

Interview: Tom and Don  
Interviewed by Michael Riordon

Key

[ ] one word (at most, two) inaudible  
[inaudible] several words inaudible; in some cases, two people are talking at the same time  
[redacted] word(s) redacted for privacy  
[Really] interviewer said “Really”  
?duck? sounds like “duck” but it’s not clear  
... an interval without speech

[Interview 1 of 2]

[0:00:00]

Interviewer: Would you, is this working? Yes it is. Would you introduce yourselves as you see fit, and, tell me how old you are, and more or less, how you make your living?

Interviewee #1: Well, I’m Tom [redacted], and I’m forty-eight, I make my living by doing a little bit of antique dealing, a little bit of furniture-refinishing, a bit of carpenter work, income from investments and, rent from an apartment building that we own, with a number of [ ] [Where is it?] Downtown Shelbourne. Five units there, it’s probably the nicest building on the main street. It was all run-down, [ ], peaked, turn of the century, fabulous old house that really warranted being restored. So we did, and we are up for the Nova Scotia Home Awards, this year, as a matter of fact. Whether or not we get it remains to be seen. So that’s what I do, for a living. [Is your last name [redacted]?] Yes it is. [OK How about you?]

Interviewee #2: I’m Don [redacted], [redacted], I’m thirty-eight, and going to say what do I do? I do a variety of things, actually Tom and I do a lot of things together, only thing that I do that he doesn’t do is stained glass windows, that sort of thing, now I’m into fusing glass, experimental [What does that mean, fusing?] Well, you sort of bond them together in a kiln, they actually, above the melting point, they will fuse, I’ll show you some [Is this to sell? Like, galleries and so, yeah? And you do?] Something new. I’ve done stained glass windows ... quite a while.

Tom: There are hundreds of Don’s windows actually in renovated townhouses in downtown Toronto and in Rosedale [Really] [Don: Lots and lots, Cabbagetown.] When I [ ] real estate there, sold real estate and worked with renovators, his work was sort of standard for stained glass windows,

in the old Cabbagetown, I mean they all, should have them anyways. ...  
Warm ... [Okay] But your music

Don: Yeah I also do anyway it's just now music, everything original, I don't copy. Been doing that since what, seventy-four I guess [You do, you mean, you compose?] Yes. [And what's the result of that, is it on paper? Or tape?] I have them on tape, so far. Someday I'd like to, for my own ... you know, satisfaction, like to get it on CD [It's just for you?] So far. Otherwise, I don't know how to go about ... marketing something like, my kind of music is very limited as to the kind of audience that would listen to it, so, that's for these like sound tracks, that sort of thing, or, I sell it to maybe Toronto ?Song? Bank or something like that, and maybe other people can use it. [25[49] Anybody can go through it, listen to it, if you want to use it you get a fee, of [ ] dollars or something, each time, it doesn't matter how many times it gets used it still gets another hundred another hundred, sort of thing, I want to look into that.

Interviewer: Is it, you're using, I'm not sure of the names exactly, but, you're using synthesizer?

Don: Synthesizer. Synthesizer, sampler.

Interviewer: How did each of you, both of you, and why, come to be living here; tell me about the journey, wherever that starts.

Tom: You want it going backwards or forwards, I mean, this is our thirtieth house. [Really.] [Don: Twenty-sixth.] Only twenty-sixth. [Gerry I think said, or ...] I don't want that mentioned in your book, just in case Revenue Canada might take a look at that, I don't want that mentioned. (laughs) [But you've moved often.] Well we haven't lived in all of them, but, by and large. It started ... backtracking from here, we were living in Palm Springs, California, and we were out, we'd picked up a motor home down there so we were out tripping around, we wound up looking at the coast of Nova Scotia and decided well sure why not, we were in California only for a year, and had moved there from Vancouver, went down to spend a winter with a motor home again, actually with an Airstream trailer, and wound up staying for a year and buying a place down there, and ... was going to live there, like I was talking about doing a business thing there, and, we were trying to buy this little strip mall type of thing, put in six stores, it was a nice set up, right in the heart of the gay part of Cathedral City. But the woman who owned it was a funny old bitch from, from Reno, and you could never get her, and after three months of negotiating, we finally had it down, well we had settled on a price and stuff, and then she disappeared again, she would just disappear, and then, when she disappeared the earthquake started so I figured, this is an ?omen?, I'm not supposed to own this place, so, [Don: We didn't.] we left, we didn't stay in

Palm Springs. [Was the earthquake there?] [Don: Six miles away, six point one] centred basically just ... Palm Springs, within three or four miles [Don: a hundred aftershocks] So that was weird, I hadn't experienced earthquakes before, so, we didn't stay there. But in Vancouver, real estate had gone mad, the houses, anything you wanted to live in was three hundred and up, and when we first went there ... a hundred and ten, about three years later, a hundred and ten thousand could buy you a halfway decent house in Vancouver, and we had moved there from Thornbury, Ontario, which is just near Collingwood, the Blue Mountains, we had an antique business on the 'high land' and we also lived in a church manse, the Presbyterian church manse, and did it up, and, a good business going there, the second residence 'ski' people, furniture, antique pine furniture, country furnishings, [ ], the goodies that go with country living type stuff, and it did very well indeed, and we sold the store and our house sort of at the peak of the market, in ... about six years ago, five or six years ago, and then real estate immediately, within half a dozen months, really, went down a lot in the Toronto and surrounding area, but by then we were in Vancouver. So, the timing was good because even the friends of mine that were in the antique business, and stayed at it, they suffered like hell for the next three years, while we did all right in the real estate [ ] in Vancouver. [Did you know that it was going to dive?] I, well, I was a real estate salesman for a number of years in Toronto, and, yes, I keep pretty closely attuned into the real estate market, and I had anticipated that it had about reached its maximum and it was going to take a nose dive.

Tom (continuing): Now, I've taken several courses over the years, I don't know if you're familiar with Raymond 'Aaron' he goes around doing real estate seminars, investing in Canada, where to invest, and that sort of thing. So there is a definite pattern, I mean real estate does this it always has, you know, and if real estate is going from, as it has in Toronto, Christ, forty, fifty thousand dollars, thirty thousand dollars our first little house in downtown Toronto, ah, when they get up to two hundred, you know that there's going to be a correction, and then it does it in a fairly short spread of time. So I figured a correction was about due now. Indeed, it was a correction within a year. And I mean, the building we sold for two twenty we wouldn't have got one sixty for. You know, and the same with the house, so [So now, before Thornbury it was Toronto?] In Toronto, um-hmm, selling real estate for Darrel [redacted]. Do you know Darrell? [Cabbagetown] Darrel died. He was only about forty-five, forty-six, a brain tumour or so I understand. Anyway, yeah, he had a really dynamite sales force, six or seven offices, there was one office when I started there. It was nice, there was nice people but, I always wanted to have a farm, so, we decided to went out one day to have a look at a farm that was advertised in the paper, and driving by, in [ ] this was, which was also in the Collingwood area, driving by to the one which was for sale, the one we wanted, (laughs) it was abandoned and full of raccoons, and rubbish

halfway up to the ceiling, [Don: unbelievable] and an addition, bigger than this one, thirty feet long, the side was flopping back and forth, a huge sumac tree out in the middle, the setting was wonderful [Don: a hundred square acres] square hundred acres, it was right in the middle, it was one of those charming Ontario country / So we bought it, and did everything under the sun with it over a period of a couple of years, ... thus began our living in the country and that was in 1980? '81? and we've lived in the country ever since. [Don: we started just coming out for weekends] to small towns, you know, '79 '80 we just went out on weekends and skied at the Beaver Valley [ ] and stuff, and, we moved across the valley ... to the other side of Beaver Valley to a smaller, eleven acre farm after we sold this first one, and it sold in the recession too, it was certainly a real estate recession then, But. It was priced about twenty thousand dollars down underneath the nearest square hundred acre farm around there that was a practical farm, ours was not a practical farm, ours was strictly for a city person's ideal of a farm [Don: It was on a ... so it didn't have really workable land] No, that's why I'm talking about the square hundred, I'm not talking about [inaudible] ... The other one was an eleven acre parcel, a nice little parcel ... But, from there, the store was born. I decided to open a store, and I've had stores before, antique stores, that's when we moved into, into the town of Thornbury from outside, to the store.

[0;10;45]

Interviewer: Now when you had this beautiful hundred acre farm, you'd made it much more beautiful, commodious and so on, why did you move?

Tom: Why? [Yeah] Well, the winters were hell out there, it was on the top of [ ] mountain, the highest part of the Beaver Valley, so winters were [Don: escarpment] [Oh, okay] It had about a four hundred foot driveway, it was just gorgeous, it was a winding road lined with poplar trees and stone wall, but the first snowfall, that was, you were toast until April. [Don: Eight or nine feet deep in some areas] So that, gorgeous as it was when there was no snow, it was awful. And we had to drag, with the toboggan, because we had four cows, and we had goats and turkeys and pigs [Don: geese and] geese and pheasants and the rabbits and ... we're now down to three geese (laughs) We had to drag these toboggans full of grain in across nine hundred feet of ... snow up to your waist, and it was lonely, and, I had, you know, I'd been drinking a lot, I was in a, got into AA some years before that because I had a booze problem, and, and anyway, ... don't mention AA if you, we are to maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, TV and film; you can say that I've had a drinking problem but not bring AA into the picture. [Okay] But anyway I wasn't getting to meetings and subsequently my nerves were getting fried, and, and, I'd got into downers, and, two hundred downers over the winter got me through

the winter up there, so that's the kind of ... stuff that was going through trying to cope with living there, and

Tom (continuing): We had problems, too, between us, you know, we had been together eight or nine years or something at that stage of the game and, there's been several periods in our relationship as I suppose there is in most people's, they're, I look at them now, they're adjustment periods ... and, they, but it's unnerving if you're, well, for me anyway, emotional insecurity is very unnerving for me. So, that's that was the result of that. And once we moved into town, of course then I got back into AA, and I haven't been drinking since. But ... yeah, there were periods that weren't exactly delightful about living in the country, but, you know, I used to fantasize back in the sixties along with everybody else that if you had a copy of Harrowsmith under your arm and a Swiss army knife, that was [inaudible], that was it, get a goat, (laughs) that's ... nice in theory [Nice in Harrowsmith] nice in Harrowsmith, which has now got very classy [ ] and all that stuff, but impractical in real life.

Interviewer: In your, you said you always wanted to have a farm. Where did that come from? Did you grow up rural?

Tom: Well, I grew up in Newfoundland, ... my grandparents had ... had a little ... farm type of place down by the ocean, just like this, and they had two or three cows, a couple of pigs. The family farm, my grandfather was a lobster and salmon fisherman, and, that was the best part of my childhood. That was the only nourishing ... part of my childhood, for me, it was nourishing, emotionally nourishing. So, I think I have really emulated that, you know, ... I think so anyway. I miss the city at times. I would like to be closer to [ ] I'd like to be able to drive there and go to the theatre and go for dinner, just get lost in a crowd, and nobody knows who I am, and I don't want to know, and then come home, I really would love to be forty-five minutes from Halifax instead of two hours, you know, or, from Toronto [Don: Then at the same time you can meet other people too. When you want to. Down here it's so limited at times, people you can associate with] limited, people are, people are reluctant to well it's different

Don: They call us CFAs here, Come From Away. Seems like the come-from-away is all associated with each other, and, we don't know any local people.

Tom: Not very many. We know local people, we don't know local people much like ourselves. But then on the other hand you know, you can't get a property as nice as what we've got here, without investing a lot of money if you're going to be right next door to Halifax or next door to Vancouver, this would be several million dollars now, you know, to have four hundred

and twenty feet of ocean front property, try and get that out in the west coast. Nice thing: we're forty-five minutes from Yarmouth. What's nice about that? It's a ferry ride to Maine. You know, and I must say, I tend to gravitate, when I think of leaving here, I think of Maine, and Boston, and [ ] Florida. I don't think of getting out of here as going to Toronto. [Don: South] Yeah, south. We have a little place in Florida.

Don: It's beautiful there. Maine is incredible. Kennebunkport is my favourite place.

Interviewer: What about you? Well, first of all, how did you ... let's go farther back than that ... did you grow up ... where did you grow up?

Don: Vancouver. [I see; so you're a city boy. Until, what, until you went to ...] Until I met Tom. [Really] First year, we spent the first year together there, and then ... Toronto [How did you meet?] ... In a bar. I just came out about two months ... There he was.

Tom: I was managing the Gandy Dancer. [That's Vancouver] [inaudible] It was a nice gay bar, it was a little bit ahead of its time.

Don: 1976. ... Well, it just sort of went from there.

Tom: We went to Toronto to visit some friends actually. They now, they also live in the country. But they had a little place on a small, downtown Toronto street and, a little street down the Queen and Broadview area, and there was a little house just a couple of doors from them for sale. And we had nothing at this stage, no money. They loaned us a thousand dollars for the deposit ... and we went back to Vancouver and I quit my job, I went back to work under the table ... and got paid under the table and we opened a little store called Junque, and sold whatever we could sell including everything in our house to raise enough money to get the down-payment of three or four thousand dollars [Don: four thousand dollars].

Tom (continuing): And then, in Toronto I went back to work at the Keg, night-time as a waiter, and renovated the house during the day and a year later we sold it, and picked up about seventeen or eighteen thousand dollars profit plus every cent I'd earned that year that went into it came back. So that was our foothold to starting to get into ... do, you know, a few houses and then eventually, make some reasonable money. [ ] time, it's made more money in real estate than renovations. 'Coz the couple of houses we've made the most money on ... we didn't do very much work on, it was time, and market conditions. [And knowing when to]

Interviewer: So, you had no experience in living outside the city, then, at all.

Don: None, no. [Did you [ ] in to at all? Did you have the desire to? Was it, more, his influence?] No, no, it was more his, yeah, I was some city boy. [Did you have any doubts about it?] Ah, yeah. But, like, we used to go up the weekends and things, so I got kind of accustomed to that ... I did actually like to ... go out and wander where it was really quiet, and you can just hear your own thoughts, you know, I thought that was really something special, you know, where you're not always distracted by something. [Yes]. So that was kind of nice. And you know I was having music going through my head that I'd be thinking of, and, try and remember it so that when I got back I could play it. But, it took a while [to adjust?] To adjust. ... I had to keep myself busy. [Do you have formal musical training?] None, I'm all self-taught. [Really] Everything I do I'm pretty well self-taught in, even my glass. I don't know, just, it's there, I can do it, I try it and if it works, keep going. ... Interesting.

Tom: His father was a musician. [Really]

Don: He was a concert jazz pianist.

[0;20;54]

Interviewer: So tell me a little about the adjustment. ... see how it compares with our experiences.

Don: Well, what Tom found the easiest way for us to do it was, to move up there and we immediately went out and got animals to bog us down. So that kept us *busy*. We didn't have really a lot of ... time, well, other than fixing up the place, we were busy, we were busy.

Tom: I was fried in real estate in Toronto. I mean I was at my wits end, I really was. Real estate is one of the most vicious of careers, it really is. The psychological pressure ... especially if you ?live? in an office where all these little dots are going on the wall to show how far you're getting up against everybody else, and that sort of thing, and I'm not the sort of person who can be down at the bottom of that list and be comfortable, I [ ] in the top two or three anyway. So, I was getting really burned out, you know, too many cellphones and beepers and ... all that kind of stuff, and, when I went up to the farm I had a lot of listings when I went up to the farm, that summer, I said this is it I'm going up to the farm and do some renovations, and I turned all my listings over to someone else, and that's one thing [ ] a lot of money in listings in Rosedale, a lot of renovated big stuff that I'd evolved to over the years, with contractors that I had worked with. And. So I went up there to, to get a breather, to get back in touch with myself. I wasn't there three or four days when the office phoned, You've got to come back to service your listings, you can't be up there. I said, I have to think about that. So immediately the next day I went and

bought these cows, and I said, I can't come back, I've got animals, I just can't come back. They said, You're going to lose everything; I said, Fine, if that's the case, I won't be back, and I never went back again.

Tom (continuing): There comes a point I think in life when the price of money is too high ... and I was paying it, in real estate, the price was too high. Sanity's got to take precedence over money. And ... I know people that [inaudible] made oodles and oodles of money, and they are so unhappy there's nobody in their life at all. And they're not, they've cut down their chances of finding anybody. [ ] somebody's earning power now is in the millions, they're not going to settle for the same person they would have settled for when their earning power was average and they were on their way up. They're going to want somebody now to take the same vacations or afford the same lifestyle that they can. One person I'm thinking of in particular that, he said, Money is my first love, it's the only one he's got, too. So that, you know, I'm glad I didn't need to get that far ...

Interviewer: Okay, can you tell me something about the journey of self-discovery in terms of sexuality for each of you, how far back does that go, and

Tom: Well, for me, I have known that my interest was in males rather than females for as ... ever since I'd been a very small boy. Oh god, five or six or seven years old I knew then. I knew then that I was now, I was first sexually active even when I was very small, 'coz the two girls next door, my neighbours were two little girls, they were about my age, and we were always exploring each other, and, I don't ever remember when I wasn't looking for something in sex, ... but, certainly when I was ... in my early adolescence, I was experimenting with sex with friends ... [This was in Newfoundland?] Yes, in Newfoundland, not to the extent that one has sex as an adult and aware of who you are, but certainly ... all the indications were there that ... that this was going in the direction of being a gay person even though I didn't really understand it at the time. And then I moved to Toronto and I got, I knew I had to get out of Newfoundland, that was the only ambition I ever had, I knew I had to get out of there. Now I know that's what propelled me to. I knew I could not live there, that's all I knew; I wasn't sure of why. Now, I think it's, I needed to get to a big city to, maybe for self-discovery. And in hindsight I think that's what it was. But, I met, ... I was lonely, and I met some people that had a cottage up at the lake, and they suggested I go up with them for a weekend, and I did and I met a girl there, and what was, what should have been a summer romance at this stage of the game even though I was ... aware that I was attracted to boys, I was very much aware when I was in my late teens that I was attracted to boys even though I wasn't doing anything. I got married to this girl, and ... we were together for, I don't know, only a couple of years. And I was working in Toronto at McLean and Hunter at the time



and there was a young man, working there, that came over to have a few drinks at my house one night, Christmas of 1968

Tom (continuing): and ... I guess just it was the right person. I always thought gay people were dirty old men, you know, and I never associated with it being ... just, kind of, ordinary people. This curly-haired blond ordinary boy was just a doll. We'd had a few drinks together in my apartment, my wife went to bed, it was a small apartment, and he just reached, he took my hand and said, Stop kidding yourself. And, nothing more was ever said, our clothes came off, we hit the floor, and the next day I said to her, I'm gay, I'm leaving, here's all the money I have, everything I had, I left with a bus ticket, I never went back there, or, to [Back where, now?] back in Toronto, this was back to the apartment, and again, that was it. But, it was an immediate, one hundred percent acceptance of myself at that point with that person. That's what did it, it was a magic thing, it was, bang, total realization, total acceptance, and that was it, I never looked back, I never looked back. And ... I'm delighted for that, you know, 'coz it was a wonderful experience, it was a nice, loving experience, it wasn't off in the dark and heavy on the cigarettes and some ... funny old man creeping up my leg, it wasn't that kind of thing at all, it was wonderful. And, that's what happened. I didn't even go back to my job because her brother-in-law worked there and, other relatives of hers, 'coz I told her the truth. So I never went back there either. I went straight to downtown Toronto and got a room in a rooming-house, went to work with the National Film Board, and went through a period of confusion, bleached-blond hair, a bit scream, lots of time in the old Five Eleven, gay bars, gay clubs, I lived for the weekend to get downtown to go to the bars and clubs. And of course that wore off in due time, I'd gotten involved with somebody for five years, and, we got our first antique store and on things went. But, and I look at that now I think as, when I was downtown and screaming and that sort of thing, I think it was a bit of a backlash, it was a bit of, almost a bit of a getting even? It was like, sort of giving society a backhander for thinking maybe, that I'd been boxed in all this time. Waagh! So I really cut loose for a bit of time, and then settled down basically to who I am now. Nothing much has changed since then, I'm comfortable with myself, I don't [ ]

[0;30;38]

Interviewer: How old were you when you left Newfoundland?

Tom: Nineteen. [And when you married?] Twenty. [Oh really. That was quick.] I was eighteen when I left Newfoundland. ... When I left Grand Banks I was seventeen; I went to St. Johns for a year; I left Newfoundland when I was eighteen, and came to Toronto in sixty, 1964, March, and I was born in '46. ... [ ] not seem that long ago, you know, (laughs) it really doesn't.

But, I left ... My father was hard on me. I have learned since that my father said to my brother, when they saw something on TV about gay people that he said, I recognized that in Tom early and I tried to beat it out of him but it didn't work, and really, that's the truth ... I hated him with a passion. And that's why, really, I was driven out of there, I had no choice. I have very, very little happening with my family. I've got two brothers, there's no, there's not a relationship worth salvaging, I have a relationship with my sister, somewhat with my mother, my father and I still can't talk, there's nothing to say, there is nothing to, I can talk to anybody, there's nothing to say. It's so weird, it's so awful, it's a hole in my life, and I suppose it is in other people. But, ... there was never, I don't ever remember, once, getting any kind of affection from my father. There was never, never any encouragement; all I ever remember was, You'll never amount to anything, you're going to spend the rest of your life [ ] in Toronto, you've got shoulders like a girl, 'coz I have round shoulders, and I had an ass like a girl, and ... ridicule and condemning

Interviewer: This was all ...

Tom: All from my father. I think now, I think, certainly the part of, that he was trying maybe to get me go the opposite direction to make me more masculine or something or other, and, by saying that You'll never amount to anything hoping that it would have the reverse effect. Of course, it did, in actual fact it did, because I've done very well, in getting out in the world and, financially I've done very well, emotionally I'm still fucked up. But, somewhat, who isn't, I guess. But, having said that, it took me 'til I was about thirty-eight or thirty-nine to forgive him in my own 'head?', you know, because, that's all he knew too, you know. So, I'm glad I don't have any children, I have one son, that was, I don't really know him, I left the marriage when he was only a year old, and he's now married and living in Israel with a Jewish girl that he met and married over there, ... But I'm glad I didn't raise any, so therefore I don't have any because somewhere that has to stop, you know, and that kind of abuse, it stopped with me, I'm not passing it on to other another generation. So, I'm just as glad that things turned out the way that they have, in hindsight, you know, otherwise I might have been stuck in Grand Banks with ... with a wife and a bunch of kids and ... even if I wouldn't have realized that I'm a gay man, I would have been stuck in the mentality that goes with that, I would not have traveled and done the things I've done, so my life is a helluva lot richer because I'm gay, I think, and because I got out of there. So I can't look back too viciously against the forces that pushed me in the direction that's turned out, for me, to be a good direction, as it happens, ... that's a funny way of justifying some kind of child abuse, I'm not trying to justify it, but I'm saying, every cloud has a silver lining and I see a silver lining, the cloud that began my early life.

Interviewer: It's interesting that your warmest images are of your grandparents.

Tom: Yep, definitely. Funnily enough, my brother and sister's kids, think the world of my father, and, he is to them what his father was to me, see? Now, my father and his brothers have the same kind of low tolerance for their father as I have for mine. When they became grandparents I guess they'd mellowed by then, and, the grandchild gets what would have been nice if the child got. ... Funny cycle isn't it?

Interviewer: Don, tell me about your journey.

Don: Actually I'm one of a twin, first born twin, two boys, we're both identical. ... The first feeling that I remember, probably around seven, my, our, biological father left us when we were about four, mom had two young boys, managed, actually, it was really tough, she met an Italian man, my stepfather now, and they married and, ... I don't know, something, always there, we always thought the world of him, he was very strong and, actually physically too, [inaudible] I don't know what it was, to us he was Superman, you know, it was great. And he always used to play it for us for fun, you know, pretend he could fly and all that stuff, it was great. but first real recollection of being attracted to males I guess was lifeguards, down at the beach. We lived three blocks from the beach, and, I was about seven, and my brother and I would go down there, you know, we were just fish in the water, swim sort of thing, we lived down there, but we never ever mentioned anything about it to each other, we didn't have to, we were somewhat semi-psychic, we could hear each other without talking? And, we were always that way, we always knew when each other was hurt, even from blocks away, you know, it was, [inaudible] like a block away ... and, she'd go and find him [inaudible].

Interviewer: What's his name?

Don: David.

Don (continuing): And yeah, we used to go down to the beach and, the lifeguards were real heros, we'd always talk to them, and, we didn't have to say anything, we just looked at each other and smiled, you know, when a nice lifeguard went by, sort of thing.

Interviewer: It sounds like you were each other's best friend?

Don: Well, when we were quite young we were; when we got into our teens we, you know, I started to ... he was somewhat, had effeminate mannerisms that I didn't, and stuff and, my friends and his friends were two totally

different kinds of people, and, so it got so it was almost like, brother wars, you know? [inaudible] quite a long time, the teens weren't really nice, we used to pick on him all the time [You and your friends] yeah [What did you do, fag stuff and so on?] yeah, we were mean [So at that point you didn't consider yourself to be gay] Well I knew in my heart I was, but, I guess I was sort of ... trying to be like everybody else, trying to be like people that I thought ... were normal I guess, you know. Ah yes, normal. [Tom?: The Holy Grail!] But anyway it was we never ever mentioned it, you know, to each other, you know, all through our teens I was the ... I used to go in his room sometimes when he wasn't around and, muck around for magazines and stuff and I did find, you know, like, body-building magazines or, you know, that sort of thing, or, cut-outs from newspapers that he liked I guess, and eventually I found out mom mine too, so (laughs) [While you were in his room she was in yours.] Yeah, I guess.

[0;40;15]

Don (continuing): But anyway, when we were nineteen, or I was nineteen I guess ... He had a real tough time all through school, teens and whatever; he had such a bad acne problem, we both did but his was really severe, to the point that sometimes you couldn't even see his nose or his eyes, you know it was really severe, so, I always felt so bad that he had to go through that at school, like school, you know, how mean people could be, and, he always had to dress in ... the wildest flashiest newest trends he could find, it doesn't matter how ugly they were, he'd wear them, sort of thing, and half the time my mom was buying matching sets for me too; so, I'd wear them too sometimes. So we were called the gruesome twosome. It was pretty wild. But, we weren't ... we didn't associate with each other very much, a little bit in the halls, he had his friends, I had mine. When we got to ... around nineteen, we really didn't have a lot to do with each other at all. ... There was a neighbour, right next door, who moved in, and, when they moved in there, something happened, it was just I just had something for him, I couldn't, just, I spent all my, any time I could, looking through the windows, spying on him, he was out in the yard, I always watching, sort of thing, ... just a real strong magnetic sort of thing. Eventually I got the guts to go over and ... and meet him and talk to him and, we actually liked each other and, I introduced him to, I had Supertramp and all that stuff that was really great music of that day, and he didn't have any of that, he, he really loved music, so, we had that in common. I'd go over there all the time, any time I could, just to sort of sit with him, talk with him, just his voice alone made me drool (laughs), he was nice. Actually, Tom looks quite a lot like him. ... Anyway, [Nineteen or so?] I was nineteen then. Anyway he ... invited me over to, a party, and all his friends and everything, a house-full, everybody, it seemed to be mostly a straight crowd but there was, one guy that came with one of their friends, and, I

got, I used to get pretty drunk sometimes, that was one of those nights [inaudible]. This guy was there, his friend had left, and, I went downstairs for a beer, and, he came up behind me and just put his arms around me, this man, ... and I was really tense, but I really needed it too, I tell you, it felt good but I was tense, didn't know how to deal with it? Eventually I guess I let the alcohol take over and, got enough nerve to take him right next door, I had a bedroom down in the basement, my parents upstairs ... Anyway, yeah well when you drink like that you don't really think of the ... you know, what can happen. So, anyway we went for it right there, everything, everything. So, you know, he'd had some experience and, it was everything I needed, what I was looking for, it was great, really good. And we ended up actually seeing each other off and on for about a month I guess.

Interviewer: Had you been through your teens dating girls too?

Don: I never went near them; I never had any sexual experience until I ... [Oh really] ... I just, you know, all my friends had girlfriends, and they used to say, You must like guys or something, and I'd go, I don't know, you know, it wasn't like, ... why don't you have a girlfriend, *all* of them had girlfriends, it's just some-, why don't you? you know, what's wrong with you? I just said, I'm not comfortable, and they always left me alone, they never made a big deal about it, you know. Once in a while we'd smoke up, walking down the street with one of their friends, [inaudible] I thought, you know how you are, teens, Stay away from me, sort of thing, but, then he just laughed, it wasn't a big deal, it didn't seem to matter. I think I grew up in a really good time. ... Anyway this person that I'd met eventually ... through him I found that there were such things as bars, I had no idea, Oh really? He said there's like four or five of them downtown, like all of a sudden, lights go on, there are people, I'm not alone. So, eventually he showed me where they are, and that was it. ... I didn't realize what he was doing. I was on unemployment insurance at the time and he was just sticking around 'coz that's what he wanted, he wanted to help me spend it. (laughs) And that's, you know, that's basically what he wanted, he was, kind of a ... street kind of guy ... but anyway, that didn't last. Then I met Tom, pretty well, within a month after that. [That's a long time ] '76.

Tom: Eighteen years we've been together, eighteen years in July or August.

Don: August. [inaudible]

Tom: The latter half of those eighteen years are preferable to the first half. The last half of them [inaudible] but, there was a two year, and five year, and seven year, and nine year adjustment in which case Don would run home to mother and I was, I'd run off to Vancouver and [ ] bring him back. We, we did go through some (laughs) adjustments, you know, and that's all

they are, I'm sure that's all they are. There's so many gay people that, after two years they break up, they go out and they find somebody else. And I believe, and this might be just theorizing, a theory of mine, but, I believe that ... if you don't get over whatever it is you gotta work through that two years down the road you're gonna have the same problem with the next person. And, they're adjustments to each other, but it's [inaudible] find somebody else and [ ] wears off, and two years a little bit [ ] getting richer.

Don: I feel the same way and I think that's probably what made it work. It's like you start at zero every time, every time you start with another person ... didn't appeal to me at all. It seems to be better to sit and *talk* to one another, what you think, you know, no matter how harsh it may be, you know, what you're feeling, you can adjust, everybody can give and take a little bit, whatever it takes. Well, we did, [ ] ... The longest we were apart was six months, I guess.

Interviewer: So you literally ran home to mother?

Don: Yes ... I went back to Vancouver one time, got my own little apartment

Tom: ... we were apart six months, just over three, that was the fall we opened the store. 'Coz we came back from Vancouver, but, this was also, an interesting period. I was thirty-eight or thirty-nine, ten years ago, ... I was going through what I look on now as an early mid-life crisis. There is no doubt in my mind that's what I was going through, emotionally I was a basket case. And I'd walk in a *blizzard* for *miles* so that I could wear myself out so I could go to sleep, so I wouldn't drink. 'coz if I'd drank [ ] really it wouldn't have solved anything it would have added more problems to what was there. And I was so insecure and I was so full of fear, and, all of the things now that I hear, I've heard since other people going through very similar things, and very unsure of themselves, and I think it's the same thing straight men go through when they run out and get teenage girlfriends you know and leave their wife, it's a fun time, and that was a really rough time in my life, and for two years there, I wasn't out running around but emotionally it was a rough, rough ride for two years. And I think that's [ ] it coincided with the problems we had when Don was in Vancouver, and [ ] run out there, after three months we decided to get back together, and I ?called? in an auctioneer and sold absolutely everything on the farm down to the last tea-towel, and split, in my Volkswagen to go back to, well, we were supposed to meet in San Diego but I got there in the Volkswagen and he was sick in Vancouver and couldn't get down.

Don: Pneumonia. I knew he was looking forward to ... he'd sent me a plane ticket to go meet in San Diego and we'd slowly go up the coast, go to San

Francisco and I'd never been [inaudible] I was looking forward to that, I couldn't go

Tom: I [ ] up to Vancouver from San Diego and I won't be coming down, I didn't see any coast, highway

Don: He was there in record time.

Tom: Twenty-seven hours later, motoring along in my Beetle. (laughs)

[0;50;10]

Interviewer: When you went home to mother, did she know you were gay?

Don: Oh, yes, we told her ... As soon as Tom and I met I think we both, and my brother came out at the same time, around the same time, so. She knew with him ever since he was three, for some reason. She always figured. So it was accepted, but, me it was a real shock, real shock, she went through a lot of crying, and all that stuff, but ... It was really interesting their first meeting, mom's and Tom's. They were both so nervous and tense and everything but they really liked each other, they got along fine.

Tom: I was thirty and she was about forty, you know. [ ] and I are good friends today, and we have been for a long time, I think the world of Joan. And, she's there for us, she really is a good support. And she's got more than her share of trouble. Don's twin brother also has AIDS, and the, I would say last stage of it, too. He's been positive for twelve years, and he's had full-blown AIDS now for almost two years. ... So she's got a plateful but she's a wonderful person and she's there. And thankfully ... My family don't get it and they don't talk about it. Don and I have been together eighteen years, you'd think Christmas cards [ ] whatever ... Finally I gave them shit when I was down a few years ago. Because, when we were apart there for a while and stuff, ... you need somebody to lean on a little bit. And your family's not there, you know. Now if it was my sister and her husband that split up they'd all rally around her, you know? It's the same emotions, thank you very much. I get angry over this and I'd let 'em have it, you know? [Did it produce results?] Yes, yes, forced, forced results, probably not from the heart. But it didn't matter, you know. Then my mother after that started sending me, she sent me a Christmas gift, she'd always put in twenty bucks for Don, these last few years. (laughs) So anyway. But now it's, it's much better with my sister and her husband, but certainly it wasn't, ... When my twentieth high school reunion, was, this was around two years after the announcement of AIDS, you know, when there was all the hype and a *tremendous* amount of fear about AIDS before it got understood. I was going to go back to my high school reunion and Don was going to go with me, what the hell, let's go, but they were afraid

we were going to be walking on the street holding hands and kissing ... naïve thinking, you know. Subsequently, no, I couldn't come back. So I got a letter that was an awful letter from a member of the family, that, I couldn't stay at the cottage and the fear of AIDS and all that shit, you know. When, neither one of us have any reason, there's no reason to fear, neither one of us are HIV-positive. But, even the fact that we knew somebody who was was reason enough that they didn't want us on the property. That sort of, that, of course it just put me [ ] down there that much faster, because I am a fighter, I don't take things like that lightly. ... But it got resolved, and it's [inaudible] [Did you go down?] No, I didn't want to expose him to that kind of ... He's never been down there [inaudible] He's never been to Newfoundland.

Interviewer: I wanted to ask you about David. Did you, after your teens, find some common ground?

Don: Actually, once we both came out and start we great, really wonderful. Mind you he was, he came out screaming though, he came out rebellious, and it was ... I still had a hard time hanging out with him.

Tom: He wasn't screaming ...

Don: Well, just a very short while, a few months.

Tom: He was, he was

Don: Would talk, laugh his head off

Tom: Him and I didn't get along too well. He was very, very, very affected, you don't know, an aspiring actress, [Don: He'd walk down the street, and he'd turn, and stuff] it's common, it's a common thing.

Don: It was so funny. I couldn't walk down the street with him, I just found it too embarrassing. You know, so unnecessary. But anyway

Interviewer: A certain kind of bravery there, though, eh? Was he subject to harassment? He must've been.

Don and Tom: [inaudible]

Interviewer: Or, everybody was so unnerved (laughs)

Tom: Well you've got to remember also in the ... and this was '75? '76? [Don: It wasn't bad then] That was about as liberated as the times had ever got, [Don: It was a good time.] before or since. You know, it was really all



right then. [Don: Really good, really safe] Particularly on the west coast. [Don: a very safe time] I mean, the mix of being a hippy and gay, it was wonderful, all at the same time, so, it was an easy time to be like that.

Don: And then, you know, he found friends. I left, within a year after.

Interviewer: What about here? You said that after Palm Springs you [ ] the Nova Scotia coast and decided ... What was the draw?

Tom: Well it's a pretty coast. [Don: Inexpensive.] It's inexpensive to live, and, we had enough money that we thought we could probably buy a couple of apartment buildings and do them up, and live off the revenue, which indeed we do. So, financially, we're comfortable. We can't be extravagant, but as long as we maintain the type of lifestyle we have, we're fine. So, the investments have been, we have some investments and some mortgages and stuff, ... and the apartment building up there, so it brings in enough revenue that, not a lot of money, but we don't need a lot because we don't have any payments on anything to make except credit cards and gas. Cars, and the house and everything else is paid for, including the apartments up there. But ... Don can now do his glass thing without having to come up with ... twenty thousand dollars' worth of product a year, net, net profit. And I can do what I do. So over the next four or five years, what I see happening is we'll probably boost our income by ... by ten thousand bucks, or more, through the little store and Don doing his glass, and we're doing things we like. We can still spend the winters in California or Florida if we want to, and we live here in the summertime. And our work is kind of our hobby, we don't have to leave the premises. I don't want a store uptown, where you got to be sitting there all day long, [inaudible] So, it allows us to have a fairly relaxed lifestyle, and we don't, we're not subject to the pressures of getting out there and making ends meet. On the other hand, there are, we don't have quite as, as wide a social life as I would like to have either, you know, I don't know [inaudible] what you guys have [Similar] Similar? And we have a few friends, you know, we have a few friends, and we cherish the few that we have, but it would be nice to have a few more. Ten or twelve friends is all you can cope with anyway, and maintain any kind of relationship, but after that it's

Don: The other thing is, also, is that we both never thought that we could ever anywhere in Canada afford waterfront. And when we came here and saw the prices, and the opportunity, [Tom: we bought this on a FAX machine] [inaudible] We had actually passed by it

Tom: We'd gone back to California [ ] real estate agent, we'd bought a little small house [inaudible] out there. But the real estate agent phoned us and said, There's a lovely little house down on Shelbourne Harbour, 'coz we wanted to be near Tony and Malcolm down the road, or, you know, not

right in town, and it's sheltered. And Shelbourne, by the way, is the warmest area east of Vancouver, in Canada, Shelbourne and the immediate vicinity, within twenty miles or so. It's considered the banana belt of Nova Scotia. I mean, we get that much snow, and, Bridgewater and [ ] they get that much snow [Just a kind of quirk of ] It's a quirk, yeah. [Don: It's the Gulf Stream] Gulf Stream, the currents and the warm water

Don: Triggerfish, dead on the beach, in West [ ] [A tropical fish?] Oh the, you'd find them down in the Caribbean.

Tom: He'd come up the current and got lost. So that's ... and then when she said about ... we just bought it, this never came on the market for sale, this property. Before the sign went up we'd bought it. Tony came down and had a look and phoned and said yes, he described it to us. It was disappointing, when we got here, I must tell you.

Interviewer: Tell me about it. What did you find here, when you came?

Tom: Well, I mean, this room here was two rooms, right? There was a little small bedroom, so this was an old-fashioned little parlour. ... The kitchen was cozy, but ... [As you said, hardly any windows] There were no windows at all, looking out over the ocean, it was anything but ... the type of house that it is now. It was all geared towards looking at the road but mostly back then they wanted to see what was going down the road, they didn't want to look at ... at the water out there. I talked to a man in West [ ] I said, Why don't they put windows on the water? I don't want to see any god-damn water, I spent fifty years on that water. And that's how they feel about the ocean, you know. And that's valid. It's a lot different from how we feel, because, well it's kind of novel for us, you know.

Don: Every morning, pretty well, so calm, until about ten o'clock, the wind comes up about ten o'clock every morning, you can wait for it, it'll come up.

Tom: And there's always loons, there's always, always loons, and seals, right in front [Really] 'Course the seagulls are handy if I'm skinning chicken or something or other, I just have to throw it out in the yard, they're waiting [Don: It's gone] It's terrific that way, you know, you don't ever throw it in the garbage and smell it, and it goes to some good use, comes back as fertilizer, not necessarily well-placed at times, but ...

[1;01;11]

Interviewer: And the tides, must be, really ...

Don: Lately there's been some real low ones.

Tom: About six feet [inaudible]

Interviewer: There's a lot of life in the tides, as well, isn't there?

Don: Full of starfish and sea urchins like you wouldn't believe. Crabs ... oh, it's beautiful.

Tom: There's lobster

Don: Huge lobster.

Tom: There's lobster there. They catch lobster right off the

Don: We snorkel in the summer.

Tom: And in the summer we'll have [ ] You can see lobsters under the rocks there ... just hanging out [ ] and nose

Don: Right at the end, there's a [ ] river and it empties into here, so it warms it right up, quickly. ...

Interviewer: So, you expanded the kitchen.

Tom: Yeah. We got rid of the porch and added it to the kitchen, to take advantage of the view down the harbor looking at the wharf, because it's a terrific view. And then we added this little bit into the living room and put the windows in, again for the same thing, to enjoy the view. And then upstairs, Don did all the rooms and put glass in them all to be able to, a) have some headroom, and also to be able to have a decent view out over the water. Were you upstairs? [Yeah] So the upstairs was all like this, a storey and a half. I mean, if you walked halfway into the room you hit your head on the ceiling. But it was a clean house when we bought it, it wasn't a run-down ... the woman who owned this house had lived here for sixty-two years [inaudible]

Tom (continuing): And they used to make barrels in this living room, this little barrel [inaudible], so I'm told. [Don: Oak barrels?] I don't know if they're oak or spruce. This barrel's made up Shelbourne, there's a barrel factory on the wharf. [Don: used to make barrels in this room right here, actually, in the forties] Did you get down by the movie set at all? [Sort of. We went down that road.] *[telephone rings]*

Don: It's really worth seeing. [ ] walk the length. It really is, it's unbelievable. It's going back in time and it's authentic ... just ... [Can you, just ...?] Oh

sure, they don't start filming again until Wednesday so it's okay. [voice: you came close]

Interviewer: This is the place you renovated?

Don: Yeah. Next page is renovated now. ... Oh, yeah, the Historical Society are very happy with us. It had been sitting there ugly like that for ten years.

Interviewer: When you're doing these things, these things you're describing, are you it entirely yourselves? Do you hire people, or what?

Don: Well, we farm out some things, because, you know, who wants to do dry-walling. They're professionals, they can do it and do it fast. You know. We've done that, we've done [ ] right back to the four walls, and, built everything up ourselves, but, it's just not worth it any more, especially when you've got, you know, we can afford to pay people to do it and it gets done quickly. So [inaudible] kind of dirty work any more ...

Interviewer: So, what do you, are there other aspects that you still want to do? do 'coz you want to, or do you farm it all out?

Don: Oh, no, no, actually we only farm out things like dry-walling and stuff [inaudible]. I do a lot of finishing stuff.

Tom: Don paints.

Don: I paint and clean up the dirt, clean up the messes and scrub and stuff. And do the landscaping. [Oh, really.]

Interviewer: Now, the skills, these skills, particular skills like carpentry and so on, from childhood?

Tom: I come from a long line of boat-carpenters. My father and his brothers and their father, they'd all been boat-builders. And, as a matter of fact, our family ... dory are you familiar with dory? Well the Grandy dory is on the twenty-five cent piece, the Newfoundland twenty-five cent piece ... and its nice, because they spent so long at it, it's nice to get a bit of recognition. So I guess it's there, you know, it's ... I like working with wood. I guess to some degree I've inherited the bit of that. But I couldn't drive a nail straight 'til I was thirty. So I think [ ] some of the things I did ... and I can smile. But now I know *how*, and I know how to build a house and I know how it's done and I know all the process and everything else, I'm not as good at doing it as some of the people that I hire to do it for me, but I do know *how*, you know. So, and I know if it's not done right, even though it's still might be done better than I could have done it. So, I have one

fellow that's worked with me for way over a year and I have two starting Monday to do this [inaudible] ... plastering, that's it ...

Interviewer: Now, with the two of you here, all the time, or most of the time, ... does that ... challenge your patience with each other, and so on?

Don: We've been together so long now, actually, we don't really have a problem, we know when to stay out of each other's way [Right] especially [inaudible] ... We know each other really well.

Tom: He spends time in his studio in there, and I'm out in my little workshop out there, we have our separate work areas, I mean ... I like to get out there and monkey around, play with the antiques, Don doesn't have much of an interest in it, that's not his area particularly, and I'm not a stained-glass or music person. So, you know, we're not always on top of each other, but still, he was in Vancouver last ... for a whole month [Don: all of October] and I missed him after a few days. I was busy as hell building the dormer upstairs, and getting a [ ] septic system and all that stuff, trying to keep myself busy. But, ... yeah, that's not a problem with us, not any more anyway. ... Sometimes I just go and get in the truck and go and poke around, check out junk shops, just go, I just go [inaudible]

Don: We do. I think everybody does. Instead of holding it in.

Tom: We snarl at each other every now and then, you know, get into little tiffs, bitching about something, but nothing heavy [Don: No, nothing violent at all] ['Coz you get it out] Well there's no heavy accusations 'coz neither one of us has done anything for so long, but I mean, I think no matter who you live with

Don: Used to be worse, 'coz I wouldn't say anything, I would just bottle everything up. But, I don't do that any more. I got to that point where I decided not to. It's better to, just let it out, and then I don't have to think about it any more and then we've dealt with it, you know?

Tom: Well, we used to fight, I mean, years ago. [Don: I socked him a few times] We actually fought, we used to get into fist fights. [Don: rolling in the street at three in the morning, it was so funny] Terrible. We lived across, talk about ... religion, ... we lived across the road from a bunch of priests, a Jesuit order of priests. If ever I ever live next to a bunch of hypocritical instigators of, ?ill? relationships, that was them. Because, we had more problems / well they were a bunch of closet queens, I think they were. Certainly [Don: Kirk was out, Gerry was out] some of them weren't so closeted. But, they caused a lot of problems in our relationship. [inaudible] I wouldn't be friendly with them, but then, you know, they worked

Don: They did. They tried to work me against him. [inaudible]

Tom: They did. I'd lose it sometimes. I was drinking at that stage of my life, and I went over, one night [inaudible] late at night, do your dishes. Right across the road. So I went over, and this priest

Don: The night before, what happened, though, that's what made you blow it.

Interviewer: Hold on, ... change this

Tom: I don't know what

[end of Interview 1 of 2]

[Interview 2 of 2]

[0;00;00]

Interviewer: Okay.

Tom: So, yes, I could see that Don was over there, doing the dishes and one thing and another,

Don: He was really late, and he wanted me home, he didn't want to be home because, the night before we'd been broke into, we were asleep upstairs and they just cleaned the main floor out.

Tom: Cleaned out, cleaned out. [inaudible]. So I went over and they tried to block me coming in, really got in the way; it was the wrong thing to do, so.

Don: Him and I ended up rolling in the streets, fist-fighting [inaudible]

Tom: I just ... blew the door open and knocked the [inaudible] and I went straight in and dragged them out. [inaudible] But you know, they are responsible for a lot; they're not responsible for my actions, I'm responsible for my own actions, but they sure as hell can instigate you to do things that you probably wouldn't have done. And it did and it was them. Anyway, so, after the break-in we put the house up for sale, the only house we've ever lost money on, we put the house up [inaudible] We didn't lose anything specific, but you know, might have even broke even, somewhere along there, generally we made money buying and selling houses.

Don: One of the guys in there, he was amazing, ?Terry?, he was really crude, really crude. Here he was, studying, kept going around, Fuck for Jesus sort of thing, you know, all the time. And while the other ones were so down

on him all the time because of the way he talked, it was just amazing, even the things that were going on in that household, such different people, one was from Boston, one was from St. Catherine's or something so they came from all different places, and then had to deal with each other. I think there was like four or five of them, weren't there?

Tom: Six or seven, I heard. A bunch of them, anyway.

Interviewer: Was your upbringing Catholic?

Tom: No. United Church.

Don: Protestant. But actually it never meant anything to me. We went to church until ... we got to that age where we could ... finally could get out of it, you know? We didn't like going, never got anything out of it. It just seemed to be a routine [inaudible] ... and, I never had any kind of religious feelings at all until, like, Tom and I find that Unity, I finally felt, that I'd found something like, I never even liked even to go near a church or in it or anything. It just got to that point. But, the Unity changed that. [Tom: Unity is a wonderful church.] He went first, and said, You've got to come, I think you'll like it. I really didn't want to go, but I thought, well, got to shut him up, so, I went, and, yeah, I really, it really was good. Kept going, and then I used to go Tuesday nights as well for meditation. And, great [ ]. I felt really good about myself; they really help you feel good about who *you* are. And they try to [inaudible]

Tom: They don't [inaudible]. They don't condemn you for who you are, they just want you to feel good about who you are. [Don: Yes] It's terrific, it's the most positive thing I've ever experienced.

Don: And, in Palm Springs, in the desert, a little church in the desert.

Tom: Well, you know, even there, even in Palm Springs, which is a hundred miles east of Los Angeles, there was a Mormon woman, running for council, and, she wanted to clean up the gay businesses, there was a gay bookstore, and they sold videos and normal stuff that gay bookstores like Little Sisters have, same kind of thing. And ... she wanted in Cathedral City, which is -- Have you ever been to that area? [No] Well, the Coachella Valley is a long valley that's maybe twenty miles long, and Palm Springs, Cathedral City, [inaudible] and so on, they're all joined to each other, there's no obvious breaks in any of them, it's a string, it's the valley, it's called the desert. But they're, so, Cathedral City is where all the gay businesses and clubs and whatnot are, and, even there, there's a religious movement, the religious right, ... and I think they're getting heavier everywhere. They're here, too. They're in the south coast of Nova Scotia, they really are. And, there is a fundamentalist type of ... religious

crowd here, and fundamentalist religion is scary to me, any kind of fundamentalist religion is scary.

Tom (continuing): There's no room for, for logic, and, of course [inaudible] sixty-four different Christian religions and each one of them claiming the Bible as their source of inspiration, every single one of them giving out different information. [interviewer laughs] You can find whatever you want in the Bible. [inaudible] Especially in the way it's phrased, there's so many [ ]. But, that's ... I think that's one of the things we have to be very, very aware of and very, very cautious of. There is a resurgence of [inaudible] and what's-her-face, scope. Same thing. Catholic woman, who [ ] political, and condemning whatever it is she's condemning./ Interestingly enough, it was brought to my attention that, she said, she is divorced from her husband. She didn't divorce him, he divorced her because he's taken up with a new partner; interesting choice of word; I wonder who the partner is. But anyway, if the partner happens to be male, she had a chip on her shoulder, therefore, it would be interesting to find that out. ... Those were her words, 'partner.'

Interviewer: How does this fundamentalist thing manifest itself around here? [ ] ever see it, or look like or sound like? ... School boards?

Tom: Yes, school board, yes, school board ... there's religious people there. Certainly ... the day-to-day people that I deal with, are very, very religious. One person that I happen to have [ ] him one morning ... and they picked up on it right away, What are your thoughts, they got right into, and right away I could see we were heading in a fundamentalist direction, and I mentioned Unity, and Oh yes, yes. It was immediate, without knowing anything about it, Oh yeah that's a new age type of religion. There was no room in that person's head to even consider what Unity might be or what their doctrine might be. It was just [inaudible] I've had friends [inaudible] Pentecostal, for example, some bad experience there. ... I don't know. I once, part of my AA twelve step work is to talk to somebody and talk about your own self, it's the fourth step, which is, taking a fearless and searching moral inventory of ourself, it's kind of a 'cleanse?', it's kind of a way of getting rid of the garbage and [ ] into our futures. And, some of the things that came up, you know, things that pertained to my being gay, anyway, Very shortly after I did this with a very *senior* person in AA, I started getting Healing the Homosexual flyers from the Presbyterian Church. [inaudible] Yeah, I don't want healing; I'm not sick. You know? But this religion again, deciding, for me that I need healing ... I am far more comfortable with who I am sexually than all those religious people [ ]. And I've also found, the worst enemies I've ever encountered, have been closeted homosexuals. They are by far the worst. Some of them don't even know they're closeted homosexuals. But, people that are sexually comfortable with themselves, sexually secure, they don't



find [inaudible], at least, I haven't found that they have. But the religious ones, yes. Scary, they're scary, religion scares me.

Interviewer: So, would you call yourselves "out," around here? Or, how do you experience that, how do you deal with that?

Tom: Out?

Don: Well, we certainly [inaudible] Tom became the Reeve even, even after, then everybody knew.

Tom: Well, I have a bit of a big mouth, as you've probably gathered. But, I will voice my opinion on something, in the press or on TV, several letters have been read on the [Don: CBC] on the local CBC Halifax of my opinions on stuff that I've read that rubs me the wrong way. And recently [inaudible] CBC they wanted [ ] Halifax and voice an opinion and put a face to it, on an opinion I'd given them by calling their number on, in this case it was on dead-beat students that don't pay off their loans. [inaudible] couldn't pay them off. Anyway, because the east coast is permeated and steeped in rip-off-the-government mentality, let's take 'em for all, it really is, it's obvious. You can buy unemployment stamps, and, everybody's wife is [inaudible] ... there's a real rip-off mentality in the east coast, there really is, and that probably should be off the press, [ ] certainly my name off with it, but that indeed is reality. That sometimes keeps people at bay, the fact that I'm a bit outspoken will sometimes keep people at a distance, you know. If you're right up front ... Now if I was a timid kind of person that would shun and shrivel [inaudible], you know, then I might be up for a lot more ridicule. But it's quite the opposite. So I suppose a lot of my ... defense is my ?aggression?. I'm not afraid, I don't *care*, I really don't care.

[0;11;13]

Don: People have seen what we can do. They've seen three places now since we've been here two years, we work fast, and they ... I think we're getting more respect.

Tom: We're respected for what we do, now that's true, because we have taken some rough property, [ ] this was the best of them, but, the other two properties were bad properties and we've been thanked publically in the paper on that one, and stuff. So there is a respect for what we do, and, so that helps. But, are we out? Well, that's a good question.

Interviewer: Well, when you say, for example, you've been thanked, and so on, is it you and you? Your names ...

Tom: Oh yeah they know that we're together, oh yeah, they know, it's Tom and Don, everybody knows it's Tom and Don. [Right] ... Nobody says anything specific, but, you've got to be a moron to come into this house my neighbours all do I can see [inaudible] the rest of the house [inaudible] obviously one bedroom, you know. But it's not a problem. I don't know, I can sort of talk their language a bit because I grew up in Newfoundland. I can go down on the wharf and I can talk about the boats and fishing ... so I'm not completely a duck out of water, in this part of the country. And the way I dress, you know, I dress like everybody else around, sort of thing, when I'm working and stuff, so I don't look like I don't fit in either. So if they happen to find out that I'm gay, Oh, it's not like I'm gay right up front, they kind of know me, a little bit, and, like I was saying to you, gay partners are not the norm, if I was a hairdresser in town I might have been, maybe, targeted a little more, I don't know. But I haven't found that a problem, I have never found that a problem. Ever. I'm me and that's, Oh, yeah, that's Tom, he's gay, fine, he's gay. But they get to know me first, I think.

Interviewer: So even when you were in the sort of ... competitive thing of running for reeve, nobody used it against you?

Tom: Well, actually I got ?acclaimed?. No, it was not used against me. There was one person that wrote a letter in the paper and ... in a column to the editor, talking about the main street of Thornbury at the time which needed a lot of work, and the business people bitching at the town hall for not doing this, that, and the other for it but meanwhile they weren't fixing up their own storefronts, so I kind of let them have it, Clean up your own backyard, and maybe we'll be there to help you out, and I got lambasted by somebody saying something about a clandestine, what was it? cloak, no, this caped newcomer ... But the way it was all worded, it was obvious they'd figured out I was gay, and they'd signed a fake name. ... I went back at them in the paper again, and just basically told them I admired their sense of humour but if they had any courage at all they would have used their own name, the name does not exist. That was the end of that. I didn't *back down*, I let them have it in return. And that was the end of it, there was nothing ever more than that.

Don: It was a very clever bunch of articles, it went back and forth ...

Tom: It was very interesting, sold a lot of papers.

Tom (continuing): But, the thing is, you know, they said that we would lose our local business, well, and I said in the paper, yes I it would really hurt me to lose that 1% of my Christmas shopping list that I get locally. Because *all* of our business *bar none* was from Toronto, and other places, they were all the ?skiers?, we didn't sell except twenty bucks in a year to the residents

[inaudible] So, it's not a problem, I don't make it a problem. I won't let it become a problem. If somebody asks me if I was gay, depending on who it was, I would either say Yes or Why do you need to know, or, [ ] question. Or, come back, [inaudible], why are you asking that? 'Coz it really boils down to nobody's business. The only issue really is, do we do something in bed different than Jack and Harriet across the road. That's what it boils down to, well, it doesn't really, there's a lot more to it than that, inasmuch as I think the average gay person is more ... more aware of what's going on, I think, or they've been around a bit more, maybe they're just street-wise ... I think most gay people's houses inside are much more interesting than, certainly a lot are, than the average. I've been into some that are nice houses of straight people too. But, I've been into a lot of houses that I could never possibly live in, I'd be uncomfortable being there for a day ... very sort of straight. I think because we get around, and we travel, and, let's face it, we're influenced by, by actors and actresses and, and we're catty and ... [Don: art and music] and art and music and, yeah, all of these things, I don't know, do they replace family and children? I haven't got a clue. But I think it makes us more interesting people than someone who doesn't have any of those things, and just spends all their time raising two children and living in one small town. I don't think they're nearly as interesting as somebody that's been all over the place and maybe experienced a lot more of life, you know.

Interviewer: You mentioned before the sort of yearning to have a larger circle of friends. What do you, how do you, what can you do about that? [inaudible] Or, what have you done? You work a lot, from the sound of it. It's something we haven't talked much about, but now you're sort of looking around.

Tom: Well, yes, I've, we've been very busy, both of us since we've been here, and we weren't going to go ahead with this this year, I didn't anticipate buying that land and laying out thirty thousand bucks here, but, however, we're going to just do it and get our house the way we want our house, so that it's done. And then I don't have to always be involved in projects of fixing up the house, we can work on the store. The store we'll get to meet people. There's just been a group, in the embryonic stages ... as of last weekend, some friends were over from [inaudible], and they said, Business, the gay business, it's called the Rainbow Alliance of Atlantic Canada. And it's kind of like, is it Lambda? with gay businesses? so that people who want to know, [ ] been in the gay guides and all that sort of stuff, people [ ] know what businesses are gay ... So that's in the development stage and that's a good thing, we'll meet people somehow through that. I think if we go to a few, the nicer craft shows with some of Don's work we might meet some people. There's some people I know of that, I mentioned, out near Liverpool area, that have a circle of friends. I want to get to know some of theirs. I'm going to make an effort. Advertise

in the paper? I've seen friends advertise and they ... now, you get all the ?winners?, not all, but you get a lot of winners, you get a lot of kinky people, a lot of losers, some are looking for a free ride or sex, I'm not interested in advertising for sex, we're only looking for friends. To have fun with and do things with, that we share interests with, you know? [Don: Talk to.] Go out for dinner. Let's get together and go to Maine for the weekend, or, come on over, [ ] lasagna together, or, let's go up the valley for the day and have dinner somewhere ... Some friends, [ ] buddies, junk shops or flea markets or whatever, you know, just to do things with. That would be nice, it would be nice. We have a bit of that but not enough.

Don: Yeah, and you know, it comes down to, each other isn't enough, sometimes, you know? You do need input from other people, get feedback, that sort of thing, what you're doing, what they're doing. It's sort of like a support thing, isn't it?

Tom: Last winter we went down to Florida in the end of December, and we stayed down there until the first week of April. Was it the first week of April? Yes, the first week of April. And, we met a few people down there, on the west coast. This is just north of Clearwater, in the Hudson and Port Ritchie area. But, the gay bar, and people, of Port Ritchie, Florida, was just like walking into 1967 downtown Toronto. I couldn't believe it. You got checked in at the door, there's no windows in this place, you went around the back and went in, all the same sort of clandestine [ ], and ... yeah, it was strange. But there's a big religious number down there too. And, it's not that

[0;20;45]

Interviewer: Around there they don't fool around with letters to the paper and stuff, they shoot people, too, you know.

Tom: So, now, though, around Tampa and places, I'm sure it's a lot more open, but ... I was really amazed at the Bible belt that runs through the southern States, Florida right on over to California, ... and it's getting, it's picking up momentum. [ ] in Europe and Asia, the Islamic movement, anything *but* homosexual, *that's* picking up momentum. Religion always picks up momentum when times are tough. When everybody's, when there's lots of money, and economic security, then they relax and everything goes. But you can trace that right back to, I was reading yesterday about Nevada City? No, Virginia City in Nevada? Back in the eighteen hundreds I mean that was just a bustling, mad community with all kinds of exotic people and a hundred and fifty bars and stuff, and it shriveled right up to nothing now, it's just a tight little community again. So, again, with all of that silver and gold they found there, people are having lots of money and lots of fun [Don: decadent]. That allows, that permits things that they normally

wouldn't permit. Or that they don't permit when times get really tight. So, it's nice to have a scapegoat I guess sometimes. But I, I don't know, I was thinking, I thought this last few years you know that we're just going to progress, and it's going to get better and more open. I'm not so sure I believe that any more, I believe that this is a time to exercise a little bit of caution, and a little bit of discretion. I'm not so sure that the, there wouldn't be a bit of not, maybe a backlash, with this religious thing happening, and things like Skoke, Roseanne Skoke down there. The personal freedom that we had in the seventies, I don't know if we're going to see it continue to grow, or maybe, if times really do get tough, and I think mostly [ ] get worse, I'm not so sure that maybe we wouldn't wind up being a target for somebody's frustration. Or, at best, rescinding some of the things we've already accomplished. Look at what the leader of the, can't stand him, Manning, you know, did you notice the other day the front, what was it, I don't hate homosexuals, I hate homosexuality, this cabinet minister was saying. You know, are they picking up steam? I mean, they're well-based out there in Calgary and Alberta and those places, it's not somewhere that looks as favourably towards gay people, I don't think, as maybe Toronto area or Vancouver or Montreal, the three safe spots [ ]. So, is that sort of stuff picking up momentum? Should we be viewing it with caution?

Interviewer: When you say, a time for discretion or caution, what do you mean, what would that look like? What would we do differently?

Tom: I think we should be very aware ... of what's happening politically and religiously, in regard to attitude towards us.

Interviewer: But do what with that?

Don: I think maybe it's just the last few [inaudible]

Tom: Make damn sure that it's not getting constricting. I think. Not to let it get, pick up too much steam.

Interviewer: You don't mean back down, or?

Tom: Oh no, I don't think we should back down. No. I think quite the opposite.

Tom (continuing): I don't think we should back down. But I think we have certainly to exercise caution and prudence and be very aware ... that those things, those Roseanne Skokes of the world are not gaining momentum, and if they are, we have to figure out how to combat it. We may not get a whole lot more handed to us for the next few years, we've come a long way since I came out of the closet twenty-five years ago, and there's a long way to go before we're recognized [ ] what we should get. There's no reason why

him and I shouldn't get the same rights as anybody else after being together eighteen years. But, there are people out there that want to close some of those things that we've got, they want to pull them back. They want to, the Reform Party said about abolishing the Charter of Rights. That would be horrible. So, there's some out there. And of course there are also the religious [ ]. Manning is religious, certainly not based on anything that Christ taught, but apparently he's religious, you know?

Interviewer: Have you been monogamous through your relationship?

Tom: Yes, basically.

Interviewer: Was that by, sort of, negotiated like on principle, or?

Don: Well I think both of us at different times [inaudible]

Tom: When we had problems, and we were apart for ... the two or three times we were apart for a month to a couple of months at a time, we weren't monogamous, but we each had, we weren't particularly promiscuous but we weren't monogamous. But otherwise, yes. Certainly this last ten years, you'd have to be crazy not to be.

Interviewer: But is it by, did you ... sort of negotiate a, like a policy between you, or did it just happen?

Tom: I think it was just unwritten. [Don: Yeah] I think well, you know, everybody's entitled to their own opinion, but I think monogamy in a relationship is important. I've always thought that, ever since ... and I had a first relationship of five years back in the, started in the late sixties. I've always felt that; I've never been, of the opinion that, you can have a lover but go to bed with whoever you want. That's having a cake and eat it too. That's having a room-mate ... I find that hard to deal with, for myself. If it works for somebody else ... It's not really a commitment, I don't think. There would always be [Don: It'd be hard to share the man you love, you know?] It would be difficult to [Don: That's my pie, you know (laughs).] But if you met somebody else. You know. You get all wild and infatuated with, and go on from there, and the other one gets dropped off, I don't know. I don't think very much of the idea of, Oh yeah, we're lovers but we go to bed with whoever we want. [inaudible] I think monogamy is important ... well, especially [Don: [ ] it can be very hurtful] especially these last, you know, twenty years, or so.

Don: Yeah, I just spent a month out with my brother, in the hospital and everything. Just about ninety, getting up to about, what, ninety-four ninety-five percent of everybody we've ever known is gone now. Yeah, you know, out in Vancouver. [Tom: four or five people have died in the

last year] Just, it's been horrible. I went to the hospital with him [inaudible], was in the bacterial infection, figured out, and, all these people, wandering, it's not a pretty sight at all, so it's really, I thought it was a very good thing to go and visit, and see ... you know, it's a reminder of what can happen, and I think it's probably, a lot of people should go and do that sort of thing. You know, this could be me, if I don't watch myself. It's ugly.

Tom: It makes living here, and I suppose where you are, when you go to the city and see all that, because, in the city is where there's so much of that, you know, so many people sick in the city, or it's so obvious in the city. And of course, the facilities are there to help the people that need it. ... I don't know, it's kind of nice to get away from it and come here, 'coz, you're not inundated with it.

Tom (continuing): On the other hand, ... if we were closer to a city or if I lived in a city, I know that I would be doing some work on a volunteer basis, for, for the AIDS somewhere, whether it's going and helping somebody who's living alone, or being a companion, or whatever, I would like to be able to do. I had a friend who just died in Vancouver [inaudible], but I phoned him frequently and talked to him on the phone, he had a friend looking after him, but, that's as much as you can do from here. But there is a person here who has AIDS. He's only twenty-four. [In Shelbourne?] Yes. He's twenty-four. He lives [ ] corner where that big scandal about the schoolteacher that was, Smith? All right, well, he lived at ... Harbour, just thirty miles west of us. But yeah, he's a young fellow, he lived in Toronto, he's twenty-four, twenty-five. [You know him?] Well, I, not really. I know his father. He's gay. I know his father, I know his family, but I don't know him well. ... So it's everywhere, you know, it's not unique to big cities.

[0;31;00]

Don: But it's kind of nice not to, here, have it around you and in front of you all the time.

Tom: He was staying at St. Paul's Hospital.

Don: I was ready to get out of there, you know, after ... being there a month. There's lots of wonderful things about being in the city, you know, accessibility, the computer stores are fabulous, you know, anything you want you can go and look for, and find, and here of course it's, pretty well ?much? have to order everything, you know, and wait, or search, a lot of traveling to find ... But it was nice to get out of there so that you didn't ... see, you know, you can walk by people on the street and know they have [ ], you know, it's just, it's not nice.

Tom: If I found that I was HIV-positive, I don't expect to make that discovery, we have been tested, but, I know that I would certainly head to a city, I wouldn't stay here. I would definitely dispose of this and move to a city. Most likely Vancouver. [Why?] Because of the support system. For that reason alone, the support system, is there. There's other people, and, I don't think it would be as lonely. ... I mean, when you're in the city, you're, ... there's lots of visual distractions which takes your mind from [inaudible] you know, if you're a bit of a worrier and I am ... So, yeah, I would rather stay there, you know?

Interviewer: Barring that unpleasant possibility, do you imagine yourself staying here for the foreseeable or unforeseeable future?

Tom: For a lot of time, well, we're doing more with this house, we're getting set up to, where it's going to be fairly comfortable here, you know? The house is going to be comfortable and the money is kind of rolling in from the investments, and that's alright, we can do our thing here, so ... The compromise might be leaving for three months in the winter and summer vacation say, getting away from here enough, out to Halifax for occasional weekends and things, so, probably stay here for a while. I can see retiring in Chester, more so than here. [Where's that?] Chester is, is closer to Halifax. [Don: twenty minutes to Halifax?] No, maybe more, half-hour, maybe forty minutes ... Chester is to Nova Scotia what ... Monterey is to California. Chester is [inaudible] Well, there's a lot of old, big money in Chester. [inaudible] The ?Moyers? family and people with oil companies, and, Flora McDonald, ... And there's another sort of ordinary community, but, the advantage to that, is that, with that type of person, brings a desirable attitude [inaudible], you've got a more cosmopolitan kind of person. Chester is definitely more cosmopolitan. [inaudible] part of Chester is gorgeous ... But, it's a place where you can live in anonymity, even though it's a small place, because the people that come are going there for the weekend at their house, they're not, you can have some anonymity, and you don't, and it's not the same caliber of person as the uneducated fishing community (for god's sake, don't say that). But, do you know what I'm trying to say?

Interviewer: I can imagine.

Tom: We'd be accepted a lot more there, for one thing. It's close to Halifax, there's a bus. And certainly we would have more friends; now, there might be a lot of straight people, but we would be well accepted with the type of person, straight person, that's there. A little bit more broad-minded [inaudible], somebody that's been somewhere other than Shelbourne county or Nova Scotia. There's a lot of people that have never gone anywhere. ... But, check out Chester on the way, Chester's very pretty. Nice place to have lunch there called [inaudible] [Don: [inaudible] I'd like



to someday have an adobe down in] The desert [Don: in New Mexico or Arizona] That'll be the grand compromise 'coz I love water. He likes the desert. [inaudible] Well, I could handle that, actually.

Don: I can't stand the cold and dampness. Drives me crazy. I never felt better than living down there in the dryness. It just felt great, bones didn't ache. Here they ache. Under the covers at night, my elbows [inaudible]. There, it's wonderful.

Tom: Palm Springs's got the nicest gay community I ever ran into anywhere. They're pretty well all over thirty, ... and, everybody, well, a lot of them are retired ... some of them are fairly well-heeled, some of them aren't ... but, I don't know what it is [Don: They're comfortable with themselves. Everybody that you run into] I never went out for dinner as much in my life. [Don: you get to know who they are, what they're doing, you know, they're comfortable] Friendly, warm, come on out for dinner, and get together for ordinary dinners? You know, [Don: They aren't trying to impress you.] Nobody's trying to impress anybody. [ ] tomorrow, meet up, whatever, it was not, it was not really trying to, it was not pretentious, they were really down to earth real people that gave you a hug and meant it. Especially, I was involved in AA down there [Don: lots of hugging, everybody hugs down there] god, nice area, yeah, I was very surprised, you would think it would be the opposite. And then on the weekends all the boys came in from West Hollywood, that's a different story. But, the ones that lived there all the time, [inaudible] Hollywood or West Hollywood, it's so polluted it's horrible it's not even funny.

Interviewer: Does Suzy go with you, everywhere? [Tom & Don: Everywhere] Really?

Tom: She doesn't like Palm Springs, it's too hot. Doesn't like Florida much either.

Interviewer: So you have to take her into account?

Don: Well, actually, we shave her, she gets a real, close, Schnauzer cut.

Interviewer: What uh

Don: Yorkshire

Tom: Overgrown Yorkshire. For a Yorkshire, she's a cow. But, she's got a great personality. She's tough little dog [How old is she?] Ten [Don: she's into everything, ... she likes it here, she loves the yard, she doesn't like it when she can't have a place to run in or shore, she loves the shore, the ocean ... she'll run down all by herself, she'll bring up starfish up to our house, or,

she grabs crabs, throws them in the air, and pulls their legs off [voice: Oh, stop it] ...

Tom: They were bred for killing rats in mines, originally. [Really] Yeah. She kills. We have a little otter out there, a little sea otter, river otter, and there's a mink out there too, some got away some years ago down there so there's a few mink around. She had it pinned down between the rocks and she spent the entire day, until high tide came to drive him out by the rocks, all day. And she gets these moles. She spends a great deal of time out there.

Tom (continuing): She's comfortable. She likes it; but will we stay forever? I don't know, I don't know. It depends, really, it depends a lot.

Don: It would be a real surprise. ... He's always, he's always on the move. I'd like to settle in someplace, someplace you could call home. Whatever you want to do, you can go from there.

[0:40;17]

Interviewer: How long have you been here?

Tom: Two years.

Interviewer: Is that the longest you've been

Don: Four years in the second farm, the longest in one place.

Tom: Four years there. But, you know, we have used it as a way of making a living, you see. You could buy a house for fifty thousand bucks, you could put twenty into it plus your own labour, and you could sell the damned thing for a hundred and a quarter, you could do that in a year and you've picked up fifty thousand dollars. You have these other little things that earn a living on the side; at the end of the year you get a nice chunk of change. So, you know, it's been a motivating factor, ... to get a few things done and get comfortable. And the last two in Thornbury and this is off the record sort of thing, we bought fifty seven and seventy three and sold for two twenty and two ten, and I sold them myself with no real estate commission, and I put ten thousand in one and [inaudible] about five or six [Don: It wasn't much] But there's no, we made a lot of money on those two properties. So, then, in Vancouver, we went out there just as the market was going up too [ ] on a house each and realized the same kind of profit. So, it's been our income. But, I'm tired of doing it. I'm starting to get a bit of a sore lower back, and a little bit of sciatic nerve, and, you know, those things that come as you broach fifty, and, so, I don't have the same energy do that sort of thing. I would like to have a little store that

made a few thousand bucks a year, not a lot, not a lot, but something that was fun, and allowed us to travel, you can write off the expenses of travel finding things for it, interesting stuff from Mexico which we've done before [ ], and just spend, yeah, to go up to visit our friends in Ontario, and have the personal freedom to go, that's worth a lot, and we can do that from here, so

Don: And what's nice about what we've been able to do too is anytime we wanted to just ... take off, we can go together, I mean, we didn't have to worry about schedules or

Tom: Well, you don't either, do you?

Interviewer: Not unless I have a commitment.

Don: There's not many couples you come across that do, like, [inaudible]

Tom: You can have the last week of June off, and you want to get off something else, and you've got someone else telling you you can have two weeks off a year and not telling you when they are? That's prison in my opinion. No thank you.

Interviewer: What happens to the geese when you go away?

Tom & Don: Neighbour. [Really]

Tom: We've got good neighbours.

Don: Tom wants to get a little donkey or a llama, you know.

Tom: Llama I think. [Don: Llama] and probably get [ ] somebody out in the yard.

Voice: Where did we see, we saw a llama just

Tom: They're fashionable now.

Don: Emus. We want a rhea. [Oh really] Yeah, they're fashion.

Voice: Where was that place, that small place we went to?

Interviewer: Yeah, I can't remember.

Voice: Anyway, we saw a llama.

Tom: Shall I make some more tea?

Interviewer: Bear River.

Tom: Bear River, yes, there's somebody out there [inaudible]. There's somebody out there has an emu. [Don: wild] What's his name? [Don: [redacted]] [redacted]. He's a priest.

Interviewer: There's a United Church minister there who's gay too. [voice: Ooh.] Used to be a little hotbed of ... ecclesiastical homos.

Tom: (laughs) Well, [redacted], apparently, and he's lived down the States, the rest of the time he does this bed and breakfast, quite mad apparently. It's a fun place.

Don: There's a [ ] couple up in Lunenburg who's got a bed and breakfast too, I guess.

Tom: Anyway, would you like some apple pie?

[end of interview]