EE: This is August 12, 1994, and we're doing an Oral History interview with Otto Bremerman. What we usually do is, if you'll just tell me a little bit about your parents and your people and where you came from. Some of the questions there you have in the guidelines, if they're religious or, or if they were not, if they were uptight about homosexuality or if they were pretty easy about things. So that's usually where we start.

OB: Okay, ah, well I was born November 14, 1930, and I was born in Rock Springs, Wyoming, and I never lived there. I only stayed there long enough to get out of the hospital. I guess. And ah I grew up mainly in Cape Girardeau, Missouri, on the Mississippi River, nobody had told me this way back when we were kids, and it didn't make sense to me, and it makes a lot of sense now. But I never did connect all these feelings in a way that ah, that I knew what gay life was.

EE: Did you connect it with the words queer and faggot?

OB: Ah, in that people who who prefer men to women were queers and faggots. The sex part didn't even enter into my mind at that point.

EE: Did your parents ever say don't do these things, or stay away from this park or that park?

OB: No, they came from a German family; it was never discussed. We never discussed sex. I never had the birds and the bees talk with my Dad, and ah, and those things were just never discussed. I guess the closest thing that I came to having any kind of rules or regulations along that line were the, the little section in the Scout Handbook that told you about about wet dreams, really. But, and I never felt any guilt about this. I was careful, growing up in the Midwest. I was careful to keep my thoughts to myself and not talk about my preferences. And, of course, in those days, ah, it was not fashionable to come out. even when I was grown, it was not fashionable to come out. So. So, I graduated from high school in 1949 and I went to college in town where I grew up, Cape Girardeau, at Southeast Missouri State College. I was there for a year and a half, and there was a gay scene there and I was just about to get involved with it, but there were other things in my life going on. I was a member of the Naval Reserve ah, Korea was going on, and our reserve unit was supposed to be called and I was letting my grades slip and I was kind of on the fence what to do. And I also knew that I was getting stronger and stronger urges to to become a lot more sexually active than I was. So I, and I knew I couldn't do it there, so I joined the regular Navy. And I went in on a four year hitch and ah, I still felt I was straight.

Then when I got out of the Navy, I was going to go back home, find a girl and get married and the picket fence and kids and all that sort of thing. Ah - I was stationed, after boot camp I was stationed in Hawaii, that's where I met Jim incidentally. But ah, ah, I left Hawaii to go back to San Diego for a six weeks school, personnel school. And I was in San Diego in off street areas looking for little quiet bars to ah, to meet a girl. And I happened into a gay bar called the Bluejacket's Club, and of course I immediately realized I was home, and this was my first
real indoctrination into the gay life.

EO: What do you mean?
MO: Well, I just felt very comfortable in this gay
bar. The men were very affectionate with each other,
having a great time, they did a lot of drinking, I did
a lot of drinking, and I just felt very comfortable
there, and I just knew that this must be home for me.
EO: Well, I'd like to, to back up a little bit. I
mean, you said you had sex in high school. Ah, let
questions: 1) Was it just with your peers or did you
have sex with adults out side of school?
OB: Okay, for the most part, it was my peers.
However, I worked in a drug store in a hotel and ah,
two different older men encouraged me to, after I got
off work, to go with them, and so I had a little sex
that way. I ah, one was quite a bit older and that
was not a very good situation for me. The other one
was fine for a while and then I got nervous about this
and -
EO: It was an ongoing thing?
OB: Yeah, it was more than once; it was three or
four times. And then I decided that maybe I was taken
- being taken advantage of, and I get very upset about
it. I wouldn't see the guy anymore.
EO: What did you (inaudible)

So I had not, the war was over about the time I
got to work, and so this happened the next year
probably. Yeah, with the older fellow.
EO: And this was, this was ah, did you see this as
being different than what you were doing with your,
with your high school friends?
OB: Yeah, yeah I did. I - it was not a good
thing for me. Not a good experience. I don't know
why - the guy was not all - as I look back at it, I
don't think he was all that pushy or whatever, but
it didn't work for me. It, it frightened me.
EO: With your high school friends did you, was it
sex in between you - did you ever talk about it or was
it made you scared; never, never talked about it? Was
it an ongoing thing, or was it just once in a while?
OB: Ah, actually I was very, I was the aggressive
one. I was, I was the seducer and did all the
seduction part, and it was whenever I had the chance,
whenever we spent the night somewhere. Ah, I was in
the band and when the band went somewhere and spent
the night where we'd be two or three in a room, or
something like that, I would get the conversation
around and we'd all get horny and, and jack each other
off and that sort of thing. Ah, on a number of
occasions, I would talk people to go, into going up to
the high school Lovers Lane sort of thing - we called
in Cape Rock; it was up on a high hill overlooking the
river. And ah, and I would I would get 'em involved
in mutual masturbation actually, but if they would
marry me, I would still masturbate them.
EO: Was it the same group of people that did, or
just, or was it -
OB: It was the kids I went to high school with.
EO: And you weren't worried (inaudible) found out or
was it a secret from everybody?
OB: No, because if they told, then they'd have to
admit they were part of it. So for the most part, I
felt pretty, pretty secure about - this was the only
time this ever happened is with them, you know. It
didn't happen with anybody else. But ah, ah, so I
didn't have - I did have some expression from these
same people that they didn't want to be around me
again, on occasion. But ah, by the same token, at the
same time I was going out with women and, or dating
the girls, and so there was not a lot of talk about my
being a faggot or a queer. Faggot was not used too
much; it was mainly queer is what was used then.
EO: And you knew what that that -
OB: Well, it just meant that I would have sex with
boys instead of girls.
EE: Were you having sex with the girls that you were going with?

OR: No (laughs). I tried once or twice and it didn't work out. It just didn't - either the girl didn't want to, or I couldn't, so.

EE: I understand. So when you graduated from high school, were you trying to get out of of town to see a wider world, or or what prompted you to go into that?

OR: Okay, after graduation from high school, I went to college there in town for a year and a half. And ah, as I said, this Korean thing was was looming and we had our, our naval reserve unit was activated, but was not called in yet.

EE: When did you join the naval reserve?

OR: In high school; I had been in the naval reserve maybe three years before I - instead of ROTC, I went into the naval reserve in high school.

EE: So as a way to get a better job and some training?

OR: Well, for me? No, it was to get out of town (laughs). I wanted to - I knew from the word git-go that I had to complete college. I wasn't ready to do it at that time, and to join the Navy and get away from my home, my people, to get on my own, ah, for four years. Then I did have to go back to go to college, and that comes later; I'll tell you about that later. But, but ah, yeah, I actually joined the Navy to, to stop all of this thing that was going on with college and my grades and my - my life in a small town and to get out on my own and find out what it was that I was looking for.

EE: So you were looking for something or did you -

OR: Well, I knew that there was something out there that I wanted, but I wasn't sure what it was.

EE: I mean, I hear a lot of men say that the Navy was a way, or the Army, armed forces was a way to -

OR: Yeah, it's also an easy way to cut the strings that tie you to the family.

EE: What were your relations like with your family.

OR: Family relations were good, ah, but they were, they were very, we didn't talk about feelings, we didn't talk about ah, love, we didn't talk about sex. Very strict German Protestant type, ah -

EE: Were they at all worried about you, that you were somehow odd or different?

OR: They never talked to me about it if they were. EE: Did ya, I mean, I know from my own family the non-verbals that go on, you know, sometimes they can -

EE: Did ya. I mean, I know from my own family -

OR: They never talked to me about it if they were.

EE: Very-verbals that go on, you know, sometimes they can -

EE: I mean, I know from my own family the non-verbals that go on, you know, sometimes they can -

OR: They never talked to me about it if they were.

EE: If you're not going to talk about sex, they can certainly get the message that whatever you're doing isn't right, without saying a word - just making things uncomfortable or, I mean, I don't know if you had any -

OR: I didn't have that feeling, no. Ah, I got the feeling of a lot of encouragement for whatever I wanted to do. Just to, this'll speed it ahead a little bit, ah, we -. As far as my relations with my family, when they retired and moved out to San Francisco, Dick and I had been living together ten years, maybe, by that time, five years by that time, ah, we had a one-bedroom apartment with one bed and they knew we both slept in that bed, but nobody ever asked anything or said anything. And ah, I decided if they asked me, I'll tell them, but I wasn't going to educate them if they didn't want to know. And that lasted 'til the day they died. Ah -

EE: Did they ever ask you if you're getting married, or if you're seeing any, any girl or?

OR: All, early on when I was quite younger they kept, they kept saying well you're going to met a girl next week, you're going to meet a girl next month. This, that and the other thing - get married and have kids, 'cause they wanted to be grandparents.

EE: Do you, do you have brothers and sisters?

OR: I have one sister.

EE: Is she older or young?

OR: She's younger and ah, she was married twice, and ah, no children. And, but, let me get back to my train of thought, or I'm going to lose it here. But with my folks, ah, they never did, ah, they never did ask or maybe they just didn't really want to know, but I'm sure they must have known, I mean, there's no way they couldn't have known. We did not hide it; we did not flaunt it. We did not have ah, our male magazines out where they might see them when they came over. We had them; we kept them put away is what I'm saying. On the other hand, they knew that we slept in one bed. I guess the closest thing that I can
remember a friend of mine, the fellow that introduced us as a matter of fact, his mother and my mother were together, and my mother was saying something to her, which she later, later relayed to him. Ah, that she wished that I would get married so she could have grandchildren. And ah, she said to my mother, Oh you'll never get married as long as they're together, meaning Dick and I. And Mom says I guess you're right, and that's as much as I know of it, they ah, they would acknowledge.

EE: How did they, how did they treat Dick?
OB: Very nicely, very nicely, just like another son, as a matter of fact. Ah, we had, we had, we're lucky that way. Both of our families had been that way. I'd been very well received by his family. His brothers and sisters all know we're gay. His dad and his mother have been told, but they don't, they don't acknowledge it. His dad, half the time, acknowledges. Once we were driving, we had just arrived back in Bath, New York, where Dick grew up, and his dad and mother picked us up at the airport, and ah, while his mother was still on her way to the car, his dad said well, we got two rooms ready for you when we get back to the house. And Dick says well you know we sleep together, don't you? And, ah, his dad was very

EE: How big was the town?
OB: Twenty-two thousand, but everybody knew me.

EE: Yeah, yeah. Well do you remember, I mean, especially some of the first times, kind of how you said it, what you said. 'Cause coming out seems to be a kind of contemporary term - I'm wondering if if - 'cause I don't know is those who were -
OB: No, what we would - we didn't say we're gay. What we said is you know, we are a couple, or you know we are partners in every sense.

EE: And was there any other, was there any confusion as to what you were saying?
OB: No, ah, some red faces, but no confusion. I think all of them wanted to ask what we did in bed. but they didn't dare (laughs)

EE: Yeah, they want to know but they don't at the same time. Yeah well, we left off, well let me think, you'd just graduated from high school, ah. You're in college and you're seeing this girl and what, what was that like and why did you want to be part of that?
OB: Ah, well, I was still trying to protect my image in the town. A lot of the gay life in the college was people that came from other towns, other small towns to this small school. But ah, I, I was beginning to learn about things like certain professors who were gay, who were queer, and ah, I also began to learn that one professor put on, what
I working in the hotel there was perfect for meeting 2 - otherwise, it was ah Greyhound bus station. You 3 could always run into somebody interesting at the tea 4 room in the Greyhound bus station, and that was about 5 it. Oh ah, baseball diamond at the fairgrounds, ah, 6 particularly after dark. If you walked through the 7 fairgrounds and stopped at the dugout there, you 8 usually met somebody. So there, there were certain 9 places, but I was only getting to barely know about 10 these things when I left town.

EE: Well, do you remember how you found out about 11 them?

OB: Mostly when I came back. When I came back from 12 on leave ah, i at that point had a little more 13 experience and I knew where to look. So, so that's, 14 that's where I found out about these things later.

EE: Well, in college with these gay professors, did 15 you, tell me, consider yourself?

OB: No. I didn't consider myself part of this tribe 16 for lack of a better term. Ah, and I, and it 17 frightened me a little bit because I didn't know what 18 it was.

EE: Were you frightened by your own feelings, I mean?

OB: No, because I. I, how do we say this? Ah, I 20 went through the boot camp period. They just disappeared. They were 21 there one day and gone the next. - you never knew.

Everybody suspected that they got caught and got 23 shipped out, but they didn't know what happened to 24 them.

EE: Were you worried about getting caught?

OB: Yeah, but of course, remember, this is second 26 nature to me. I grew up in the midwest where you 27 didn't act gay and if you were - or queer or 28 whatever -

EE: A flaming queer. I'm from Minnesota myself so I 30 know the midwest.

OB: Yeah. And so, you, mean you played the butch 32 game. So, it was not difficult to use that that 33 sort of thing. And having had three years of 34 experience in the reserve, naval reserve and having 35 had a couple of ah, two-week cruises under my belt, I 36 was already exposed to what it would be like in the 37 Navy and then on shipboard, which a lot of the people 38 in the boot camp hadn't, hadn't experienced yet. So, 39 so I had some knowledge, which I would gladly share

EE: And did anyone, were there. I mean, when you first got there did you notice anyone else who was -

OB: Yeah there were some, quite a few flaming queens 43 in my boot camp, and most or 'em ah, or a lot of 44 'em were kicked out before, before the end of the 45 boot camp period. They just disappeared. They were 46 there one day and gone the next. - you never knew.

Everybody suspected that they got caught and got 48 shipped out, but they didn't know what happened to 49 them.

EE: Were you worried about getting caught?

OB: Yeah, of course, remember, this is second 51 nature to me, I grew up in the midwest where you 52 didn't act gay and if you were - or queer or 53 whatever -

EE: A flaming queer. I'm from Minnesota myself so I 55 know the midwest.

OB: Yeah. And so, you, mean you played the butch 57 game. So, it was not difficult to use that that 58 sort of thing. And having had three years of 59 experience in the reserve, naval reserve and having 60 had a couple of ah, two-week cruises under my belt, I 61 was already exposed to what it would be like in the 62 Navy and then on shipboard, which a lot of the people 63 in the boot camp hadn't, hadn't experienced yet. So, 64 so I had some knowledge, which I would gladly share

Page 17
to bars, because we joined SIR and got involved in all
that.

EE: Well, I really do what to talk about your Dick
and SIR, but I want to finish up on (inaudible) before
we go a little more about that. What, what did you do
in the - what was your job there?

OB: Okay, I was, I was stationed with ah CicsPac
Fleet, Commander in Chief Pacific Fleet, and ah I
started out in the flag office, the captain, the
admiral's office as a yeoman. Why they put me there
I'll never know, 'cause I didn't know how to type. I
gone through school as a pre college type, pre
engineering actually, I was going to go into chemical
engineering, and ah ah, so I never took any business
courses at all. So they put me in, in a a ah
typing pool ah office, where I had to teach myself to
type first before I could do, do my thing. And ah
ah, and I did, I taught myself to type ah, with one
of these self help manuals that you learn from. So I
was in the flag office until, ah, they wanted, wanted
me to transfer in to the personnel office and I, and
they said they'd send me back to the, to the States
for a 6-weeks school, personnel school, and that was
great, I thought, because I could get back and I could
really find out what gay life was about, 'cause I'd
heard about San Diego and the gay bars there. But on,
by the same token, I was still thinking that I was
straight and I would probably marry a girl, and I
probably should be sleeping with one now and then.
And ah ah, so that actually when I got back to San
Diego, the first week or two I was spending my
evenings trying to find a little out of the way bar
where girls were that I could get to know. And that's
where I found my first gay bar actually. So I knew
there were gay bars, but I didn't know where they
were, but I had found one.

EE: Now this was during the training period?

OB: This was during the school, this personnel
school thing. And, some 6-foot corpsman at that bar
decided we should go back to the YMCA which was a
block and a half away where he had a room, and spend
the night. And we went back and he carried me over
the threshold and then is when I decided that I didn't
want women after all. From then on I knew I was going
to be gay, for ever and ever (laughs) and forget it
so, and that really was the pivotal point in my
thinking because at that point I realized that now I
have to. I have to make my life different than I had
planned. I won't go back to Missouri and finish
school and become a chemical engineer. The steps

Page 24
by the same token, I had to finish my tour of
and not very well, as a 7 'em keep your mouth shut; don't sign anything, no
this war, I mean, to me that just seems real
all
what was going
and I knew that wasn't going to happen.
from then on I, I set my

my friends were straight friends and I knew that there
were all these other people there. And they were
interrelating and I'd shipped a couple of them off - I
was the personnel man, and when they got caught doing

I didn't know it before, but I did know it after I

I would go from CicPac to an attach job, then back to
CicPac to an attach job, and I'd
never go out of the, out of the hierarchy of the, the
Navy. But I said no way. If I got through four
years, honey, I'm going to get out on the street and
I'm going to play. I kept my, kept my emotions under
control for a while until I - and not very well, as a
matter of fact, but I did. 'Cause I took a lot of
chances.

OB: Threats, yeah yeah, a threat really because I
couldn't understand them, and I couldn't understand
what they could see in each other and, but now I kind
of recognize well I guess if I can see all this thrill
I had with this guy, which is the first time I felt
anything like attraction like that, before in high
school and so forth, it was just another conquest or
it was something to do, but it was not really sex, you
know what I mean?

EE: I think, I mean, it kind of gets back to
leaving town and trying to find what you're looking
for and know what it is. It seems like this is (both
speak at once).

EE: So what, you took a 6-week training period, then
you got back into the, and then you said you started
looking for other gay people in your barracks.
OB: Yeah, and started relating with them and
figuring out what we were and who we were and so forth
and so on.

EE: Well, could you tell me a little bit of how, how
that works because you knew they were there before but
you didn't, you didn't really hang around with them
all the time?

OB: No, I didn't, and most of the friends I had I
had made before I came out to myself, and so most of
my friends were straight friends and I knew that there
were all these other people there. And they were
interrelating and I'd shipped a couple of them off - I
was the personnel man, and when they got caught doing

EE: I think, I mean, it kind of gets back to
leaving town and trying to find what you're looking
for and know what it is. It seems like this is (both
speak at once).

EE: Well, that must be kind of scary, I mean, kind of
gross, just ah, I mean if you're reading these
confessions. I mean, did you place yourself, like
this could be me.

OB: This could be me, yeah.

EE: Did you, I mean, also at the same time reading
those confessions, did you learn anything about, like
gay world or wherever you went?

OB: No, because those people are so afraid, they
just, they don't want to tell, to say much. All they
said was things like this person approached in so and
so park, and, or came up to the car when I was parked
across the street from the barracks and asked me to
roll down the window and when he was talking, put his
hand on my leg, and blah blah blah blah blah blah.
And then it went from there, and then we got caught,
you know. So didn’t relate any feelings. This was,
let’s see, the facts.
EE: Well, did you, I mean, did you learn about the
parks then or or, about where people, where people met
or did you see any patterns coming up out of these
things.
OB: Not from those confessions, but I, I was
learning this as I just went along. For instance, the
base there - although I was stationed on the sub-base;
it’s quite a big base, and all along the piers there
are the tea rooms or actually for the workers during
the day, that work on the docks. But those were
filled to over brimming with sailors at night. I
mean, they were in and out and in and out and in and
out, and ah, all you had to do is be attentive at one
of the stalls for very long and pretty soon there was
a tryst right there. And, and I learned these things
just by happenstance. There wasn’t any confession or
anything. These are the things you, you start
learning right away you realize hey I’m gay, and I
want to do these things. I want to suck cock, you
something new for me to realize. I mean, did the
people who weren’t engaged in the sexual activity,
like the straight people, I don’t know if you had a
name for them then, but what did they think of all
this? Did they just ignore it or did they not notice
it or - ?
OB: Oh, they would have to go out of their way to
notice it because who would bother to go into a dark
john on the dock when their barracks was across the
street. And they got, they got a john over there in
their barracks. It’s all light and nice and, home
(laughs).
EE: Well, was there a lot of talk about, you know,
kidding about fags or being -
OB: Oh, that, yeah, there’s always, but ah, but the
people that talked never knew what was going on, and
you had to be, you had to be gay to know what was
going on, because ah, or you had to fall into it as a
straight person. If a straight person walked in to a
john or a person walked into a john and didn’t start
looking around and so forth, you immediately zipped up
and paraded out because you knew there was a straight
person there. It was not a gay person coming to
a cruise.
EE: Did you use the term straight?
GLHS OHP 94-31, Uncles Project

OTTO BREMERMAN

1 (inaudible) they were going after his ass (laughs).
2 EE: Yeah, then things had changed suddenly. Well, what were your political feelings during this time?
3 Or were you -
4 OB: I really, I was not politically ah ah, other than the fact that I considered myself a Republican at the time of all things, because I was going into business. I decided that instead of engineering, I would go into business. And my family were Republican, so I decided the Republicans. But ah, ah, and at that point, I don't think the Democrats were quote liberal unquote.
5 EE: Well, I mean, about, did you have any qualms about if America should have been in that war or anything like that?
6 OB: No, no. I figured if the government says we're supposed to be there, we're supposed to be there. We didn't question the government until Vietnam.
7 EE: Yeah, I was just wondering about that, I mean, and also about how you felt about communism.
8 OB: Communism, we were, we were all taught to, to fear communism. That's all I felt about communism. Matter of fact, in theory, I thought it might work, you know, it'd be great if we could get everybody to divvy up all the stuff and everybody'd be equal. But Page 33

Page 33 bridges were burned.

Page 34

1 small, er, large cosmopolitan places that you can do that sort of thing.
2 EE: And so, when ah, you left, maybe you asked to leave, you asked to leave early, you said, or asked to be shipped to the States?
3 OB: No, no no. I asked to be shipped back to the States, because I'd been three and a half years, almost three and a half year on Pearl Harbor, ah, on Hawaii. And I wanted to get back and get things started for my going to school and so forth and so on.
4 EE: Was the war won by then too?
5 OB: It was, it was winding down, very closely. During the Operation Big Switch, I went on temporary duty ah, and went to Yokahama, Ikuska, Ikuska, Japan, and ah, did an evaluation of the Navy's part of the war. Ah, and this was before I left, had left Pearl Harbor - came back to - the last I spent in San Diego at the fleet gunnery school and ah, so it was the end of the war. The war was over by that time, 'cause the Operation Big Switch was the trading of prisoners between Korea and the U.S. and so forth. And ah, all that evaluation stuff was conclusive as
GLHS OHP 94-31, Uncles Project

GLBT Historical Society

Page 37

Page 38

Page 39

Page 40

8/12/94

1 of, at the end of the war essentially. Then, then I
2 was shipped back to San Diego and I spent six months
3 there and got out, I guess out in November. I got out
4 a few months earlier than my discharge because they
5 were letting everybody out at that time. My regular
6 I joined say in January and I got out in November, so
7 I, it's only ah two months, I guess, short of four
8 years. And ah, I had enrolled in Berkeley while I was
9 at the gunnery school. I'd, I'd done all the footwork
10 I needed to do, to ah, to change my life from the
11 Midwest to the West (laughs). And I was to start at
12 the spring quarter, so I went back to Missouri and, as
13 a matter of fact, I went back to work at the, at the
14 hotel where I, in the pharmacy, in the drug store at
15 the hotel where I worked before I went in the Navy.
16 over the Christmas holidays to help out. And also to
17 earn a little money, a little more money for my, for
18 my school trip. And I packed up four suitcases and
19 typewriter, and that was my whole life, put it on a
20 train and came back to Berkeley to go to school. The
21 train, because my dad worked at railroad and sent me a
22 pass, had done a number of trips by train and ah, when
23 I was stateside.
24 EE: Yeah, which railroad?
25 OB: He worked for Union Station in St Louis. He
26

1 EE: One of friends, his dad worked at Southern
2 Pacific, I guess. He got into World War II, and he
3 was, you know, he'd travel everywhere, because his dad
4 had these passes.
5 OB: I even got, I even got ah ah Pullman
6 accommodations, deals like that. I don't know if Dad
7 had to pay extra for those, ah, how it worked but, but
8 he would send me passes. My dad retired from the
9 railroad. My - they moved out here then after I tried
10 to get away from all that (laughs). And they lived
11 out here when he died. They ah, they were here for
12 quite a long time, so they knew, there was no question
13 in their mind, you know, of our relationship, my
14 lover's relationship and mine. But it was never, it
15 was never brought to conversation.
16 EE: Well, didn't San Francisco itself have a kind of
17 aura of, of strange or exotic, I mean especially and
18 if you come from Missouri, I would wonder -
19 OB: For Me?
20 EE: For you and for them.
21 OB: For them? The strangest thing that ever
22 happened with them was when we went to a restaurant
23 and black people sat down next to us, and my dad
24

1 EE: Yeah, I mean black men, it's one of those
2 white thing. I do have a problem, but that wasn't it.
3 My problem was, was black ah, men and white women, as
4 a couple. That bothered me. But black and white guys
5 doesn't bother me. And I've I've been with black men
6 and that doesn't bother me.
7 EE: Yeah, I mean black men, it's one of those
8 things, almost have a larger stereotype (inaudible)
9 to inspire fear and kind of kept going, even to this
ten (inaudible) Huntsville, Alabama, got burned out
11 because of that -
12 OB: But my folks never got - course they were never
13 - they were exposed to - all my friends were gay and
14 whenever I had, had my friends over, I had my parents
15 over. And they were exposed to Jim and Jack and Bob
16 and all these other people that ran in and out of my
17 life and Dick's life. And ah, they got along famously
18 with them' they didn't have a problem. They, once in
19 a while would (inaudible) some of the women I had
20 around because they were pretty - they were
21 (inaudible) but, but ah for the most part, no,
22 they didn't have a problem with adjustment, and I
23 didn't at all.
24 EE: Well, I think that also that I, I mean, just as
25 you're getting out of the Navy and moving to Berkeley
1 to go to school, during the civil rights, is coming
2 up, isn't it?
3 OB: Yeah, the first freedom march we went on was not
4 the gay march, it was the black freedom march.
5 EE: You were involved in that?
6 OB: Yeah, Dick and I marched in that in San
7 Francisco. The one, the big big big one, we marched
8 in. And the first freedom march I, I - it was very
9 interesting, I remember Dick was not with me; I don't
10 know why, but ah, first gay parade I was in, I wore a
11 big floppy picture hat, a felt picture hat, with big
12 grand plume out of it, and dark glasses, and I was
13 stridently joining the parade and I would slip out and
14 I run around to a street parallel and then I'd get
15 back in the parade and go for a couple blocks, and
16 then I'd run out. I don't know what I was thinking
17 about, but I wanted to be in it, but I didn't want to
18 be seen; that was it. I guess that was it. And I
19 don't know why Dick wasn't there. And it's just, I
20 can't remember, I've tried and tried and scratched my
21 head to remember what that was all about and I
22 couldn't remember that.
23 EE: Hmm, that's horrible. I mean, the other march
24 you were talking about, the great great big freedom
25 march; I don't know anything about that; that was -

1 you're going into business now, you're pretty much
2 (inaudible) with yourself but (inaudible) kept up with
3 your friends in the Navy. They moved to San Francisco
4 also.
5 OB: Ah, alright, some did. And I did not keep up
6 with those that, I didn't, I didn't continue a
7 correspondence with people I hadn't ah, that didn't
8 happen to come out to go to school in Berkeley. And,
9 except with Jim. Jim didn't come out here to go to
10 school in Berkeley. He went back to Chicago where he
11 lived; and I did keep up with him in that whenever I
12 went back to Missouri to visit my folks, I would get
13 a pass and go up to Chicago and spend a day or two
14 with Jim. And then, one year he came out here for
15 vacation and stayed with me and decided he wanted to
16 be out here too, and ah, then he packed up, said I
17 would come back to my house, and he spent the first
18 month or two 'til he got, got set up at my, at my
19 apartment. And ah, then he got a job and then he got
20 his own apartment ah, went on from there. And then we
21 ah, essentially, we knew each other, but we were not
22 in the same circles for a long long time, while he was
23 going to school and doing this and that to get into
24 his teaching profession, until suddenly he bought the
25 house across the street from us, not knowing that we

1 CB: That was, it was ah, it was when everybody
2 across the country marched with black people.
3 EE: This was 1954?
4 OB: Yes it was, '54 it was very early... No it was
5 later than that, had to be later than that. Ah, it
6 was in the '60s, had to been early '60s.
7 EE: I suppose '63 was, I think, the March on
8 Washington. Martin Luther King March on Washington.
9 OB: Yeah, might have been '62 or 3.
10 EE: And did you, did you at this time or earlier -
11 OB: Relate gay to black?
12 EE: Yeah.
13 OB: Not really, not really. Ah a lot of the, the
14 so-called politicos, the, the gay politicians were
15 trying to do this, trying to make a connection. But
16 most of us in the rank and file didn't really feel the
17 connection. We felt that black people were more
18 oppressed 'cause they were so easily ah, visible. And
19 so ah, we didn't make the connection, ah even though
20 they tried to portray that. And I, I suspect black
21 people finally decided that it wasn't working either,
22 you know, that we weren't, that that was not a selling
23 point for them either.
24 EE: Yeah. Well, to get back to ah, you were in the
25 Navy and (inaudible). You changed your whole life,
I was taking extra credits every semester, to get it all done in the shortest period of time. And ah, my roommate at Oxford Hall was a straight man who was an accounting major and I found in the paper, an advertisement for a job for two students for a part-time night work, and what it turned out to be was a funeral parlor where there had to be two students, 'cause one of us had to answer the phone every night. So one of us had to be there every night, so my roommate and I moved out of Oxford Hall and moved into the funeral parlor and did that job (inaudible). So ah, I had a couple years with a straight man; now he knew I was gay; I told him I was gay. And ah, ah, we had sex a couple of times, as a matter of fact, but again, I was the aggressor in that.

EE: Oh. When, when you were living in Oxford Hall, were you going to San Francisco and being wild in the streets or what was your -

OB: Yeah, on weekends, yeah, I'd take the F. That's when they had the train running on the lower deck of the bridge. They had electric trains.

EE: Oh yeah, just sort of, I mean, I know I took the J car over here but I never heard of an F car so -

OB: No, an F Train.

perhaps why I didn't do a lot of barring, bar stuff when I was first over in San Francisco. I stayed away from the bars because the police raided the bars periodically quite often. And if ah you happened to be wearing perfume or if you happened to be the nelly type, you would be hauled away to jail and your name and occupation would appear in the newspaper the next day. And so, I stayed pretty much away from gay bars.

EE: Was there any danger of being beaten up or -

OB: Yeah, if you, if you made any kind of remark or lifted your eyebrow in the wrong way (laughs). So by the police.

EE: Okay, I'm thinking (inaudible) of sailors outside the bars - this is more lesbian bars but I don't know if it's true of gay bars too.

OB: No, as a matter of fact ah, I was. I was pretty much a trade queen and I was picking up sailors and, I'd been, I got hit on the head once, ah, in what, two or three years I was doing this. I got hit on the head once. Other than that, ah, a couple of Marines turned me in because they were afraid, each of the other, would turn themselves in if they didn't. And so I got into some trouble there and spent the night in jail. But ah, ah other than that - there was less worry about gay bashing in those days than we have today. There's a lot more worry about getting ah, bashed by Chicano hoods today than, than we had.

EE: Do you think that's because more people know about gay people now, or is there -

OB: I don't know. I've never given it much consideration other than the fact that, that now it seems to me that there should be less of hate crime, and all that sort of thing.

EE: Yeah. Well, as you mentioned earlier and also just now about being a trade queen, what do you, what does that mean?

OB: Ah, that means I prefer to pick up straight men. Or as straight as they they came, I picked up whoever I could pick up. But hopefully it would be straight. Ah, I think it, I think it was because there would be no ah, emotional commitment.

EE: Yes -- so were you constantly avoiding it for the emotional side of it?

OB: I - perhaps, perhaps I was. I'm not, I can't get into, I don't know that. You know. I haven't done that kind of analysis on myself, so I don't really know. Probably that you're right and, good guess anyway,

EE: But also, I mean, what did, what did gay men, well -
Bar, but they used to kid me that I could be watching television, get back, go downstairs, pick up a trick, get back to my room, and see the end of a show, and only miss a commercial. And that was about it, because most of the sailors or soldiers or marines would stop in the little arcades there on Market Street they're just a pal--and, and you could, you could stop one of 'em and start chatting and Oh, I got some beer; come on up. And then from then you decided whether or not this one's going to work out. If it wasn't, then you'd say Oh I've got some place I got to go; I'll see you out, and take them to the street.

EE: What determined if they were going to work or not? I mean, just--
OB: Well, usually, usually they had an idea that once you got 'em upstairs that something was going to happen.
EE: Well, that's interesting; I never, I never--
OB: You never met a trade queen in your coverage, your--
EE: Well, I guess I have; I guess the terms are different now. (Inaudible) I guess I got too caught up in the difference between straight and gay and that, you know.
OB: Well, we also, we also had the, we also had the saying that Today's trade is next week's competition, so, so I don't know. You know, you think they're straight today, but they may not be; they may be just what I was back in Cape Girardeau, on the edge and perhaps coming out later.
EE: Well, anyway, this is getting us a little bit past Berkeley. Ah, while you were going to school, you didn't have any place to go until you moved into the funeral parlor. Did you just come to The City and, and have sex in little places here, or did you go home with people, or did you not do anything...
OB: Ah, ah, when I was in Berkeley, ah, when I got out generally on weekends, I would come to The City and go home with somebody.
EE: And that was different then--
OB: Than when I moved to The City, and then I had my own place. Then I was strictly working the street.
EE: Okay so, I mean that, yeah, I can see that because you know what's going on. You made a choice to--Okay. So, life in a funeral parlor, that always kind of unusual; was that a strange thing for you?
OB: Well, it was in the beginning unless you knew, got involved in it. What we got out of this, we got a room, bedroom, we had a kitchen and bathroom, and a daily paper. And ah, all we had to do is answer the phone at night. We didn't do anything except answer the phone, and then they had a case, we would answer the door. We dressed in a suit and answered the door, because in Berkeley they kept the door locked; you rang the bell. When you came to see a dead person laid out, you rang the bell, and we'd come out of the office and answer the door. If there were a lot of people coming, you just stood at the door and let them in. And that was all we had to do; we didn't have to do any of the other work. But our apartment was behind the selection room. The selection room is the room that has all the empty caskets that people choose which one Uncle Joe will be
buried in. And so ah, you went through this room with all the empty caskets, and went through a curtain and that was our apartment back there. And I had some straight friends (inaudible) or not straight friends; Navy friends, he was gay, come in to visit one time. And my roommate who was straight, answered the door, and the Navy friend was being very rilly about.

about being in a funeral parlor and what not. Well, all, my straight friend decided he didn’t really (inaudible) - he wasn’t going to turn the lights on as they went through the selection room to get back to our apartment. So here this guy out of the sun and into this dark room with all of these open caskets feeling his way back to our apartment (laughs). My straight roommate was going (knock knock) is that you coffin? (knock knock). And ah - No, that worked out very nicely. We had a good relationship; we stayed in touch, this straight guy roommate, and I by one call a year. He married, he didn’t have any kids. He since has died; he died of some, some problem he had, but, but we were - We were very comfortable, him knowing I was gay, I knowing he was straight, and we didn’t have a conflict with that - he liked to get his dick sucked once in a while so.

1 once in a while so.
2 EE: Some men do. So, ah, at Berkeley during this time, ah (inaudible) was Berkeley like really political then? I mean, was there protests or ah -
3 OB: Yes, ah, free speech, free speech. Time. That was actually a little after my, my time. I guess, I guess when I was actually in school was the lethargic time, there was not much going on politically. But it was the beginning of the free speech and ah, what was his name. This is what Dick was referring to - I draw a blank when I think of names but there - Mario Savio, Mario Savio and the singer Joan Baez. She was there, she was on campus, she was doing singing, singing some songs. Ah, Mario Savio was the leader of the Free Speech Movement. And this is before the big battle over - I was out of school then - they had the big battle and they called the troops in. They called out the National Guard, they had riots over there. They called out the National Guard and the whole bit; they had 'em lined up over there at Berkeley.

EE: This is later on in the '60s.

OB: Yeah, that was later in the '60s. That was, that was Vietnam, yeah, that was Vietnam. But Mario Savio was before that; he was, he was in the Free Speech Movement. And what that was all about I can’t really tell; I was not really into it.

EE: Well, the years you were at Berkeley, '54 to '58.

OB: Not '58, I moved here in '56. I don't think I even put that down here. Ah, I moved to San Francisco in '56. Berkeley, February '55 through September '56.

EE: Oh, just a short time there, okay.

OB: I did the best I could to get out of there; all I needed was to finish up, get a degree and that, that satisfied my family.

EE: Well, I was just thinking that ah, with this sort of thing, you know, free speech had something to do with McCarthyism, but McCarthy was already, kind of like, gone by then - Julius and Ethel Rosenberg -

OB: Anyway. I moved, yeah, I moved to San Francisco in '56; I met Dick in '58.

EE: Okay, so, during this time, ah, well I guess, I didn't realize, I didn't realize (inaudible) more like shorter version, four years, 'cause you'd already had - Ah, I'm just trying to, you know, the idea of the whole larger issue, large political issues influenced you and how it hurt your being gay.

OB: Oh, nothing, zilch, zero. Ah, in those days, you only told very close people that you were gay and only then if they were also gay. And, and generally you could tell; you knew who was gay and who wasn't, more so then than today. Today a lot of people act gay and they're not gay at all.

EE: Well, I know. I mean, coming from the Midwest I know that. It's like it's very hard to tell, you know, who's who's where here. It's very different, very different.

OB: But ah, in those days, everybody was straight unless they told you they were gay.

EE: Yeah, well - I'm trying to think of - well, I can't unless I get 'em. Let's see, you got your degree and, and then you left Berkeley and you came over to San Francisco?

OB: Yeah, I ah, I got a job with an insurance company and ah, so I moved to San Francisco. Then I had two years doing the Market Street scene and working my job. And then this, when I was introduced to Dick.

EE: I just had a - what I was going to think of before - during this time, I mean, along with like civil rights coming up (inaudible), were you aware that that you were being discriminated against or shit on because you were gay? Did you realize that that
They called me up and said we're coming over to take 2 showers. So they did that - they came over and 3 showered at my apartment. And ah, ah, introduced me 4 to Dick. He went to his meeting, and while he was at 5 his meeting, ah, Jack and Bob says why don't you come 6 with us, spend the rest of the 4th of July weekend, 7 we're camping out and such and such. So I dug around 8 and found my sleeping bag and what not, and went off 9 to the beach with them. Of course, I said, well, new 10 blood here. So I proceeded to put the make on Dick, 11 but he wasn't making that day, and so ah, that whetted 12 my appetite I guess. So then the next weekend, I put 13 a bottle of scotch under my arm, and I got on the F 14 Train and I went to Berkeley where he lived. Well, 15 I'd called and talked to him a couple times during the 16 week. And so we started courting back and forth, a 17 weekend in Berkeley, a weekend in San Francisco. And 18 ah, then a month later, in August, August 4th 19 actually, we ah ah decided to throw in our lots 20 together. And he said, okay, but you're going to have 21 to move because too many sailors come by that 22 apartment. And so he moved over with me to that 23 apartment, and 24 then we moved out to a new apartment. And that's 25 probably the first time I felt the tough part of, of discrimination against gays. Even in San Francisco, 26 we had a hard time finding a place that would rent to 27 two men. I could've rented, or he could've rented, 28 but they didn't want to rent to two men. 29 EE: Was that because of the (inaudible) or was there 30 some other reason? 31 OB: I think it was because of ah they thought we 32 were gay and they didn't want two men. So we finally 33 got hold of a Realtor who was gay, and he got us a 34 place, with gay people. And we said alright if we 35 ever get into business, we're going to just rent to 36 gays. Fuck them. 37 EE: Ah, when you said you just had to throw in your 38 lot, you know, with Dick, what does that mean, 39 especially - 40 OB: We didn't, we didn't think of it as a long term 41 arrangement, necessarily. We didn't think of it as a 42 quote unquote Marriage. We thought of it, ah, as 43 just living together for convenience purposes 44 because we were, currently we were spending one 45 weekend in Berkeley, one weekend here, and we were 46 spending money in both places for housing. We could 47 live in one place half as cheap and, and ah, we had an 48 ah, ah emotional attachment certainly, but we didn't 49 think of it as a marriage sort of thing. Did you want
We don't try to emulate heterosexual marriages as such. But certainly we are, we've outlasted most everybody else we know that have had heterosexual marriages.

EE: Yeah. That ah, that is interesting (pause - inaudible) myself here now. One thing I wanted to ask about, prior to this, was about. Did you know other gay men who were in couples, and and -

OB: Well Jack and Bob were a couple as long as we've known. Ah, and Jim has been but that happened after Dick and I. Ah, he's been coupled two or three times, three times. Ah, so we've known others. Now, we've just - trying this - matter of fact San Francisco Couples; we haven't become very active with them, but we thought we would try and see what if we could expand our social circle a little bit. Ah, but ah, ah, as far as ah couples, most of the people in this neighborhood that we know are couples. The fellows next door have lived there ten or fifteen years, are couples or a couple, and, two doors down from them, another group a couple, and ah. We haven't lived in like Castro. Dick would like to live in the Castro; I, I wouldn't care for it, ah. I look at the Castro as a ghetto rather than a neighbor - well, the neighborhood that I want to be in is one where there too well. And we didn't try that again for a while.

And then we decided that, or at least I thought we had decided that it was going to be monogamous, and I later found out that maybe Dick didn't feel that way or think that way and then ah, then we almost had a split. And then we decided yes, it should be monogamous because by this time AIDS had reared its ugly head and we didn't want to be involved in, in that in our relationship. And so, it's been monogamous for the last number of years. But ah, it's been on and off.

EE: Was that was that (inaudible) early on when it first came up, was that, was that something like, you know, look at and then decide?

OB: No, no, as a matter of fact, that probably should have been talked about more than it was because we sort of felt our way along on that - would this be alright to do or not. And ah, and it, I don't know, we didn't talk about it a lot; we just did it.

EE: You know, that's what I'm trying to find out, so the very big question is like How do you, how do you decide what what, you know, when it comes down to, you don't want to place limits on it but when it comes down to what what you actually do, what are, what is going on here? Where do you look for for answers for that? Is this what you decided?

OB: Yeah, yeah. We don't, we've always felt like we should make up our own (inaudible); we don't have to do what everybody else is doing. Ah, where our problem, if there were a problem, it would be because we didn't understand what (inaudible) left for us. And come to a meeting of the minds that way. What other people did or didn't do was not a, was not a guide for us.

EE: Well, was it, was it monogamous?

OB: Off and on. Well ah, we started out pretty much monogamous, and then we decided that we would ah ah, well we brought home a third party from a , from a Tavern Guild picnic once. And that didn't work out too well. And we didn't try that again for a while.

Page 61

Page 62
We each have our own, our own checking account, our own savings account, but all the big money is in one pot and we just figure we're taking out of the pot. It's not really. We each have our own, your names. So, when you do this sort of thing, pretty soon you find out that that all the big stuff is in both your names. Then we got involved with a lawyer and set up a trust which shows some legal problems with parents, with families. Ah, I want, when I die, everything to go to him, but I might have a cousin or two, or maybe my sister might come up and say, oh but I, I'm next of kin. And so we've set up trusts to, to carry on, so even if you're gone, he steps in as trustee and so forth and so on. And there's no will to contest them; there's nothing to contest.

EE: I know my friends ah, they've been together since the '50s also and they're trying to decide how to handle inheritance tax. Now they're trying to figure out a way around that, you know. They have been very successful. To get away from wills, because we had the kind of commitment that you're going to stick around for a while anyways. When you do this sort of thing, pretty soon you find out that that all the big stuff is in both your names. Then we got involved with a lawyer and set up a trust which shows some legal problems with parents, with families. Ah, I want, when I die, everything to go to him, but I might have a cousin or two, or maybe my sister might come up and say, oh but I, I'm next of kin. And so we've set up trusts to, to carry on, so even if you're gone, he steps in as trustee and so forth and so on. And there's no will to contest them; there's nothing to contest.

EE: I know my friends ah, they've been together since the '50s also and they're trying to decide how to handle inheritance tax. Now they're trying to figure out a way around that, you know. They have been very successful. To get away from wills, because we had the kind of commitment that you're going to stick around for a while anyways. When you do this sort of thing, pretty soon you find out that that all the big stuff is in both your names. Then we got involved with a lawyer and set up a trust which shows some legal problems with parents, with families. Ah, I want, when I die, everything to go to him, but I might have a cousin or two, or maybe my sister might come up and say, oh but I, I'm next of kin. And so we've set up trusts to, to carry on, so even if you're gone, he steps in as trustee and so forth and so on. And there's no will to contest them; there's nothing to contest.

EE: I know my friends ah, they've been together since the '50s also and they're trying to decide how to handle inheritance tax. Now they're trying to figure out a way around that, you know. They have been very successful. To get away from wills, because we had the kind of commitment that you're going to stick around for a while anyways. When you do this sort of thing, pretty soon you find out that that all the big stuff is in both your names. Then we got involved with a lawyer and set up a trust which shows some legal problems with parents, with families. Ah, I want, when I die, everything to go to him, but I might have a cousin or two, or maybe my sister might come up and say, oh but I, I'm next of kin. And so we've set up trusts to, to carry on, so even if you're gone, he steps in as trustee and so forth and so on. And there's no will to contest them; there's nothing to contest.

EE: I know my friends ah, they've been together since the '50s also and they're trying to decide how to handle inheritance tax. Now they're trying to figure out a way around that, you know. They have been very successful. To get away from wills, because we had the kind of commitment that you're going to stick around for a while anyways. When you do this sort of thing, pretty soon you find out that that all the big stuff is in both your names. Then we got involved with a lawyer and set up a trust which shows some legal problems with parents, with families. Ah, I want, when I die, everything to go to him, but I might have a cousin or two, or maybe my sister might come up and say, oh but I, I'm next of kin. And so we've set up trusts to, to carry on, so even if you're gone, he steps in as trustee and so forth and so on. And there's no will to contest them; there's nothing to contest.
I was 12 and so I did that for three years, as a matter of fact. 8/12/94

EE: North Beach and Polk Street. 25 Octavia where there, it's now been replaced by some gay bars. 24 called the, the ah Opera Club, which was over on Castro district. This was back in the days when there were these bars around town - gay bars. 22 And we weren't going to bars there. We were going to ah - Bill Plath had a bar while and people could like go out in buses to drag - 21 Ah, the cops came down on the Castro pretty heavily. 20 That was the night that, that the police let us for a Irish neighborhood.

OB: This was before Castro, before they had the and people could like go out in buses to drag - 21 Ah, the cops came down on the Castro pretty heavily. 20 That was the night that, that the police let us for a Irish neighborhood.

EE: To back up just a bit, I mean, ah, before this time you say that you just, you know, Jim and Jack and Bob and a few other people, were you, were you accepted readily as a couple. Was there any problem among other gay people with that? Did people say, well you should, you know, be single or what are you doing? 14

OB: No, that was perfectly acceptable. Yeah. And, as a matter of fact, a number of our straight friends began to recognize us as a couple, although we didn't come out as such. But if, if I were invited by one of my, my straight friends to a dinner or something, they always invited Dick. And when we reciprocated, I invited so and so and his wife and Dick would have to be there, you know. So, so ah, so we didn't ah, come out until Dick did right before he retired, maybe a year or two before he retired, he came out at work, to the people he worked with. But I never did formally guarantee that if the contractor doesn't do it, he doesn't have the money, the capacity, the experience to do it, the sure company, the bonding company will come in and pay to get it done by somebody else. So that was my job. And ah, and that's a very very rigid, again very rigid conservative type ah situation that I was in. In fact, for a number of years, you couldn't wear a colored shirt; you had to wear a white shirt. I didn't get my ear pierced until I retired. And then I said I won't go back because I'll get my ear pierced and they won't let me back and that's when I got my ear pierced. But during this time while I was moving up the ladder and my company's an - I was also doing drag in my - or drag, not in entertainment, but drag on Halloween functions, 'cause these were in the days when all the people would rent buses and get on the bus in drag and you'd go from bar to bar to bar on Halloween night. And I don't know if you, I doubt you just know about those things.

EE: A little bit about the importance of Halloween. That was the night that, that the police let us for a while and people could like go out in buses to drag. 22

OB: This was before Castro, before they had the Castro district. This was back in the days when there were these bars around town - gay bars. 25

EE: North Beach and Polk Street.
kind of housing unit over there, lower income housing units. But we hung out there because we had met him through SIR. He was involved in SIR and ah, then he closed that when they started building the - tearing down the Western Addition, and he opened up at the Orpheum Circus which was next to the Orpheum Theater downtown, right on Market Street. And we went there; we would go there for dinner, we would stay until they closed. During the time when Hongisto was running for sheriff.

EE: What year would that be?

OB: He was, I should be able to tell you that, maybe I won't. I should be able to tell you. I know, I know we backed him when we bought Potrero, and we bought Potrero, that's when we sold it. When did we buy it? We bought Potrero in '71 and we had a big sign for Hongisto on that building, so it would have been '71 or '72, ah. He ran, that was the first - I bet it was '73 and the reason I say that is that was the first time ah, that that Diane Feinstein ran for mayor and she ran against, against Alioto and lost. She lost in the last two weeks when she came out against pornography. She would have won it, she would have kept the gay vote, except in two weeks before, she came the big thing about get all these, close down department. They're only six or eight in town of bond department. I had one of only six or eight jobs of that nature, and so it's - it was a - So I was in drag all the time (laughs). Straight drag, I was, I was pretending to be straight all the time.

EE: I was going to say, were there any questions at work about your wife is or ?

OB: No no. No, they never knew that I was, that I was doing Halloween drags at Halloween time. Also, we went to private parties at New Years Eve and usually your, during that period of time, 3 or 4 years, I was in drag. After that, I lost my figure, I always say. My chin dropped (laughs). So but ah, there was about three years where I really did some flaming stuff with drag and that sort of thing. But again, this was not ah, something I needed to do, it was like being a drag queen. This was something I enjoyed doing at that time and I wouldn't do it today; it's too much work.

But you, know, but I - so it, it has nothing to do with psychological or all that bullshit. It was just a lot of fun to do at that point in my life. And I, and I had a ball doing it. I don't regret it. At any rate, I stayed with the insurance business until I left, until we got to the point where I could retire from insurance.

EE: What year was that?
OB: Yeah, the - I guess the first meeting we went to, they were getting ready for a Candidates' Night and ah, they were inviting politicians and what not, and actually, we thought that was kind of exciting. What a lot of people at SIR talked about at that time was that SIR was an alternative to the bar scene. In those days, the only social life, gay social life, were the bars. You only either went to the bars, private parties or nothing. So, since a lot of people didn't like to go to bars because they were afraid they'd get caught in a raid, ah, it was nothing - like SIR was the first place to go to socialize. And there were two other organizations, one earlier, the Mattachine Society. This is really twelve people. It was three: Hal Call and two other people; I can't remember their names. But at the most it was twelve people. And then there was the Daughters of Billitis, Phyllis and Del.

EE: Did you know them?

OB: Yeah, we knew them, and we've known them for years, never very - not socially. We don't hang out with them or anything like that, but we've known them for years. They've been to everything we go to.

EE: That's sort of interesting about the Mattachine Society because they all, I mean, I've taken Gay Studies for years. They've been to everything we go to. We did stage productions with all kinds of plays and it up, fixed it up, and it became the SIR Center, the Society for Individual Rights Center. And ah, we used that extensively until it closed, until SIR fell apart.

And we had offices there, we had this big meeting hall, we did stage productions with all kinds of plays and and. We did dancing on Saturday night after after a big thing that Rick Stokes was involved in. Rick Stokes did a, did a ah a suit against the police, ah. No, this is before then and I don't know if Rick was involved with that - it was Evander Smith who was involved in that. There was a Halloween thing that ah CRH had, Christian, Christian, CRH, Christian Religion and the Homosexual, or something like that. And they had a big Halloween dance, and cops arrested -

EE: Was this a pro thing or an anti gay thing?

OB: This was a pro thing. And cops arrested two ministers, three attorneys and a straight woman. And they threw a big ah, suit against the police, but that was in '63 I'm sure.

EE: I think I remember hearing of that. Okay, yeah, they had the spotlights on the, on the hall and all these people were (both talk at once) got to set what police brutality was actually about.

OB: Yeah, yeah, right, and ah, so there was this huge suit. Well, while this suit was on, SIR decided we're going to hold dances at our SIR Center on Saturday night and we're doing to charge admission. And we were the first dance floor to open same partner
dancing, ah, in San Francisco. Although funny enough, a couple years before I was back in Rochester, New York, and they had a bar where they were dancing, gay bar where they were same partner dancing, same sex partner dancing. And ah, SIR had the first San Francisco Couples meets.

EE: Well, I found an old issue of the Vector and they talk about up on end of Haight Street too, the bowling alley there.

OB: Oh yeah, yeah, that was the second one. That's one that ran for years after SIR closed.
EE: I'd like to talk about the Tavern Guild also,
but in those meetings when you first started going,
was it ah, was it a social meeting or did you sit and
listen to a speech and to a talk or plotting things -
OB: No, yeah, mostly plotting things. What to we
want to do and how do we want to do it? And a lot of
people tried to use SIR for their own interests and
did, and successfully did. For instance, the
politicos all decided we should give a Candidates
Night and the Candidates Night became a big thing in
SIR. And all the candidates soon appeared in droves.
And ah, then they decided no, ah, this is getting
too - because gays are Republicans and they are
Democrats. So it got to be too much of a faction
inside SIR, so they said let's not do this. After the
Candidates Night, if you want to do something more, if
you want to ah, to ah, promote one candidate or
the other, you're going to have to do it through some
other means. Well, then that's when the politicos set
up their gay democratic clubs and their republican,
the Log Cabin, the republican, demo er, republican
cub. And ah, so ah, but SIR still had a Candidates'
Night but they just wouldn't, they wouldn't endorse.
EE: And besides politics, who else?
OB: Ah, well all the people who wanted to give

Page 81

Page 82

Page 83

Page 84

1 wanted to start their own thing, their hiking, the
swimming, the bowling, but, and some did very
successful with those things. But for the most part,
what they tried to do is push their, their own agenda,
as a group to the outside, and it didn't work out that
well. Ah, maybe it did and I don't realize it because
the resistance was a lot greater than it is today.
EE: Well, I think the resistance isn't as great
today because the -
OB: Yeah, they may have been more successful than I
feel they should have been because at the time it
seemed like we didn't get anywhere. We kept going two
paces back, or forward, and one back, so we never got
anywhere.
EE: Could you give me an example of that in terms of
what they were trying to do that didn't work, 'cause
it seemed pretty successful you got candidate types
who came in to court a gay group, you know, seems
like there's a lot going on.
OB: Ah, I, I guess the biggest example is that we're
still fighting gays in the military. Ah, the very
first Candidates Night, ah John Molinari was not a
supervisor at that time. John Molinari stood, came to
the Candidates Night to speak for some Sacramento
candidate who couldn't make it that night, quote

Page 81 - Page 84
just -

OB: Just getting it, getting it recognized that
there are gays in the military who are existing there
and happen to make, make it through four years. I
made it through four years, you know.

They, ah, at, I think at this Candidates
thing, they said well everybody who got an honorable
discharge from the service please stand up, and half
the group stood up, you know. So there was
demonstration to this neophyte that indeed gays did
exist in the military and made it through - we didn't
all get discharged like they said. But that's just
one example, you asked for an example. That's one
where we still haven't got anywhere; we're still
working on it today. The president says

EE: What kind of things did you think about?

OB: Okay. To go back to what was going on in town at
this time, the few gay bars there were were paying the
police to stay open, no the ABC actually, the
Alcoholic Beverage Control people, and the police not
to raid. The police were doing a lot of entrapment;
they would come in plain clothes and go into the john
in gay bars and if you looked cross-eyed at them, they
immediately arrested you and took you away and your
name and address would appear in the paper the next
day.

ah ah, there were a lot of, in attendance, there were
a lot of ministers who were trying to reach out to the
gay community. There were attorneys, both straight
and gay, who were present. And the police were out
in massive force, and were lined up along the street
and had spotlights on the people and taking pictures
of everybody that entered into the building. And then
they came in, they marched in and ah, they were asked
to leave and they didn't; they came right in. And
the, they arrested some people there at the door. Who
they happened to arrest were three attorneys, three
clergymen and two attorneys and a straight woman. And
ah, it was either Rick Stokes or Evander Smith, both
were attorneys, who brought suit against the police
department for $7 million at the time. And the scare
of that suit, because the people who were, were
straight and were attorneys and were ministers and
this straight woman.

EE: They couldn't be blackmailed or intimidated.

OB: No, ah. So ah, they had the police quite
frightened, The City frightened, about what might come
of this suit and how much they might owe in this. And
it was at this time that SIR was developing, which was
ah different, a different thing for different people.
For us it was a, it was a social outlet outside of gay

bars. Gay bars were the only social outlet in town
for gay people at the time. And ah, so we joined SIR
looking to expand our, our social, our circle of
social friends. And ah, as luck would have it, we
hired a hall for a meeting hall. It was a former
union hall for the culinary workers, at 6th and Market
Street, and we started Saturday night dancing, dances
on Saturday night, and the police knew what was going
on and they were afraid to touch us. The ABC wanted
to shut us down because we had a catered bar; our bar
was catered by a member of the Tavern Guild, a
different one every week. So they couldn’t hene in on
one license. one bar’s license. We had a different
bar each week catered the bar. So we actually were
within the law on the ABC end of it. We had a big
heavy hammer hanging over the head. The police
department, they didn’t dare raid us as long as
everything was quiet. And ah we did our best with
that. And that went on for quite some time until
finally, ah, it became commonplace - if you wanted to
dance, you went to SIR on Saturday night. We made a
lot of money that way, paid for the rental of the
hall, that sort of thing. And the other things
happened up there. We had, we had musicals, we had ah
Candidates Nights. We had hiking, swimming, boating,
the whole gamut of things that people get involved with. (inaudible). And it lasted 'til it fell apart in '71 or '72. So it lasted five or six years. And like everything else because of the licentiousness of gay people as well as incohesion, and the fact that several people were using SIR for their own personal gains, rather than - they were ripping off SIR for some money. We were, it was necessary to close - EE: Are you talking about people stealing petty cash or people trying to - OB: No, ah both things. People were using SIR to gain, to push themselves politically. I ah, Jim Foster or - who actually started then the Gay Democratic Club, the Alice B. Toklas. He was the first one to start a gay democratic club. Ah, there are two now in town: Alice B. Toklas and Harvey Milk. Democratic Clubs. And the Republican club is the Log Cabin Club. And there were various costumes. And I guess we did it three years running. The first year was the biggest.

had quite a big ballroom on the second floor, I remember. It was a lot of fun, unloading in front of the hotel, going in - EE: Were you ever hassled, I mean, like getting on and off the bus while you were on the street. I mean, was there any - OB: No, during Halloween, particularly - Up until recently, now the Castro in the last couple of years has been pretty good, but three or four years ago, there were considerable hassles in the Castro over Halloween and, and people hurt and stabbed and what not. But the last few years, they have, they've had better police protection and they police themselves better. So ah ah, although there are still instances.

Back in the days when I was doing it - it was too knew I guess, ah, the homophobes didn't come out in droves the gay bashers. (inaudible) It was, it was still a spectacular thing to behold in a, in a large hotel. One year, the year after we did ah ah Elizabeth, it was the year that I did movie stars, and I went as Theta Boda, ah Theta, Theta Berra doing Salome. And ah, Dick went as Valentiino. Ah, then the next year we didn't do any of that - we went as as different colored kings, and there were six of us, and there was the Merry Monarchs that we did. But ah, the ah,
people made a big ceremonial thing at a big gay meeting at SIR, by burning their SIR cards, like with burned your draft card, you know, saying you’re supporting our service people going off to Vietnam and we don’t think you should do that. And ah, so you had all sides of every issue as part of SIR.

EE: Well that that, is there, ‘cause I mean, was there any debate over whether or not you should disclose your homosexuality in order to get out of or to keep yourself out of the military?

OB: No, and certainly the term outing was not, was not part of our thoughts. Nobody would consider outing somebody cisc in those days. And ah, nobody, everybody felt it was an individual choice whether or not you should go to the draft board and and tell them you’re gay when you signed up for the draft. As a matter of fact, I had a good friend in Cal when I was going to school - this was before SIR - who indeed when it came time to sign up for the draft, ah, went down to the draft board, and I went along for moral support for him. He was going to come out to the draft board and let them decide what they wanted to do with him.

And ah ah, their first thought was that they And, ah, whatever their parents were notified when they got the Other than Honorable Discharge, which meant that, that it had that I knew about on most people, they couldn’t — Other than Honorable, you couldn’t get loans for school; you couldn’t get the GI Bill. You had to be Honorably Discharged to get the GI Bill to go to school on. Ah, also, ah, Other than Honorable, you couldn’t serve in any other service, any other military service. The ah — and some people said that their parents were notified when they got the Other than Honorably Discharged, which meant that, that either they were mentally or sexually unacceptable for service. I didn’t, I didn’t know, both Dick and I got honorable discharges after our service term, and so I don’t know really if that was true or if that was just rumor.

EE: Yeah, it probably was true. It seems —

OB: I doubt, I doubt it, yeah. But it could be. At any rate, ah, I guess it was after, after those years in Halloween drag that ah Dick and I kind of got busy doing all the things you have to do to, ah, build your future. We were going up in rank in our, in our
through a rehab center that, that ah, Dick had.  
3 Ah actually, he had joined ALANON about a year before  
4 I got into a rehab center, and that's - I don't know  
5 if you're familiar with that. That's an organization  
6 for people who live with alcoholics and. And so, ah.  
7 at the time that he started, he tried to talk to me  
8 about my drinking a couple times, and I wouldn't hear  
9 of it because that's not the way people do when  
10 they're drinking, you know. I don't have the problem,  
11 you've got the problem.  
12 EE: If you'd just leave me alone there would be no  
13 problem.  
14 OB: Yeah, and so ah, so ah, he went into ALANON for  
15 a year and the first meeting, as a matter of  
16 fact, I ever went to, I went to one of his ALANON  
17 meetings with him to see what was going on - it was  
18 deadly dull - of course I was drinking at the time  
19 too, but, that was an awful meeting and I. I told him  
20 so. But ah, he was able later to talk to me about my  
21 drinking as a result of what he'd learned at ALANON.  
22 And ah, he said something that really really hit, hit  
23 me. He said I don't care if you retire early. But I  
24 don't want you to retire to the bottle, into a bottle.  
25 And ah ah, that really hit me, so I suggested that  

1 started my life as a sober person.  
2 EE: It must have been a scary moment though, walking  
3 in there.  
4 OB: Yeah, I was scared because I didn't think I was  
5 an alcoholic and how was I going to be able to  
6 convince these people I belonged there. They were all  
7 drunks and I wasn't, and I knew if they ever find out  
8 that I wasn't, they were going to kick me out of  
9 there. And that was the scary part (laughs). That's  
10 the same dental I guess I had when I was growing up  
11 gay - this is something I'll try for now but one day  
12 I'll get married and it'll be alright.  
13 EE: My real self will emerge, right. Well, so  
14 that's really cool, I mean, that, that Dick was there  
15 for you and willing to not only stay with you during  
16 the drinking, but actually take a part in well,  
17 helping himself, but also also providing support for  
18 you. (inaudible) Was that ever, was there ever talk  
19 of your drinking that he, that he, either sober up or  
20 I'll leave you?  
21 OB: No, that might have happened except that we both  
22 drank quite a lot. But I was the alcoholic; he could  
23 quit. And, as a matter of fact, when he started the  
24 ALANON, he was, he had some other problems that he'll  
25 talk to you about it, he'll talk to you then. I won't
1991? 11 a heterosexual marriage. We have done this, however.

EE: Does this have then legal ah -

Page 101

Page 102

Page 103

Page 104
I guess the first person was a tenant suddenly got sick and ah, it's been '81, '82, yeah '81. Ah, and everybody said he's not a medical doctor, but he can, he knows reasonable life, I mean, how, have you thought ah, it's not so much in this city I think as in 17 who can determine from the doctors through their 24 different ones. 24 pneumonia. And ah, so, so that was not, that was not 25 so that I can make decisions to pull the plug on him 25 you don't know what he's saying. So yeah, we've

1 and vice versa.

2 EE: Well, I mean, this is kind of a ah an unrelated 3 , the whole, perhaps - I mean, how, have you thought 4 about that, and what was due, and what you will do in 5 the case of, of someone being, you know, incapacitated 6 and on a machine, I mean, do you -

7 OB: Yeah, we, we thought that quite a bit and 8 discussed it between us. And we know exactly what 9 we're going to do if there's, there's not going to be 10 the kind of life that we're rea - reasonable life,

11 then we're going to pull the plug. And, but it will 12 be with a lot of, of advice. We'll be talking to the 13 doctors. We'll be talking to a friend of ours who is a 14 second choice in case both of us are incapacitated, 15 say in an accident or something, ah, who is ah - he's 16 not a doctor, but he's very medically ah astute person 17 who can determine from the doctors through their 18 medical jargon what we, what our position actually is. 19 And I would be talking with him in the event I was to 20 make the decision. And I would be relying a lot on 21 his - he's not a medical doctor, but he can, he knows 22 medical terms to a point where he can, he can tell you 23 if the doctor is saying yes he's going to be a 24 vegetable all his life and say it in medical terms so

Page 105

1 talked about that, we've, we've dealt with that.

2 EE: Well I was wondering ah, to back up a little bit 3 also, but is that decision at all influenced by the 4 effect of AIDS and what you've seen and how and -

5 OB: Ah, I'm sure it is. I'm sure it has been. Ah, 6 we've been. I guess because of the fact that we've had 7 a more or less monogamous relationship for umpteen 8 years that ah, that we're, that we're safe from the 9 plague. But I've had my, my best friend Jim's lover 10 die after seven years with AIDS. Ah, we've had twelve 11 tenants die of AIDS. We rent to people with AIDS.

12 Ah, it's it's part of our philosophy, we're part of 13 the community, we want to be available for people who 14 need housing and we do provide housing.

15 We don't provide it to ah, to the extent that we give 16 it away, I mean, they pay the rent as well. But we do 17 provide a place that we don't permit any tenants, 18 other tenants, to to ah ah react badly with them. And 19 so our, our building is very AIDS sensitive and ah, 20 and we, we do provide, provide accommodations. And I 21 knowingly have rented to them, not just happenstance, 22 Some have gotten AIDS after they've been there a few 23 years. But ah, I've knowingly rented to three 24 different ones.

25 EE: When did, when did you first hear of AIDS, what

Page 106

1 ah -

2 OB: Ah, well we heard about the gay cancer about the 3 time that, that New York did, what was it, it's been, 4 it's been '81, '82; yeah '81. Ah, and everybody said 5 it was a gay cancer or it was this or it was that. 6 And like everybody else, it scared us; we weren't 7 sure, we wasn't sure just what this was all about, ah, 8 And it was, it was a while really before we actually 9 saw, or it came into our lives. And ah, ah, but over 10 the, the last ten years, we've seen a lot of it. Ah, 11 we haven't, we haven't become active again in hospice 12 or, or any of the organizations. Like we've supported 13 financially, we've supported ah Open Hand and so 14 forth, but we don't, we haven't, we haven't done 15 that. But we have provided, like I say, ah, 16 apartments for, for AIDS patients.

17 EE: Do you remember the first person you know who 18 got sick and died from AIDS?

19 OB: First - I guess the first person was a tenant 20 we had for a long time - suddenly got sick and ah, ah, 21 and he didn't last very long; he went very fast. But 22 it was also before AZT I guess. Ah, and before there 23 was a lot of treatment. I guess he died of, of PCP. 24 pneumonia. And ah, so, so that was not, that was not 25 as, as an impact on me as much as a later tenant
EE: And started getting sick?

OB: Yeah, and it seemed like that that had a much stronger impact because we saw the, the withering away and the. ah, the effects of it more closely. The first tenant went so fast - he had, ah, he'd lost some weight but that's about it: he didn't have the drawn look that most AIDS patients that live a white had, so. But ah, the toughest one was, was our friend Rex, Jim's lover, because he was so close and, although, he didn't last a long time, mainly because he didn't want to. He wanted, he quit eating, he decided he'd do it that way. He ah, he was the toughest. Partly because of that, because I kept wanting him to fight to the end, and he'd given up.

And at one point, he kind of went out of his mind and they took him to the hospital and I felt so relieved because I knew when he was in the hospital that they were rehydrating him and pumping fluids and food into him, so I knew that, that he was going to get back some strength.

EE: Has that changed your, your view of, of like euthanasia and suicide? You know, it's been an issue of my life that all the sudden maybe fighting at the end isn't the best way to go. Ah, I was wondering if that -

OB: Ah, I think that's a personal thing, that the end of it, that the individual going through it, not me looking at it, and I don't think I should have any judgment about him doing that. I wouldn't do that, but if he feels comfortable doing that, or if that's what he wants, then he should be allowed to do that.

Ah, actually it's not something, as far as euthanasia goes, if he'd had the opportunity, if he could have had Doctor Kavorkian to administer the thing, it would have been a lot easier for him than what he actually went through. He actually suffered a lot more than that. Ah, his death was not, was not pretty and ah, you know, I'm not for euthanasia; I'm not against it. I think it's a personal thing and it's up to the person going through it and I don't think I should be a judge of that - am I answering the question?

EE: Ah, yeah, yeah, I mean, is that, is that, that awareness comes from experience of AIDS, or is that -

OB: I think it's less directly the experience of Rex's death.

EE: Yeah, I just, I noticed in my own life that also support it, be there for him and say well, I stand behind you whatever you decide. Ah, I don't know, it's it's too difficult for me to imagine what it would be like, so I couldn't: I, I just couldn't ah, speak any further than what I've said. I shouldn't be the judge. It's his decision and I don't think it's wrong; I think it's right for him.

EE: Yeah, yeah, I guess, I guess that's that's the realization that I left with, is that there's a lot of different (inaudible) different rights and wrongs now, so anyways. Ah, I have a few (inaudible) right now. I was wondering too about a little bit further back, ah, actually, like at the end of SIR, you joined in '65 and you were doing drag for a few years. About the time Stonewall happened in New York, did you hear anything about that?

OB: Stonewall happened ah at the beginning of SIR.
1 EE: Well, was that, was that like a well known, I
2 mean, how was word spread of that within the gay
3 community. I mean, was it just, just known that the
4 Castro was becoming the next gay neighborhood or, I
5 mean, how, because I've watched a little bit of how
6 the gay scene went from like North Beach and then Polk
7 Street and like, fairly recently, like in the early
8 '70s it seems, ended up in Castro.
9 OB: Ah, I don't know, it almost started on Union
10 Street, and I guess Union went to ah, ah fashionable
11 too soon. Because a gay neighborhood has to be
12 somewhat below the middle line of The City. Yeah, it
13 really has to be ah somewhat so you can build up and
14 become ah, change it from, from ah, a lower middle,
15 middle class neighborhood to an upper middle class
16 neighborhood, is essentially what they've done. And I
17 don't know how, how they chose to congregate in the
18 Castro, but two or three businesses got started and
19 then they, they ah organized a little neighborhood
20 business group, like the Haight-Ashbury organized the
21 Haight-Ashbury Neighborhood Group for businesses in
22 the Haight-Ashbury. Tried to run the drug people out
23 of town - well they couldn't, but they did a lot, they
24 did a lot. But the little neighborhood group in the
25 Castro were all gay people and Harvey Milk was part of

Page 113

1 EE: We were not what you would call the ACT-UP group. We
2 were, we were part of SIR, we were part of the ah ah
3 early political beginnings of of gay liberation, but
4 we were not people who would march ah with banners and
5 whatnot down the street and and in your face types.
6 EE: And Harvey Milk was more -
7 OB: He was more in your face type.
8 EE: Okay, (inaudible) I was not, I was not aware of
9 what who was who else was around with Harvey
10 Milk, because in the history books, or in the things
11 that I've read, I guess Harvey Milk and that's it. So
12 it's interesting to hear that, ah, there was -
13 OB: Yeah, ah, they both ran for supervisor, Rick
14 Stokes and Harvey Milk. Neither one made it. The
15 first guy that ran for supervisor that was gay was
16 Jose Serria - you've probably heard of him (laughs).
17 EE: Yeah, the Black Cat. What year was that again?
18 OB: Oh, that was way back - let me see if I can, if
19 I have my notes - I doubt it - that was way back
20 (dog barks) I don't have. (to someone aside) Do you
21 remember when Jose ran for supervisor?
22 Other person: No, but it's in the books (dog barks)
23 OB: Yeah, somewhere in the history books. At any
24 rate that was before our time actually. I remember
25 before I met Dick, before I was out of the Navy, when

Page 114

1 I was still in the Navy, going to the Black Cat and
2 seeing Jose and his operas that he put on, Sunday
3 afternoons and so forth. And it was, in those days,
4 and that would have been like in '54 that he was
5 running for supervisor. And of course he didn't get
6 any kind of support at all; there was no organization,
7 gay or straight or anything, that supported him.
8 EE: Well, I guess he did get like 5,000 votes. It
9 seems astronomical to me considering what you say.
10 OB: Yeah, Yeah, but it would take a few more than
11 that to become supervisor, but ah. But he was
12 actually the first out gay person that that ran for
13 supervisor. Milk was the first one elected.
14 EE: Did you remember about ah hearing about his
15 murder?
16 OB: Oh yeah yeah. As a matter of fact I was at
17 lunch and ah it came over, it came over the television
18 in the bar and everybody could - and this was a
19 straight bar - everybody was floored because Moscone
20 was killed, the mayor. And then, by virtue of the
21 fact that a supervisor was killed by the name of Milk,
22 well, I knew who Milk was - whether everybody else in
23 the bar knew or not. I walked out of there in a daze - I
24 couldn't believe it. Ah, that was a pretty wild time
25 for us. Then they, then they got White, but really

Page 115

1 EE: Well, was that, was that like a well known, I
2 mean, how was word spread of that within the gay
3 community. I mean, was it just, just known that the
4 Castro was becoming the next gay neighborhood or, I
5 mean, how, because I've watched a little bit of how
6 the gay scene went from like North Beach and then Polk
7 Street and like, fairly recently, like in the early
8 '70s it seems, ended up in Castro.
9 OB: Ah, I don't know, it almost started on Union
10 Street, and I guess Union went to ah, ah fashionable
11 too soon. Because a gay neighborhood has to be
12 somewhat below the middle line of The City. Yeah, it
13 really has to be ah somewhat so you can build up and
14 become ah, change it from, from ah, a lower middle,
15 middle class neighborhood to an upper middle class
16 neighborhood, is essentially what they've done. And I
17 don't know how, how they chose to congregate in the
18 Castro, but two or three businesses got started and
19 then they, they ah organized a little neighborhood
20 business group, like the Haight-Ashbury organized the
21 Haight-Ashbury Neighborhood Group for businesses in
22 the Haight-Ashbury. Tried to run the drug people out
23 of town - well they couldn't, but they did a lot, they
24 did a lot. But the little neighborhood group in the
25 Castro were all gay people and Harvey Milk was part of

Page 115

1 EE: Well, was that, was that like a well known, I
2 mean, how was word spread of that within the gay
3 community. I mean, was it just, just known that the
4 Castro was becoming the next gay neighborhood or, I
5 mean, how, because I've watched a little bit of how
6 the gay scene went from like North Beach and then Polk
7 Street and like, fairly recently, like in the early
8 '70s it seems, ended up in Castro.
9 OB: Ah, I don't know, it almost started on Union
10 Street, and I guess Union went to ah, ah fashionable
11 too soon. Because a gay neighborhood has to be
12 somewhat below the middle line of The City. Yeah, it
13 really has to be ah somewhat so you can build up and
14 become ah, change it from, from ah, a lower middle,
15 middle class neighborhood to an upper middle class
16 neighborhood, is essentially what they've done. And I
17 don't know how, how they chose to congregate in the
18 Castro, but two or three businesses got started and
19 then they, they ah organized a little neighborhood
20 business group, like the Haight-Ashbury organized the
21 Haight-Ashbury Neighborhood Group for businesses in
22 the Haight-Ashbury. Tried to run the drug people out
23 of town - well they couldn't, but they did a lot, they
24 did a lot. But the little neighborhood group in the
25 Castro were all gay people and Harvey Milk was part of

Page 115

1 EE: Well, was that, was that like a well known, I
2 mean, how was word spread of that within the gay
3 community. I mean, was it just, just known that the
4 Castro was becoming the next gay neighborhood or, I
5 mean, how, because I've watched a little bit of how
6 the gay scene went from like North Beach and then Polk
7 Street and like, fairly recently, like in the early
8 '70s it seems, ended up in Castro.
9 OB: Ah, I don't know, it almost started on Union
10 Street, and I guess Union went to ah, ah fashionable
11 too soon. Because a gay neighborhood has to be
12 somewhat below the middle line of The City. Yeah, it
13 really has to be ah somewhat so you can build up and
14 become ah, change it from, from ah, a lower middle,
15 middle class neighborhood to an upper middle class
16 neighborhood, is essentially what they've done. And I
17 don't know how, how they chose to congregate in the
18 Castro, but two or three businesses got started and
19 then they, they ah organized a little neighborhood
20 business group, like the Haight-Ashbury organized the
21 Haight-Ashbury Neighborhood Group for businesses in
22 the Haight-Ashbury. Tried to run the drug people out
23 of town - well they couldn't, but they did a lot, they
24 did a lot. But the little neighborhood group in the
25 Castro were all gay people and Harvey Milk was part of

Page 115

1 EE: Well, was that, was that like a well known, I
2 mean, how was word spread of that within the gay
3 community. I mean, was it just, just known that the
4 Castro was becoming the next gay neighborhood or, I
5 mean, how, because I've watched a little bit of how
6 the gay scene went from like North Beach and then Polk
7 Street and like, fairly recently, like in the early
8 '70s it seems, ended up in Castro.
9 OB: Ah, I don't know, it almost started on Union
10 Street, and I guess Union went to ah, ah fashionable
11 too soon. Because a gay neighborhood has to be
12 somewhat below the middle line of The City. Yeah, it
13 really has to be ah somewhat so you can build up and
14 become ah, change it from, from ah, a lower middle,
15 middle class neighborhood to an upper middle class
16 neighborhood, is essentially what they've done. And I
17 don't know how, how they chose to congregate in the
18 Castro, but two or three businesses got started and
19 then they, they ah organized a little neighborhood
20 business group, like the Haight-Ashbury organized the
21 Haight-Ashbury Neighborhood Group for businesses in
22 the Haight-Ashbury. Tried to run the drug people out
23 of town - well they couldn't, but they did a lot, they
24 did a lot. But the little neighborhood group in the
25 Castro were all gay people and Harvey Milk was part of
the wild time was when they sentenced White -
everybody went down to City Hall for the White Night -
when they had the riots at City Hall.
EE: Were you part of that or -
OB: No, we were respectable gays (laughs)
EE: What was your reaction to that then, I mean -
OB: Our reaction was they should have burned the
City Hall down.
EE: Even a respectable gay felt that way, yeah.
Well, do you think that that night changed the face
of political interaction between gay groups and City
Hall? I mean did that have any kind of effect other
than just venting the anger and anguish over Milk's
killing?
OB: No. I, I don't really think it did. It may have
- I'm not ah, I am not an insider at City Hall so I
can't answer your question with any knowledge, but my
outside guess is that it didn't, that indeed it ah
everybody looked on it as they were angry and they had
a right to be angry. I think the thing that's more
telling on City Hall is ah the Candlelight Marches for
the AIDS victims every year. I think the Freedom Day
Parades are more telling on City Hall. Back in the
first one or two, you couldn't get a candidate to ride
- Hongisto maybe would ride the Freedom Day Parades.

Page 117

there were tables for everybody, and there was a big
round table that like, like two of us would sit at -
it was a family table they called it. And you'd come
sit down for dinner and there'd be other people and
Hongisto and his ah ah office staff were on
(inaudible) have dinner there; we would chat and
have, talk about gay issues and and ah, and he was
very interested in getting part of the, part of his
campaign coalition between gays and Chinese and the
Mexicans. And he was trying to get this coalition
together to, to become sheriff. And so he was there
almost every night and we got to be good friends.
When Dick and I had our 25th Anniversary party, we had
it at the Fickle Fox, we invited Dick Hongisto, who
was supervisor at the time, and his wife. His wife
was pregnant, and they came to our, to our 25th
anniversary and ah ah. We supported him up until this
last fiasco. But here's what I wanted to tell you.

EE: Well ah, more about Hongisto, before we go on
with this, but what is due him? I mean, 'cause like
I really tell about old issues of the Vector and his
name is there - he's like one of the first liaisons
between gay community and the police departments, and
then just before I got here, I guess, he tried to
consignate all the Bay Times newspaper and just like
bounced on everything. And I'm wondering what he
meant, means to the gay community?
OB: Well ah, we were there at the beginning, as a
matter of fact, when he first ran for Sheriff, ah,
(inaudible, checking notes) Hongisto, Hongisto, 'cause
it's about the same
time we bought we bought ah Potrero, yeah, ah - we
bought Potrero in ah 1972, and we put up a big big big
big huge sign for Hongisto for Sheriff. And we were
having dinner almost nightly at - Bill Pflath had had
closed the Opera Club and opened the Orpheum Circus at
the Orpheum Theater and it was a gay bar that he
opened there. And he served dinners at night, and

Page 118

then he went back east and he went I think Cincinnati
2 and did some things there, and then he got booted out
3 of there and then he became of ah ah head of the penal
4 institution of New York or something. Then he came
5 back here and he ran for supervisor a couple times
6 (inaudible) but then he tried to run for mayor, didn't
7 make it, and we supported him through all these
8 campaigns, financially, we sent him $500 or $1,000 ah.
9 Then he got to be Police Chief; and he hadn't been
10 Police Chief for six months and he blew it - I mean he
11 went kapoo! And at that point, we decided that surely
12 he'd mentally had popped, and we can't support him
13 anymore. We haven't, we've talked to him, ah, we ran
14 into him up at Diamond Heights Super Market and he
15 said well he was up there on business because he's
16 running a ah ah security business in the Diamond
17 Heights Super Market was part of his Safeway up there,
18 as part of his thing, and so, but as far as supporting
19 him for politics anymore, I think he's washed up. But
20 he was the first, the first police person to be a
21 friend to the gay community and was a liaison between
22 the mayor and the police department and the gay
23 community for a long time. And when he became
24 Sheriff, he appointed gay deputies, gay men as
25 deputies to the Sheriff's Department, and later (ahem)
they got appointed to the police department by virtue of the fact that they were also Sheriff's Department. So he did have ah, like a lasting impact that lasted positively. God, what a confusing story - I mean it seems very San Francisco in a way but it's still, it's still very strange to read of his earlier support and of his later, his later fall.

OB: Yeah, well, I think it was, I think it was a power struggle in his mind or something - I don't know but I think he'd lost it, and I think, I think he was not rational, EE: But it wasn't, it was more power struggle less than an attempt to, to simply crush or silence the gay community.

OB: Yeah, yeah. I think he just said oh I, you know, they shouldn't be talking about me that way because I've been their friend all this time, and I've - I've got to do something. And he, maybe maybe he was being set up, I don't know. Maybe the underlings said We'll get him, we'll just ah pick these things up and get his name really in - but I don't think so. I, think he probably is involved and because, that was his, that was his pattern. It happened before and so ah, and that's at least how I see it (laughs).

EE: Mm. You also mentioned Bill Plath and I guess Page 121 I retract that because I have been to gay bars occasionally. Ah, just to see what was going on and to eat dinner, because I've been to the Line-Up a couple of times for dinner. We go there often. The Line Up. The Line Up is on Harrison and 8th, or Harrison and 7th. It's a Mexican restaurant (pause).

OB: Yeah, well, I think it was, I think it was a power struggle in his mind or something - I don't know but I think he'd lost it, and I think, I think he was not rational, EE: But it wasn't, it was more power struggle less than an attempt to, to simply crush or silence the gay community.

OB: Yeah, well, I think it was, I think it was a power struggle in his mind or something - I don't know but I think he'd lost it, and I think, I think he was not rational, EE: But it wasn't, it was more power struggle less than an attempt to, to simply crush or silence the gay community.

OB: Yeah, well, I think it was, I think it was a power struggle in his mind or something - I don't know but I think he'd lost it, and I think, I think he was not rational, EE: But it wasn't, it was more power struggle less than an attempt to, to simply crush or silence the gay community.

OB: Yeah, well, I think it was, I think it was a power struggle in his mind or something - I don't know but I think he'd lost it, and I think, I think he was not rational, EE: But it wasn't, it was more power struggle less than an attempt to, to simply crush or silence the gay community.

OB: Yeah, well, I think it was, I think it was a power struggle in his mind or something - I don't know but I think he'd lost it, and I think, I think he was not rational, EE: But it wasn't, it was more power struggle less than an attempt to, to simply crush or silence the gay community.

OB: Yeah, well, I think it was, I think it was a power struggle in his mind or something - I don't know but I think he'd lost it, and I think, I think he was not rational, EE: But it wasn't, it was more power struggle less than an attempt to, to simply crush or silence the gay community.

OB: Yeah, well, I think it was, I think it was a power struggle in his mind or something - I don't know but I think he'd lost it, and I think, I think he was not rational, EE: But it wasn't, it was more power struggle less than an attempt to, to simply crush or silence the gay community.

OB: Yeah, well, I think it was, I think it was a power struggle in his mind or something - I don't know but I think he'd lost it, and I think, I think he was not rational, EE: But it wasn't, it was more power struggle less than an attempt to, to simply crush or silence the gay community.

OB: Yeah, well, I think it was, I think it was a power struggle in his mind or something - I don't know but I think he'd lost it, and I think, I think he was not rational, EE: But it wasn't, it was more power struggle less than an attempt to, to simply crush or silence the gay community.

OB: Yeah, well, I think it was, I think it was a power struggle in his mind or something - I don't know but I think he'd lost it, and I think, I think he was not rational, EE: But it wasn't, it was more power struggle less than an attempt to, to simply crush or silence the gay community.

OB: Yeah, well, I think it was, I think it was a power struggle in his mind or something - I don't know but I think he'd lost it, and I think, I think he was not rational, EE: But it wasn't, it was more power struggle less than an attempt to, to simply crush or silence the gay community.
OB: I made it.
EE: My god, how did you learn how to do this?
OB: I just got a sewing machine and set it here; I got a - this is ah, this is the costume for Theta Berra as Salome, or Salome.
EE: The dance of the seven veils. (pause) so you shaved and everything for this.
OB: Oh yeah. This is a New Year's Eve party; this is at Bill Plath's house, as a matter of fact, and I was done as Carmen there (pause). This was the last one; this is where we were the Merry Monarchs; we were all done as different colored kings. This was the red king, getting ready, a red beard.
EE: Cool! So it must, they must have been a great fun party in and by itself, just putting these these drapes up. Oh, here's Dick as Luigi. Luigi wore this sort of hood in the comics. See you never saw her hair and argh an apron, and a black skirt, and sort of a sweater thing. That that was the two of us for that; we got Second Place, as a matter of fact, as the comics. Those were kind of old comics; you wouldn't remember them too far back. Those were in the days of Little Orphan Annie, and I doubt, I doubt you saw much Little Orphan Annie. At any rate, let's dump that - this is taking away from our, our discussion.
EE: Oh no, no, not at all. This is about remembering so this is, this is -
OB: We have actually, we had about three years of drag and then it got to be too much of a chore, it's a real chore to do it unless you're into it and I was not into it other than the fun of doing it during that time.
EE: Those costumes were so elaborate, I mean, that must have been hours and hours of work.
OB: It was a lot of work. I wore out a sewing machine doing it. The ah, and expensive ah - the Queen Elizabeth thing was about $800 when I finished.
EE: And this was taken in this room here?
OB: Yeah, when we had different, the different drapes up. Oh, here's Dick as Luigi. Luigi wore this sort of hood in the comics. See you never saw her hair and argh an apron, and a black skirt, and sort of a sweater thing. That that was the two of us for that; we got Second Place, as a matter of fact, as the comics. Those were kind of old comics; you wouldn't remember them too far back. Those were in the days of Little Orphan Annie, and I doubt, I doubt you saw much Little Orphan Annie. At any rate, let's dump that - this is taking away from our, our discussion.
EE: Oh no, no, not at all. This is about remembering so this is, this is -
OB: We have actually, we had about three years of drag and then it got to be too much of a chore, it's a real chore to do it unless you're into it and I was not into it other than the fun of doing it during that time.
EE: Those costumes were so elaborate, I mean, that must have been hours and hours of work.
OB: It was a lot of work. I wore out a sewing machine doing it. The ah, and expensive ah - the Queen Elizabeth thing was about $800 when I finished.
Halloween and New Year's Eve and the rest of the year we weren't involved. We didn't do that. A lot of people we'd go to a lot of drag shows, so a lot of times we had drag shows, little acts that they'd do in drag. Ah, now, they're dead dull to me because I don't. I'm not drinking anymore. At that time they were wild; I could have a good time with it but I don't - they're pretty blas now.

EE: Well, do you think just changing times make it - well I don't know if you got -

OB: I think there are two things: I think I've gotten older and so I have a different perspective, and I think that the fact that I'm sober and not drinking gives me a much different perspective to it.

EE: Well, I was wondering if back in the late '60s, '69 and those pictures if that was ah, if part of the thrill was because it was so much more risqué than it would be now, when you can like see people riding the bus any day of the week, you know, dressed in drag if that would be part of no longer interesting, that just that things have got so easy and open now that it's lost its thrill.

OB: I do remember this that in those days we would come here to dress. We would all get in the car and doing a very good job of it. And they're well known in the gay community. Ah, they've been active for years doing these things. But the Daughters of Bilitis were not a big organization in those days, either, they were Del Martin and Lyon, Phyllis Lyon, and that was it. SIR was the biggest organization at the time, the Tavern Guild was the gay bar owners. Now there's the Golden Gate Business Association which is the gay business owners. They're still active, ah, there's the gay American Legion Post that's in San Francisco. The fellow I was just on the phone with just called to remind Dick that there's a meeting this week - he just joined - and that fellow, his name's Perry Wood - ah, and he's one of the officers at the gay American Legion Post - was a member of SIR, was never an office at SIR but I recognize his name when Dick the letter acknowledging his membership and I asked Dick if it was the same Perry Wood, and he wasn't sure, so when he called, I asked him on - I had the address for Perry Wood. He said yes that's my house. And I said then you're the Perry Wood from SIR, and sure enough it was. Ah, Alexander Hamilton Post is its name, it's the Alexander Hamilton Post of the American Legion, gay American Legion.

EE: Do you run into many people from SIR?

Page 129 - Page 130

EE: Most of them are in obituaries, unfortunately. Most of the big name people, the Larry Littlejohn, Jim Foster, ah, I've got his name; I remember the drag name was Madame Sotto Voce, ah, meaning Soft Voice - he did a lot of singing around, and he was instrumental at the beginning of the Gay Men's Chorus. All those people are dead of AIDS now, and I see them occasionally, but not so often now.

During the first five years, I saw a lot of people going that way. But it was our, our generation that were the wildest promiscuous generation and had it not been that Dick and I were more or less monogamous during those years, we would have been part of that parade that went through, but we lucked out; we really did.

EE: Well, that kind of leads into another question I have about ah, about getting older. How do you feel about that?

OB: Oh, the way everybody else feels; I'd like to slow it down somewhat. And often times I think well I wish I was back where I was before when I could do a lot of things, and I still feel like I can do those things. I feel like I can go out and clean my garden out in one afternoon, which I used to do in the four...
hours - I'd have the garden completely weeded and cleaned out; now it takes me three days to do it, and I'm still hurrying. So ah, but I think like I can still do those things. I think like I can go, ah, myself and paint one of my vacant apartments and have it done in two days ready to rent. And ah, the matter of fact is that I haven't done that in years and I do try to do it, it really, I'm laid up for a while because I'm sore. So I don't do it anymore; I hire it done. But I think like I can still do those things. But as far as, as my sexual life, I guess the best way to express that is I'm not as good as I once was, but I'm as good once as I ever was. So, that's the way I express that.

EE: Now what, do you - what are your plans for the future and what do you see in the years ahead?

OB: Oh, we're going to do as much traveling as we can because from my family history, I know that arthritis is going to set in. I've already felt the problems with that. And so before I get to the point where I can't travel, I'm going to do as much traveling as I can.

EE: Where do you want to go?

OB: Well, we plan trips all the time. We're going on RSVP cruises, we go on Atlantis deals to Mexico and then the Mediterranean. And ah, we had some interesting experiences, never any bad ones, ah. The first cruise to

OB: There's a lot of drinking and what not, but ah, I found out that they have AA meetings on both ships.

EE: Well, that's cool; that must have been a recent development.

OB: No, they're in the, they're in the daily paper that comes out and they say Friends of Bill W will meet at such and such and such a place, and so ah. At, on the very first cruise, we were celebrating our 34th anniversary I guess it was. On the very first cruise we announced at dinner at the table that the reason we were taking this cruise was to celebrate our 34th anniversary. And so, everything was laid out right there. They knew who we were and why we were there (laughs) and we didn't have any problem at all. We had ah, we had one time on a Princess cruise, we had two sisters who were older, change tables on us - we were at a table of eight and those two changed tables because everybody else were couples at our table, including us, and they decided they could maybe have better fields to plow at another table.

EE: Yeah. Were you accepted as a couple at this table or on these cruises?

OB: Well, we announced it when we were celebrating an anniversary, they had to accept us as a couple, yeah. At one cruise, we decided to have the bed made up into a double instead of two singles and after we convinced the cabin boy who spoke better I guess Spanish than he did English, that this is what we wanted, it was perfectly okay (laughs). On the RSVP cruises, of course, it was really - there's no problem at all.

EE: Yeah, there's no single beds there.

OB: There are single beds yeah, because that's the way most folks are, but ah, ah, they do have cabins with double beds; you book those ahead of time.

EE: Well really, when you talk about the, the AA groups on the ships, you go to AA meetings to this day?

OB: Ah, yeah, I don't go to as many as I used to, but I still go to at least one a week.

EE: Is this a gay AA group or -

OB: Yeah, yeah, I go to Trinity Church, to a gay AA group. If I were, as a matter of fact, if I were ah, into religion, Trinity Church would be a good, a good church to go to. I was Episcopalian in my early youth and ah, that is an Episcopal church which caters to...
I just 6 OB: No, but it would if I were out on the make, if I
that sort of thing. We just don't have 4 you're regarded differently because of your age or is
I don't have any close 5 that part
8/12/94
25 I, I don't see myself as joining them. 25 EE: Well, I mean, I think I'm very impressed by your
24 so I'd have to be selective about my participation. 24 we do. Ah.
22 Ah, so you know, overall I think they're doing
21 something; I can't agree with all their actions, and 21 have all that that power struggle. That's part of it;
20 topics, but I do have, have some general questions if 20 Ah, Jim's former wife is a lesbian. He, they married
19 EE: Ah, I just have, I'm running out of specific 19 women
18 partnership. 18 Ah Dick maybe more in ALANON because there are more
17 other, a recommitment to each other for our, our 17 close friends, we don't have a relationship with them.
16 a marriage ceremony, but as a commitment to each 16 that are lesbian, but other than those very definite
15 cruises and become part of that, but we did it not as 15 relationship we have. We don't, we have a few friends
14 We did go to a recommitment ceremony on one of the 14 niece is lesbian and, ah, that's the closest
13 EE: Okay. And, I guess ah, my final question would 13 while we'll do something special, maybe twice a year
12 OB: Ah, we have had a couple of apartments that 12 auntie. Ah, but then I'm not there to pick up
10 marriages. These are not widely known about, they 10 EE: What is your relation with lesbian women, I
8 OB: Yeah, it's not a gay church, but it does have an 8 anybody else, but other than that ah, I have no
7 OB: It doesn't include those people who are so closeted
5 EE: (inaudible) like Queer Nation or ACT-UP and
3 EE: Well, you know, see, I don't keep up with
2 while back - that sort of thing. We just don't have
1 EE: Okay. And, I guess ah, my final question would
relationship simply because my own experience with Ned, you know, it's like there's too much trouble, a little more trouble than they're worth, you know. So, it's a, it'd be impossible, I think, for me to give enough to, to sustain a relationship. That, that seems a very remarkable feat.

OB: I've said to Dick that if anything happened, that if we split, I would never go into another relationship. I'd just live a single life. Maybe I would, maybe I wouldn't find somebody else. My original thought was I wouldn't get married until I was thirty and I got married at 28, and I use that term lightly. I just use it as when we partnered.

EE: Other than having to go through the whole -

OB: Yeah.

EE: Yeah, I understand. Is there anything else that you'd like to say that we haven't covered?

OB: Not that I can think of, ah. I think, I think maybe just as a general rule, that I've tried to, or we've, Dick and I've tried to work by as far as being a couple is that my thought has been as long as we're in a productive relationship that's going forward and not being destructive, that I would continue in the relationship and at such time as, as I felt that, that it was no longer productive, I would probably terminate the relationship. And so far, no, we have our problems, but beyond that we still go forward and have got a productive relationship between us, and that's the main thing.

EE: Are you glad you're gay?

OB: I'm not sure; I've never been any other way.

Ah, there are certain advantages. Things I do miss, I miss not leaving, ah children, not having children and not having that part of life. Ah, if, if I were just starting out, if I were your age, and, I would consider adoption to fulfill that area of my life that I missed. In the days when we could've done that, it was not to be considered. But I understand today it is. That more and more gay parents are, are adopting. And I would love to adopt an older boy who knows he's gay and raise him as a son and provide for him and so forth and so on.

EE: And provide him a safe and supportive and loving home.

OB: Yeah.

EE: That would be cool.

OB: Yeah, I, it's too late now for us; we're too old. We've reached that point where we're not interested in, in giving that much of ourselves to a young person.

EE: Anything else?

OB: No, not really.

EE: Okay.

END OF TAPE 3, END OF INTERVIEW
GLBT Historical Society

- huge

OTTO BREMERMAN

Homosexuals

97:24 88:16
homosexual [1] 2:17
homosexuality [1] 1:3
Homosexuals [1] 3:2
homosexuals [1] 2:16
hone [8] 83:12
honey [1] 27:5
Hongisto [1] 73:9
Hongisto's [1] 73:9
hongisto's [1] 7:17
119:17 118:25 118:6
119:17 118:17 118:21
119:5 119:14
Honigstio's [1] 74:3
Honolulu [1] 20:19
Honorably [1] 94:23
honor[1] 95:3 95:7 95:10
honorably [1] 95:14
honor[1] 95:17
Honorably [1] 95:9
honorably [1] 95:18
hood [1] 127:4
hounds [1] 48:2
hopefully [1] 48:14
Hornet [1] 213:3
horney [1] 7:23
horrible [1] 41:23
Hospital [1] 96:3
hospitals [1] 105:16
Hotel [1] 86:25
hotel [7] 143:17
Hotels [1] 98:3
99:8
hotel's [1] 90:24
hour's [1] 94:2
hours [1] 44:17
127:22 127:22 133:1
House [1] 90:9
139:20
14:3 14:8 43:17
43:25 46:25 65:2
70:3 79:4 97:10
102:12 125:9 131:20
houses [4] 74:1
79:7 96:24 97:8
housing [1] 74:1
19:13 73:2 107:14
107:14
Houston [5] 2:1
65:24 95:14 96:15
96:16
118:21

8/12/94

Index Page 8
GLHS OHP 94-31, Uncles Project

GLBT Historical Society

share - straight

OCTO BREMERMAN

stay (11) 3:11 20:23
26:11 60:14 73:8
74:18 74:22 85:19
100:15 118:1 122:8
122:9

stayed (11) 2:23
16:8 43:15 47:2
47:8 53:19 69:4
64:9 74:20 74:21
74:22 74:23 75:22
86:14 97:1 97:7

staying (11) 39:11

stays (11) 64:15

stealing (11) 89:9

step (11) 2:23 50:10

steps (11) 23:25 66:16

stereotype (11) 40:8

stick (11) 65:11

still (11) 4:14 8:6

12:21 15:19 20:12

20:13 20:21 23:5

35:11 44:5 60:25

64:12 64:13 78:12

78:17 81:22 83:21

85:14 85:10 94:20

91:4 91:17 92:21

92:7 92:8 95:5

96:22 105:3 116:1

121:6 121:6 124:3

124:4 124:6 130:24

131:9 132:8 132:23

133:3 133:4 133:10

136:19 142:3

Sinston (11) 57:21

57:21

stock (11) 66:7

Stokes (6) 79:18

79:29 87:13 114:7

114:9 114:12 114:20

115:14

Stonewall (11) 111:23

111:25 112:2 112:3

112:13 112:16

stood (11) 52:20

83:13 85:9

stopped (3) 104:5 50:6

50:8 74:16 124:15

stopped (11) 17:7

store (11) 5:13 6:12

37:14 39:9

story (11) 39:7 49:7

121:4

Straight (11) 40:8

straight (11) 4:14

21:19 23:3 27:22

31:3 31:19 31:19

31:22 31:25 32:1

46:3 46:12 48:12

48:13 48:15 51:10

51:15 53:4 53:4

53:6 53:11 53:17

53:20 53:24 56:10

56:16 69:19 75:4

80:3 87:3 87:12

87:18 92:12 101:13

102:6 116:7 118:19

Index Page 16

8/12/94

share - straight

OCTO BREMERMAN

GLHS OHP 94-31, Uncles Project

GLBT Historical Society

http://www.glbthistory.org
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>word</td>
<td>11:13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>words</td>
<td>11:25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>workers</td>
<td>29:15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>world</td>
<td>11:4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>worry</td>
<td>47:25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>worthy</td>
<td>94:3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wyoming</td>
<td>1:22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**-Y-**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ya</td>
<td>11:9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>year</td>
<td>4:14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6:6</td>
<td>9:11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16:10</td>
<td>38:8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43:14</td>
<td>57:12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>69:24</td>
<td>75:25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>76:16</td>
<td>85:25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80:1</td>
<td>91:19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>102:23</td>
<td>117:22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**-Z-**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>zero</td>
<td>55:25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zilch</td>
<td>55:25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zipped</td>
<td>31:21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Index Page 19