your own beer, and, I remember Harrison Sheik and me going there, I first met Harrison Sheik when I was at the Conservatory of Music, and Harrison always liked sweet little boys and going backstage and Harrison went to every dramatic production in the city, he still does, I saw him about two days ago in the subway, he's eighty something, and so Harrison was, used to go to these parties, and, but Jimmy Egan and these sort of Sunday afternoon talks and we would talk and talk and

J: About this kind of thing mostly? About gay liberation?

G: Well about

J: What could be done about the situation of gays?

G: And that people were organizing, like, they had magazines in Europe, and that they were light-years ahead of us, the organization in Holland for example, which immediately reappeared after the war, the COC, and how

could we organize? But there was no sense of a need for an organization. We all accepted the fact that we had to be underground,

J: But Jimmy Egan, did he feel that it wasn't necessary?

G: Yes, he started pushing holes and popping his head aboveground.

J: Like what are some of the things he did? I think he wrote letters

G: Yes, he was a prolific writer. And he wrote well, he wrote letters to The Star, and as a result people like Sidney Katz interviewed him and did articles on him and

J: This was in the fifties.

G: Yes! So we thought a) we admired him but b) we thought he was nuts. he was writing letters.

J: He was interviewed as an open homosexual? In the fifties?

G: Yes.

J: and saying it was all right to be open, that's what in effect he was saying?

G: That's right. And that if we all came out of the closet,

J: This was early fifties?

G: Yes, '49, '50, '51, '52.

J: That he was being interviewed.

G: Yes, and writing letters.

J: Did it have any effects on the straights he encountered?

G: he never hid the fact. And he had straight business contacts.

J: And they didn't seem to give a shit?

G: No. They wanted his, his product, and of course many of the people he was in touch with were in academia anyway, and he

J: Now did he think of starting an organization?

G: Oh we talked about it.

J: Tell me about that.

G: I think we were gradually becoming more visible anyway. I know I was. I wasn't going around telling people I was gay, I, I had a couple of jobs, because when I graduated from Drama School I had no place to go, there was nobody employing me, it wasn't until '54, when television started that we really started to get work, we had this great machine to gratify. So for a couple of years I was working in industry, I was working for the Grinnell Company, I got fired for union organizing there, and then I went to A.V. Roe, out at Malton, and worked out there, I was doing time and motion studies, and - a lot of paper work and all that - so then in '53 I guess, I formed a theatre company, we operated summer theatre out at Oakville, (pit stop break). Want some more tea?

J: OK, George, we were talking about Jim Egan and his brother, and his eccentric mother and the Sunday afternoon discussions. Who else took part in those discussions about what could be done about the situation of gays, besides yourself?

G: I just remember the two of us. My lover, Ralph, would sit there, but he wasn't terribly interested.

J: I mean you didn't have a group that was dedicated? Just the two of you?

G: Just the two of us, however there began to emerge in the bar scene the after-hours dance club, the first one emerged, it was called The Music Room, and we started going there, and Jim used to go there, and, and Jackie, Jim and Jackie, and Sarah Ellen was part of that, and I remember us trying to organize, well it started out as an informal discussion group, and then we started to structure it a bit, and had people come and

J: Where?

G: At the Music Room. On Yonge Street. We had Lesbians as well as gay men,

J: What year are we talking now?

G: It would have been the early fifties. Still, and I don't know when the coffee-house phenomenon struck Toronto, I mean the mass of people weren't the least bit interested,

J: But you and Jim and Jack and Sarah Ellen would meet on a regular basis and kind of discuss these problems?

G: I don't remember them being that structured, but we did have, almost group therapy, like, sitting around talking to one another, and, and anybody who happened to sit down, now mind you one of the beauties of the fifties and the sixties was the beverage room for gay men, and also, I guess, for gay women, because you could get half a dozen up to a dozen people around the table in heavy discussion. I used to say that the beverage room performed the role of, the coffee house played in, sort of, in England where people got together and talked about politics, and problems.

J: ...Cory's book?

G: We discussed that sort of thing. These books and that

J: I mean what did you feel could be done for example?

G: We didn't know. We didn't know. All we knew we wanted is what I really want today, is the right to be open, not to have to hide, and being very distressed by a) the lack of information about homosexuality and b) the misinformation, because the material available were so-called scientific studies, written by psychiatrists like Bergler,

J: Completely homophobic.

G: Right.

J: So you discussed them and why they were wrong and the beginnings of things in Europe and so on

G: And the indignation, these people didn't know what they were talking about. I mean I can remember getting quite angry that, people were writing

books based on case-histories of half a dozen pages, if they did the same thing, generalized about half a dozen heterosexual patients, and said all heterosexuals did this, I think all of us were from the same mold of being annoyed at being misunderstood, and being a little impotent and frustrated at not being able to do much about it.

J: Well, when you went to the United Electrical Workers, and you got involved with these various Communist Party people, you yourself weren't a party member I take it?

G: No.

J: Did you get involved with any theoretical discussions of Marxism? Did you get into that trip?

G: No.

J: Because a lot of people do go through that trip.

G: No. I didn't, I

J: Because it does give people a certain mind-set, for good or for bad, that, you know, they never really leave. You know what I'm talking about don't you?

G: Well, as a matter of fact, that very same thing stood me in good stead in later years, in the early days of the organized movement, in the post-1969, in the early seventies, when we had militant Marxists, and so I had a good understanding of

J: where their head was at?

G: Yeah. They considered themselves the vanguard of the working-class and because I'd gone all through that without, I went through it objectively, like I wasn't, I was there, but I was in it, but I wasn't of it, I had problems, I've always had problems with doctrinaire politics, so I've never joined a political

party, because I can't really get into the discipline that's necessary, you know, that you, blind faith, and I, I wasn't about to do that.

J: But those discussions with Egan, and perhaps with Sarah Ellen, she was also interested in what could be done for Lesbians I suppose?

G: Right.

J: Did she talk about it?

G: Oh yeah, and there were people like Mary Axton, who later became quite involved in the thing, I mean Mary and I have been friends since about 1950,

J: In the Lesbian part of the movement?

G: Right, and there was, there was more uh, in those days there there was a greater mix socially between, although men drank separately, in the party situation

J: It depends on one's perspective. I never met a Lesbian in those years.

G: I was in a group where Lesbians were part

J: I can't imagine a Lesbian appearing at Peter Marshall's parties.

G: No. No, you're quite right.

J: There was a separatist gay culture.

G: Yes, yes and many women subscribed to that as well. And the visible Lesbian, the public places, like the pubs, that Lesbians went to, were frequented by very stereotyped butch/femme

J: Now when did the idea of, there could be an organization, pop into your head? With you and Egan and some of these others?

G: We talked about it during the middle fifties but then, as I say, I went away to England for a year, and although I was up to my ears in gay society, in London, there was nothing political, and again, during that year, '54 itself, we were right in the heyday of McCarthy-ism, which drove everything

underground, then, I mean bars were being closed, I can remember going to New York, in '56-7, and, and if a bar had a sign on it, this is a raided premise, you knew it was safe to go in because they weren't going to come back, but you were told to stay away from certain bars because they due to be raided, and we all accepted that as part of the hazards of being gay, if you're going to belong to this underground, and we were nestling right up next door to the Underworld,

J: who owned many of the bars.

G: That's right. And we were, stereotyped ourselves, and accepted what people's definitions of ourselves, but the whole, I think a turning point, another turning point,

J: For you, when this whole, even the idea of an organization to fight it

G: Well, again, I'm still carrying the seeds of, of unionism, in my blood. And I could see that to, as long as you're disorganized, you're vulnerable, the minute you can present some sort of front, then you can become impregnable.

and another turning point was the Wolfenden Commission, which was struck about '54,

J: And reported towards the late fifties.

G: Yes, and - which of course led to changes in the English law,

J: Did that give you people the idea that it was possible to start an organization for legal change here or something like that? There was an organization in England of course, nothing happens in the government without being pushed, so there was an organization that pushed the Wolfenden Commission into existence,

G: And I remember the discussion that some of those people had to be straight

J: To give credibility to the Report.

G: That's right. By this time, of course, I'd become familiar with what the law was, and much of our anger was directed against that, and also I had a friend arrested, a boyfriend arrested in about 1955, a young German immigrant, he was nineteen, and he was entrapped, at the Sunnyside railway station, and he got six months in Guelph and then was deported, and the injustice of all that, just enraged me, and, but again, where do you start? The laws should be changed, we talked about the laws being changed,

J: That is, you and Egan?

G: Yep and, well, others. Anybody who would listen. But people said, you know, well how are you going to do this? You know, you're powerless. We aren't aboveground, we have no strength, we, and of course and of course you were working against the negative forces in your own community. I mean the hostility in the early sixties (seventies meant) when we started out when we started out at the U of T and later at CHAT, I got more flak from gay

J: You've been described to me as the person everyone loves to hate.

G: Yeah, right.

J: Is that a fair description?

G: Yeah, and, you know ... I remember going to Expo in 1967, and we were in Montreal the first of July weekend, and I even think it was in the July 1 issue of The Globe and Mail, reading an editorial in support of changing the criminal code,

J: Trudeau as Minister of Justice had already advocated it.

G: Right.

G: And I remember being elated at reading this, and running screaming to

J: And this was before any organizational thoughts?

G: That's right. Yeah, I mean everybody was euphorical, at Expo and what have you, but good grief! something was about to happen here.

J: And it was Trudeau's initiative here I think.

G: Yes, he as Justice Minister and then ...I think too the fact that the British had made the changes influenced him

J: Influenced you?

G: Oh yes, things were, things were changing. I mean the sixties, we were going through these changes, in the sixties, the social ferment was quite high, I mean it was that that produced Trudeau, I mean we went from a Lester Pearson to a Pierre Trudeau.

J: By this time you were doing what for a living?

G: Well, I'd been in the theatre, and when I came back from Britain I met Ron, and that was 1958. I'd been home...but John Diefenbaker destroyed the CBC. And he cut back the CBC as a hot-bed of left thinking, liberal ideas and he

J: But you were employed at the CBC?

G: Yes, on a free-lance basis.

J: You were earning your living as an actor on the CBC?

G: Yes. And then I met Ronnie in 1958, and Ronnie got into, through me, I introduced him to friends and he got into display and design work, and the company he worked for was sold, they didn't want a lot of small contracts, so he and I started doing that on our own, and then I gradually drifted away, as work got harder and harder to find, as people were leaving this country and going to The United States, Norman Jewison and all those people, um, I wanted to go to the United States but Ronnie didn't want to leave, so we stayed here and, and then, by the time we got to '69, I was working with Ronnie, small window displays, display booths for trade shows, things like

that, so by the time '69 arrived, and the Stonewall incident, we were ready.... The first hint, inkling I had of anything going on, Jerry Moldenhauer, I believe Jearld was the first person, he was an American, he had come from upstate New York, Cornell, and posted a notice on U of T bulletin boards, anybody interested in a liberation group, '69, the Fall term, the beginning of the Fall term, and some people responded to that, and I don't know whether there was a press release or something but I remember hearing Gordon Sinclair say on the radio, that, well, Toronto had arrived, there was now a homosexual group, and Ronnie and I nearly drove off the road, what's this? what's this? so, about a day later, or maybe that same day, I was in the Parkside Tavern, and and the Parkside Tavern was the hub of intellectual thought, strange as that may seem, given the décor and everything else, but the beer was cheap and we could sit around and talk endlessly. And someone said, pointed out, Charlie Hill,

J: He was pretty flamboyant in those days.

G: Oh yes. Oh yeah, we're talking about the sixties and the hippies and everything else and Charlie was wearing a bowler hat which he probably owns still to this day, and Charlie told me about this group, and I was the sort of resident political type in the Parkside anyway,

J: In what sense?

G: Well that I was always talking about politics, and just general things,

J: About what was going on

G: in the world, right.

J: Pearson, Trudeau

G: I was quite excited by Pierre-Elliott Trudeau. I was, I was swept away in the whole Trudeaumania. I thought it was wonderful that this country was

finally getting a man bold enough to say the things he was saying. It's hard, you went through the sixties, it's hard to tell

J: The forties, the fifties!

G: It's hard to tell, like, Mark my young friend, he says 'you know, I wish I was around in the sixties!' he says 'I'm a child of the sixties, born too late, I was born in the sixties,' but he, so I went to the U of T meeting, which was held in the Graduate Students Union Building, and a handful of us, and there were Lesbians there and they, and they were feminists, and we were all

J: This meeting was the first one, I mean Jearld Moldenhauer basically started gay liberation in Canada, in a sense?

G: Yeah.

J: I mean, whether you like him or not, you have to admit that.

G: Oh yeah, I give him full credit for that.

J: He was the first person who nailed something to a tree

G: That's right, and people came. I remember Ian Young was one of the early people, Pat Murphy was one of the Lesbians, and the Lesbians confounded me at first, because they were radical, they were more interested in the feminist thing, and they were busy attacking all, all the gay men, much to our dismay, as being male chauvinist pigs, just for having a dick, and, so we went through the Fall, Spring, '69, '70, and we were still great talkers, although we were, we were inviting people to come and talk, I remember Scott Symons coming and talking, and

J: What did he have to say?

G: Well, he, he'd just written

J: Place d'Armes or something.

G: Place d'Armes, yeah

J: Did he come out as gay? at that time? He's denied he's gay, he sort of says, I'm homosexual but I'm not gay. But he was open about being homosexual was he?

G: Yeah, Scott and I for a while we were very, we had quite a friendship, you know, then he went off to Mexico with John

J: Platonic?

G: Yeah, of yeah

G: And then when they went to live in Newfoundland

J: But he spoke, anyway, as a visiting speaker?

G: That's right. And then we held a public meeting, and I can't remember exactly what and we invited this this man, this god, from the United States, Dr. Kameny, and I remember we used the auditorium in the Nursing building on St. George Street, and you know Kameny came and I thought, holy Jesus, here's a guy who's really got guts, he's standing up and talking, well, in the Fall of '70 - '71, it became apparent that we needed a community group, that many people in the community wouldn't come to the University, thought it was an intellectual group, they were uncomfortable, and my thrust had been towards helping people, to come to terms with their homosexuality, and the beginning of organization along the lines of social services work, where can I get a doctor? Where can I get a lawyer?

J: Who is gay-positive?

G: Yes. And that, we were already having these splits about the, along the militant lines, political action, take to the streets, attack, versus the back-stage approach, and then there were those who weren't the least bit interested, that we had a healing job to do, and an education job to do, teaching our people, turning in in order to turn out, that sort of thing, and I mean, when I think of it now, the handful of people with diverse

backgrounds, political thought, looking at this huge canvas and not knowing where to put the first brush stroke, and what it was going to end up looking like when it was finished, if it was ever finished, and we, there was a strong push for, can you help me? We were getting this, I was getting it at the Parkside, and at other places where gays met and socialized, and I was emerging as a focal point

F: Were you able to help people, direct people?

G: Uh-huh, because I was very familiar with what network existed, at least I knew the drinking network, and I had acquired a great number of contacts with people in various occupations, so at the beginning of the Fall of 1970, we talked about a community group,

J: Non-university?

G: Non-university, leave the campus and this is the progression of many, many gay groups, the universities were very hospitable in a way, I mean people challenged the universities and fought for their right to be on the campus, but university groups were springing up all over the United States, universities were of course hotbeds of radical thought, you know, they were in opposition to the wars and, the rise of the black movement, and I think the key thing was the rise of self-definition, the woman-defined woman, the black-defined black, and the homosexual-defined homosexual, and new works began to appear in 1969, if not written by homosexuals, at least gay-positive things, I mean there's a very distinct line there, pre-'69 and post-'69,

J: Do you see anything though, like I was saying, any foundations of the later movement in the pre-'69 era?

G: Oh, of course!

J: Like what?

G: Well I mean we had

J: Let me put it this way: I ask this as a question, if the networks hadn't existed, there couldn't have been a meeting at U of T, there couldn't have been any organization, is that true?

G: That's true.

J: In other words, the organization, such as it was, with its CHAT, and later GATE, was built upon the net-working of the earlier era?

G: That's right.

J: And the social services people did, formerly, not only you but other people, want a gay doctor? Gee, I've heard of one, I'll find out for you, that sort of thing?

G: That's right, and you know, I mean, and there was this great, even as early as 1947, when I went to, I took the bus to Banff, to the School, and people told me about various places to stay, now the YMCA was one of the greatest networks, you stayed at the Y, you took a shower, you met somebody, that person then in turn told you where to go in Saint Louis, or Kansas City or wherever the hell you were, and my brother, I remember my brother commenting, how do you know all these people? In these various cities? Like, at

J: Would you say there was, then, in 1947, or whenever (end of Side Two) We were talking about this early era of '69, I asked you, I even put words in your mouth, probably, about the foundations being there before, but you would agree?

G: Oh yes, in fact it used to anger me that the young, the young ones, worshipped Stonewall. The first meetings that we had of CHAT for example, we were invited to a demonstration in New York, to commemorate Stonewall, now this would have been 1971, two years after the event, and I remember

being strongly opposed to adopting American institutions, like, like this colony, Canada once more, I said, we have our own landmarks, and the criminal code amendment had been proclaimed in August of '69, I remember, so I said I think we should go to Ottawa, and protest that this did not legalize homosexuality, it amended the Criminal Code to permit certain non-reproductive sexual activity, whether you were homosexual or heterosexual,

J: Are you saying you proposed commemorating that by demonstration rather than American Stonewall?

G: That's right.

J: That was the choice?

G: That's right. And we did!

J: The choice was to not commemorate Stonewall but to goto Ottawa instead?

G: The suggestion had been made, the invitation had been extended, and people were willing to embrace it, and, now mind you we didn't have much knowledge of Stonewall, Stonewall hadn't reached the proportions it holds now, I mean it was an incident, yes, but people didn't recognize it for what it was, as a turning point, and it was just one turning point, but it, it, the way humans operate you had to pick a date, like Christmas, and say, this is the date, and we'll say, this is what had happened,

J: It's now a Saint's day basically.

G: That's right.

J: What are some other things where you found disagreement?

W: Well, even in the beginning, like, when there was (the decision) to set up the community group, that was broached in the Fall of 1970, and I remember being asked to participate in that, because we were being asked

to do things that the university group wasn't set up to do, and wasn't terribly inclined to do,

J: Like what?

G: Well, like help, like help me find a doctor, help me, I need counselling, I need this, I need that, legal advice, all those things that all these things do now (i.e. specialized gay organizations), organizations do. And we were still very much in the verbal stage, we were still yelling and screaming to the rafters about the injustices of the world, and quarelling with ourselves about the modus operandi, what were our priorities? Where were we going to go? And how were we going to effect it? Well even a decision to set up a community group was viewed by some as a weakening, I mean the women were already threatening to walk away, that their energies would be better put into the feminist movement, because although they gave equal importance to the feminist movement and the gay rights movement, men only gave importance to the gay rights movement and really couldn't understand what the feminist movement was all about. And they were quite right. Well, I remember saying, if you'll wait until we get the Christmas season out of the way, we'll do it, so, but we had a meeting, I think it was around the twelfth of December, I remember it snowed and the meeting was almost cancelled, and Charlie Hill said, are you going to go to this meeting? And I said, yes, and so are you. And he said, well, I thought if you were going I wouldn't go, I said, fuck you, Charlie, if I'm going, you're going! So we went out to a house on Gladstone Avenue, Kevin, his last name escapes me for the moment, and there were half a dozen people sitting around the kitchen table and we had some beer, and we were talking about the community group, and I was appointed Chairman of the Steering Committee, to set this up, and I didn't want it run out of someone's kitchen table, or out

of someone's basement, I said, we have to have a visible presence in the community, so we were looking for office space, and an ad for furnished offices, simple little offices, in the building at the corner of Charles and Yonge, the old Post Office building, where Wendy's is now esconced and Gold's gym is where our first offices were, that's kind of ironic, isn't it? We went there and these offices were tiny little things, and we really couldn't afford it, and the guy said, there's an office up on the top floor, they're dusty, they haven't been used, you can have one of those for fifty dollars, and we went up and

J: A month?

G: Yeah, and he was right, the floor hadn't been ? there was this brown linoleum on the floor, and terr- , it had been a government building! In fact there were still drawings stuck on the wall for TTC subway construction, and so we cleaned it up and painted it, and opened the first office,

G: That was called at that time CHAT?

G: Yes

J: It was already called CHAT?

G: Well I, I chose the name, the word homophile was very popular, we were trying to popularize the name, we were trying to take the word sex out of homosexual, it stuck up like a sore thumb in the middle, and we were being characterized totally by our sexual activity, or perceived sexual activity.

J: It was thought that by saying 'homophile' you would get rid of sexual

G: That's right, that we could broaden the base of it, philos to love, and it encompassed the whole emotional involvement, and the loving of someone of the same sex, and, but the word

J: Anyway you had this, it was called CHAT and there were a dozen of you involved? And you had this office, and you worked your little butts off by looking nice, and then what happened?

G: And then, we had to have a meeting, you know and it was interesting, we didn't know where we were going to meet, and I was aware

J: This was before the office or after?

G: Almost parallel to it. We were talking about January and February and we, Holy Trinity Church was doing a, wonderful work downtown, they had a very liberal pastor, and the whole congregation was very liberal, and they, the church was a living church, the structure was well used and, I don't think the bishop thought much of the idea, but there were all sorts of groups meeting at Holy Trinity, and using the facility, and the church encouraged people, they had lunch-time forums, and

J: So you arranged, or somebody arranged, for it?

G: Well, I remember Charlie Hill and I going to one of these lunch-time forums when chief Harold Adamson was speaking, and raising the issue of police-gay relationships, which he just looked at as if we were nuts. And I remember Charlie and I being, you know, you get up and ask the question, no, you get up and ask the question, Charlie put the question and then I followed it, and supplementary questions, but the audience was all intrigued, who are these two people? talking about gay issues! and he couldn't see any reason why we should meet with the police, because this was criminal activity, and there was no, no room for discussion for criminal activity. So we were aware, aware of the uses the church was being put to, Elgin Blair, another early pioneer, and a member of the NDP, Elgin is

J: I knew Elgin back in '46.

G: Elgin was very much involved with the Unitarian Church, and the Unitarian Church in the United States had demonstrated a willingness to host gay organizations, so Elgin said, I'll go up and ask the Unitarians, the first Unitarian congregation on St. Clair Avenue, if we can use their facilities? I said, OK, I'll go up and see Holy Trinity, well, I reported back, I went to Holy Trinity, and I spoke to the secretary, and she said quite casually, well, what kind of space do you want? and I said, I don't know! How many people are coming? and I said, I don't know. I said, it's a founding meeting, and we'll just have to see who shows up. So she said, maybe you'd like to use the sanctuary if you're expecting a lot? Yes, I guess so, I said, don't you want to know what the organization is? She said, well, if you want to tell me, I don't care, so, so, we're a gay organization, we're the Homophile Association of Toronto, Oh good, that's very interesting, that sort of rounds things out here, so I reported back that we could use the church, that there wasn't any problem with that, Elgin said he was bogged down a little bit in the church, the Unitarian organization, in that they had to have a meeting of their board, J: So the result was Holy Trinity became your spiritual home.

G: yes, we went back, and I met Jim Fiske, who was the minister there, and he said wonderful, wonderful, so we got this nice reception, and the first meeting on February 4, 1971, fifty-five people showed up, and we were almost at each others' throats from day one,

J: Now what were the issues?

G: Well, just organizational and

J: What do you mean organizational? Like who was going to be President and Secretary-Treasurer?

G: Yeah, that sort of thing. And what, structure was the big issue, because in the sixties we were getting all this attacking of structure and form, and the

favorite thing was horizontal structure, the vertical structure had to be destroyed, well horizontal structure works well if everybody takes an equal share, and has equal skills, but it's not very long before people say, well I really don't want to do that, why don't you do it, so it pushes up, and before you know it you're back to a pyramid! Um, we had the radical left, the Maoists, the Marxist-Leninists, and on the right we had such people as, oh that jolly big Englishman, who was the epitome of conservatism, he was, he was Colonel Blimp,

J: Anyway, when you had your rows, what were some of the issues besides the vertical/horizontal?

G: Well then we had the radical Lesbian feminists. Called themselves The Cunts. Stormed out of meetings. And the meetings were often into the self-help thing of breaking, at one point in the meeting breaking into discussion groups, and just talking to one another, it was almost like therapy, and

J: Was Chris Bearchell a member right back then?

G: I remember Chris going back a long way, but I don't, I can't quite remember her there.

J: Right at the beginning. Anyway you broke into little groups when you got to a problem area, did you?

G: No that was part of the structure of the meeting. We had coffee and things but we were a discussion group, we were a help group. A self-help group. And leaning towards social services. And I began, I was, like, very concerned about people being arrested and I set up the first organization going to courts, and monitoring courts, and since my bent was that way, and I was - the leader, quote - I felt there was room for the political arm, but it wasn't long before those that were into radical politics were fed up with this namby-pamby approach, as they saw it, of, of helping people, that we had to

attack the institutions of our oppression, and we had to get out of the closets and into the streets, and we had to protest and storm the barricades, and build barricades of our own, with which we could defend ourselves, so um, those, those were issues, and of course after we went to Ottawa, I guess that's when GATE emerged, yes, there was another little organization in there, which came out of the Ottawa political demonstration, what the hell was that called?

J: I could look it up somewhere. (It was Toronto Gay Action - JDG)

G: And then that led eventually to GATE. CHAT was the first home of The Body Politic, again Jearld Mollenhauer's idea, maybe, the meetings were held in his apartment, CHAT got the old synagogue on Cecil Street, The Body Politic came there, there were arguments about did we want The Body Politic associating in such close proximity, because people were associating The Body Politic with CHAT, and that was our newspaper, I was constantly saying, that's not our newspaper, well, it's your newspaper, it's not my newspaper, and, so we met in Holy Trinity, I guess through '71, and I guess it was in '72, I remember Peter Maloney coming in '71

J: He ran as a Liberal candidate somewhere around there.

G: That's right, he was going to be the Liberal candidate,

J: He was

G: Yeah, but I don't know on his first appearance whether he was the candidate, he could have been the nominee, and he brought the, a fellow with him who was giving out something to do with the grants for the Opportunities for Youth, and we made an application for an Opportunities for Youth grant, and that gave us staff for the office on Charles Street. And then in '72, we got a follow-up grant from the next federal government program which was

J: LIP.

G: Yeah, local initiatives program. And that supplied us with seed money and staff when we moved to 58 Cecil Street.

J: When did you move to Church?

G: After Cecil Street. You see we got Cecil Street, these land developers had bought it, and they gave it to us rent-free, for maintenance, that if we were in the building and made sure the pipes didn't freeze and all that stuff, and we couldn't get the city to let us develop it as a community centre, because the standard of the community centre was that it had to serve the immediate surrounding neighbourhood, or a group of people who live in the neighbourhood, and since we drew from all over Metro, we couldn't get that status, we'd have to be a private club and provide parking and bring this archaic building up to the building codes standard.

J: So were these radicals still with you on Cecil Street and then on Church Street?

G: Oh yes, but they also, when GATE was formed, they moved to an office on Carlton Street, at the corner of, I think, Ontario, yeah, and the BP also moved there, radicals, I think this departure came after the first Men Loving Boys article which caused a great deal of yelling, screaming.

J: At your meetings?

G: Yes. These assholes were doing a lot of damage, we were torn between people who wanted to do things but having a different idea of how far, you know, going too far too fast, I mean you used to hear a lot of this in reference to the blacks in the United States, like, what did they want? They're going too far too fast. Others saying, fuck you, we got to move, and clashes of personalities, of people who didn't get along with one another, and then of course even when GATE was formed then there was ? in

dissension, I mean we were such a diverse group of people and we were just reflecting what was going on in The United States. I mean the first gay liberation union in the United States all fell apart, because it was comprised of drag queens, Republicans, Communists, you name it. But all people who, people joined for different reasons, some joined through idealism, some joined through anger at the way they had been hurt, badly hurt, by the criminal system or just by society

J: Did you ever have a serious run-in with the cops in a pre-'69 situation?

G: Oh yes I was beaten up by two policemen in High Park in about 1952 or so.

J: What happened?

G: It was a very bleak November day, I remember, and I like to walk, and I was living at home, um, it must have been just after I returned from England, because while I had lived in England

J: '54 or '5?

G: Yeah, '55, '54, in fact it might have been immediately, 'cause I returned to Canada in October, of the year of Hurricane Hazel, '54, just got back in time for that, and um, and my lover who I went to England to extricate myself from had neatly moved into my mother's home! my home, and I was out walking in the park, I wasn't working and there's a pavilion in the middle of the park, which is now a restaurant, the Grenadier Restaurant, this was just an empty pavilion but the washrooms were open and they were typically smelly washrooms of the day, and they had been entrapping people there and a friend of mine had been entrapped there, so I had cruised the place and I saw these two men, or a man sitting in a car outside, when I walked by, I went into the washroom, and came out, later I came back and a man came out as I was going in, he was quite attractive, so I walked in, then he

came back in, and this other plainclothes officer, huge man, no shoes on, came out of this doorway which led to a kitchen and just picked me up and smashed me in the face, called me queer and everything, the other man, they played the good guy, bad guy, and the other guy was writing notes, and all this stuff, but I was hurt badly, they almost broke my nose, it was very badly bruised, and they had nothing on me but they put on ? violence, and frightened me, and told me to stay out of the park and all that stuff, the one man, the one I followed in, now holds high office in the Ontario Provincial Police, so the other one died of a heart attack and when I read it in the paper, I was elated.

J: So these guys beat you up, these cops and, and you struggled home somehow, but you weren't prosecuted?

G: No

J: I mean you've never been sent to Guelph or something?

G: No but I'd, I'd had the experience of my friend who had been sent to Guelph and I'd gone to Guelph to visit him there, in the prison, and I knew what he went through, and being deported. The fact that I was assaulted by the police bothered me, and I'd heard stories of other people, and so the police attitude bothered me, and I knew of the homophobia. Also at that time um, a lot of sexual contact was made in parks, in washrooms, and I had become familiar with these trysting-spots and I knew I was vulnerable, and one never knew whether one was being spied upon,

J: They might pounce suddenly?

G: And who as an agent-provocateur which I felt that this officer who, was, who led me to believe he was interested and led me back into the washroom, where the other officer attacked me. So I came to the whole movement with a, with an attitude that we had to do something about the police.

J: In fact that was one of your motives?

G: Yes, and I was very, that was one of my first concerns, was setting up, to help people who'd been arrested, and one of the first things we did when we opened the CHAT office or I did, was to start going to court, and seeing how I could help.

J: How did you support yourself at this point?

G: Well, Ronnie and I made a decision, we had a discussion at that point when CHAT was established, well how was it going to run? Who was going to do this? People kept looking to me, and so we discussed it and decided that we would live off his salary, and we did, and it was important to us, it was important to him, and that was the major contribution on his part, was, we were that interested, and of course once I got into it, I got into it and into it, and we, we discussed about the fact that in order to advance things we we had to, I would have to go public. And with the publication of the existence of this office, and the government granting to it, we were inundated with interviews, a big story was about to appear in The Star, and Ronnie went down to visit his father, his mother had died by this time, um, and told his father he was gay, his father said, how's George? and he said, well I'm here to talk about that, he said, there'll be a story in tomorrow's Star, and I want to tell you first before you read it in the paper, and his father said, he didn't know or realized we were gay, however we seemed to be happy and changed the subject. So we, we discussed the economics of it, and I mean we were, we could have gone on being comfortable little homosexuals, going to Judy Garland concerts and going to Europe every year which we did, we were really, we could have ignored the whole movement, as many did.

J: The vast majority, 99.99%.

G: But

J: Something made you - and Ron went along with it - something needled you into doing things I guess.

G: Basically it was, if we don't talk back, we're talked at, about, around and over and through. Seldom, but more importantly, we weren't talking back.

J: Now you were socialized in the pre-Stonewall era. Many of these young kids who were coming in, gay guys I'm not talking about the women, the gay guys coming in, how had they been socialized?

G: They seemed to be coming from the general rebelliousness of the sixties.

J: You know, with us, there's a common language, did you feel that there was that lacking with these gay guys coming in, the young radicals?

G: To some degree, yes. Well let's face it, in 1969 I was forty-two years old, I'm dealing with people half my age, and that they sort of treated me on the one hand with respect, but on the other hand, like, well he doesn't know really where it's at, he's from the old school, he wants to puddle around and be a social reformer and a do-gooder or social worker. We're militant, we're coming out of the trenches, and they were coming, coming out of, out of the whole black liberation movement, I mean, they were the same kids who were marching to Selma, Alabama, they were the same young women who were disciples of Betty Friedan, and various women leaders, the, the black movement, the Martin Luther King, John F. Kennedy, I mean the whole society was ripe for revolution. I mean we were tearing down,

J: But they saw it differently from you? And their language was different.

G: Yes. Yes

J: They were gay guys, sucking and fucking, as you got to know them personally, you must have known some of them quite well,

G: Oh yes.

J: What was their socialization? How do you think they became gay?

G: I think we all became, I don't think

J: How did they come out

G: In as many diverse ways as we did. I mean some of them came out through the back alleys, the teachers, the whatever, the thousand and one ways that, and an advantage they had was that suddenly there was something above ground! It was only a flag-pole with a flag on it, at least there was something! A focal point. Again we had older people, some of whom dropped away quite early in the game, because they felt they couldn't cope with these young radicals, um, and then the young radicals eventually establishing their own organization, do things their way, and that was something else I had to deal with, at one point I really gave a lot of thought to: was diversification a strengthening of the movement or the weakening of the movement?

J: That is, having two organizations, CHAT and GATE?

G: Right. And then subsequently the constant spinning off of other organizations! And most organizations, I mean there's a direct line from Gays at U of T, I think the second group was Gays at York, and then CHAT came out, and then from CHAT you get all these, MCC, all this substructure forming, like roots going down into the ground, and yeah, we were coming from different socio-economic backgrounds, I mean people like Ed Jackson and Ken Popert, and Tom Warner who came from, I remember Tom Warner came from Saskatchewan, he came to the first meeting and sort of screwed up his courage and actually challenged me to something, he told me later, I was terrified! here was the man whose name was known across the country and people had a wonderful idea, when I went to visit in outlying places the mental picture people ? up about me I thought, who is this guy that they're expecting? And of course there's this whole business, it's quite common, in

our culture where you build people up and then proceed to chop them down. The background I came from, the gay background I came from felt very threatened by this

J: Did they feel threatened by you?

G: Oh yes!

J: I mean people that you'd known for years?

G: Of course there was a growing apart, because there are only so many hours of the day and I was spending a lot of time at the courts, publicity work, and everything else, we were invited less and less to social parties, with them, but of course we were now going to bring -your-own-wine parties, at Charlie Hill's place and Eddie Jackson's place, and I found it amusing not too long ago, last summer, at a party, sort of to celebrate someone's birthday, one's fortieth birthday, and here we are in a little renovated Yuppie townhouse, still downtown, off Spadina and Baldwin, one of those streets, well, we've come a long way from little attic rooms, with candles in wine-bottles, but yes, our, our friends were not amused, and there was resentment, and some of them felt sort of left out, that events were passing them by, and this was being equalled by their aging experience, when you begin to feel you're a little out of the mainstream, but then as time went on, now, they all want to be part of the, the beginnings, I mean you find people taking credit for things when they weren't even there,

J: And opposing it probably!

G: Yeah, that's right.

J: You mentioned Eddie Jackson, is he somebody you related to OK?

G: I related well to all of them

J: Did you?

G: They had their problems with me because I was perceived as being a supporter of the hierarchical structure. As being paternalistic, and it's a bit like wanting to radicalize your father's firm, but your father is still there, and even though he says he'll try it, he's just waiting for you to fail flat on your face. And sometimes I felt I had an obligation to assert authority, to say no, like, on some of the issues on inter-generational

J: Give me an example of some incident.

G: Well, I remember once having a row with Jerry Moldenhauer, because when we were at Cecil Street, we had this big building, and the windows, we had no air-conditioning, the windows were always open, and the neighbourhood kids were always hanging in the windows, because it was at ground level, and talking to us, and we had a rummage sale, a bake sale, what have you, and the people from Cecil Street and Spadina, and Grossman's Tavern was across the road and we used to go over there and drink, and we were establishing quite a nice relationship with the neighbourhood, and I remember there was a boy, he was about twelve, he was a Nordic beauty, he looked like something out of a Nazi textbook, and in the European tradition he was wearing very short shorts, he had long smooth legs, blond, blond hair, he was stunning, well, he entered upon the premises, and we were showing some old movies, some old Laurel and Hardy movies, and what have you, and Jerry Moldenhauer, one of the things Jerry has always been interested in is in NAMBLA, the North American Association for Man-Boy Love, and I watched Jerry moving in on this kid, and my heart stopped still, and Jerry went and sat beside this boy, so I went and sat directly behind them, Jerry was furious with me, and we had a scene about it, and I said, I'm sorry, Jerry, I'm not, I can't allow you to jeopardize, the minute your hand goes on that kid's knee, this building closes. And I said,

and that's where it was heading. Your personal interests and tastes, philosophically we can talk about man-boy love, but pragmatically and politically I cannot let that happen. And the others upheld that. And we had those, those struggles, but no, but I, I, I got along very well with them and they coped with me, but they also had a respect for where I was coming from, and, and every once in a while we did have to be, practical, and we could write philosophical articles and so on, I think the fact too that I was willing at my age, to get involved and was, I pushed and shoved and made things happen,

J: And your two election experiences a little later on too.

G: Jearld Moldenhauer was once reported to me, well, you know, Jearld likes you and respects you, and I said, oh? because we had had our differences,

J: He's also a man everyone loves to hate.

G: Well he was always an off-horse. And he was a burr under the saddle of GATE, and then when the fight over the control of The Body Politic, yeah, there were wonderful battles. But that again is very much like a family. We spent a lot of time just sitting around talking internal politics.

J: I have to go now. I want to thank you, there's a lot more information I'm sure you have, but typing this out is going to take more than my standard twenty hours! so we'll deal with this first. (End of taped interview).