

AAHP
AIDS Activist History Project

Interview Transcript 50

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Interviewee:	David Hoe
Interviewers:	Alexis Shotwell Gary Kinsman
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Persons present: David Hoe – DH
Alexis Shotwell – AS
Gary Kinsman – GK

[START OF TRANSCRIPT]

AS: What I always do at the beginning is just say that we are talking to David Hoe about Ottawa, but in Vancouver, and that it is September 16, 2016. So, thank you so much. The first thing we do is just to start by trying to get a bit of a sense from everyone around setting the stage. And so we usually ask when you first heard about AIDS—or, it probably wouldn't have been called AIDS then.

DH: Yeah. It was either called GRID or Gay Cancer. I was living in Montreal, and my roommate read about this in the *New York Times*, as did many people. And there were four or five people gathered in Montreal. One was this roommate of mine. Another was Nobby Gilmore (Dr. Norbert Gilmore), who has recently retired as a doc from McGill. And the other was a guy called Richard Burzynski, who was the first ED [Executive Director] of the Canadian AIDS Society. So four or five men met, this must have been mid-eighties, early eighties when it was a strange—as we all know now, “gay cancer.” So my roommate used to come home and talk about it. That’s where I first heard about it. It seemed, like many, that it was incredulous that gay men should be having this enormous thing that seemed completely unrelated to everything that we did. So that was when I first heard about it.

AS: Were you a student in Montreal?

No, I was working in a centre for deaf and disabled children.

AS: And did you get involved in any AIDS organizing there?

DH: No. Not at all. I didn’t do anything at that time. That came later. I was training to be a psychotherapist at the time. And that’s where my energy was going. And then my psychotherapy training was in Ottawa, and I thought “Okay. Somehow I’m going to have to move to Ottawa.” And came up with the AIDS Committee of Ottawa [ACO] as Executive Director, and I applied, and I got it. But I had previously been considering it and met with Richard Burzynski in ’87, and that’s really where I learned more about AIDS activism. Of course I had seen it in the news, and the treatment advocacy that was happening at that time.

AS: Would you have been in Montreal for the... the International AIDS conference in Montreal was a bit later. It was in '89.

DH: '89 was the AIDS conference, and I was there for that for sure.

AS: Okay, so I won't jump ahead. Had you had any political formation that made you feel connected to the activist part of AIDS, or to the getting in the mix of it?

DH: Well I was a gay activist in the UK in the late 60s, early 70's. So I had a formation, if you like. I had my baptism back in the early days. I was part of starting gay lib in the UK in the 60's. I was in the epicenter of gay activism in a town called Brighton in the late 60s. When I was in social work school I did my first thesis on the history of gay oppression. That was in '67-'68. So, I was part of the wet behind the ears crowd that started gay lib in the UK in the 60s. Then when I came to Canada in the early 70s, I didn't pick up that at all. I got totally wrapped up in my work. I felt that I had my primer, as a gay activist, years and years and years previous. I was familiar with community organizing.

AS: And so the job came up in Ottawa for ACO...

DH: In Ottawa, yes, the AIDS Committee of Ottawa. They were looking for an Executive Director. I felt like I could bring my gay activism, and could bring my—I was Director of an organization already—I could bring my organizational skills, and I could also bring my personal politic to this. That's what I planned to do. But I could carry on my training as a psychotherapist, too.

AS: Can you just talk about, a little bit, what that was like? Or what happened? How it all unfolded?

DH: It was a great time. Both the AIDS Committee of Ottawa and the Canadian AIDS Society were setting up shop. And we set up shop together. We agreed that we would share offices. The first challenge came when nobody would rent to us. It's a fairly familiar story for AIDS organizations. So I arrived and it ended up, because we couldn't find offices, that my home became the office. And as we hired staff as we got money, then slowly the bedroom became an office, and the kitchen became a working room, and onwards.

My early memories are of those times where we were scrambling to get up a place where we could work and be active and political and provide services and build community. So it was pretty much non-stop building. The AIDS Committee had been going for two years as a voluntary organization, so a lot of the volunteers were really ready to have staff. And so there was an unloading. I had to learn accounting, and then media relations was another, and hiring staff. And then being the public figure. It was a pretty fast track and steep learning curve. Everybody was rolling up

their sleeves. So that made it just a great kind of connecting energy, which was so vital in those days. And then it really got busy with the first demonstration on Parliament Hill with AIDS ACTION NOW! My home then became the center of making T-shirts, and posters, and all that kind of stuff.

GK: Can you tell us about the AIDS ACTION NOW! demonstration on Parliament Hill?

AS: No one has told us yet about what it was like to have people from other cities coming to Ottawa to do demonstrations. Can you talk a little bit about just how that would have been organized with AIDS ACTION NOW!, and what it was like to have people come from away to demonstrations on Parliament Hill? How it would work and feel?

DH: Well, it was very powerful, because the folks from AIDS ACTION NOW! were probably the strongest voice, with the greatest hub of energy, in terms of activism.



So, it was a big deal to have so many people come from Toronto, and some came from Montreal, and set up on Parliament Hill. There was not only the demonstrations, but it was also quite the iconic figure now, of a few people taking medications that were, at that time, not accessible in Canada. One of which became a lifesaver for me, Pentamidine. It was a time when voices were strong, but angry. So there was big energy. It

was all hands on deck in an ocean that was tumultuous. In that sense, there was also the wonder of connecting with like-minded people, and shared values, and the vigor of wanting to see things different and change. Then there was organizing a march through Ottawa ending up on Parliament Hill.

It was a big deal because it was the first one in Canada, and it was shortly followed thereafter by one in Toronto, which was much less civil—Ottawa is kind of a civil place. I remember being at the one in Toronto when we were marshaled by horses as we walked along – I forget which street it was – Queen Street, I think. And we had police horses on either side of us. That was a more tense demo than the one in Ottawa, which was funnily enough hijacked in some ways because Alistair Clayton, who was then the head of the Federal Center for AIDS, decided he would be part of the lead of the march. You know subsequently I ended up working for the federal government, I know how these things work inside the federal government, too. It clearly was a tactical thing that had been discussed with the Minister and Alistair was up there at the front, showing that the federal government was behind progress. Nonetheless, he kind of disappeared when it came to the speeches on the Hill. Tim McCaskell and, I forget who else was speaking. Oh, Michael Lynch.

Politicians came out to talk to us as we were waiting, lining up to start the march up Elgin Street.

AS: Were there a lot of marches at that time? Would that have been an unusual thing?

DH: Not a lot. I think there were various ones throughout the country that were at various sites, but I think the two biggest ones were about establishing treatment activism. And then of course there was the big one at the Montreal conference in '89, when the voices were really, really strong.

AS: And so you went there. Did others come from ACO?

DH: Oh Yes. We were all there.

AS: Can you talk a little about that?

DH: Well, the people that were on staff at the time came out, and some of the volunteers came out. And so we were a really good contingent. AIDS ACTION NOW!, I think probably maybe 15 or 20 people came down, but we were able to boost the number of people simply because we were local. So it looked substantive, which was great.

AS: Do you have any memory—one of the things we've been learning is that in Montreal just before that conference there was a small group of pretty young people who were working on AIDS, called Réaction SIDA—do you have any memory of them?

DH: I'm just wondering if one of those people came to... I think they did, I think they came to the Ottawa demonstration, too. Because I remember that there were some signs in French, I think. And I think it was the AIDS ACTION NOW! equivalent in Québec, right. I think some of them came to Ottawa for that demo. I'd have to look at the photographs. There's some still up in the AIDS Committee of Ottawa of that day.

AS: Yes. That iconic one -- I feel like I've gotten us kind of taken us away a little bit. So I want to go back to some of the early days of ACO. You wouldn't have been there when it was very first proposed as part of PTS [Pink Triangle Services]—Barry told us about that.

DH: No. When Bob Read and Barry Deepröse proposed it as part of the PTS, no, I wasn't there. I was the hired help that came on later after they'd done all of that heavy lifting. [laughter]

AS: So what was it like organizing with ACO, or being the ED in those days in Ottawa?

DH: Well I'd been a Director of many organizations, but nothing prepared me for this. In that, I think the biggest thing was, it was making HIV a public history. So it wasn't about – of course we were providing services and we had got prevention strategies – but it really was establishing the organization as a voice that would guide the city through HIV. And that meant in terms of media work, in terms of political work, in terms of articulating what the issues were, and in terms of offering an alternative to the prejudice that was around. In that sense, it became a big job as a communicator. And it became an important part of developing a political analysis that was forward thinking, as well as providing services. Of course, nobody had expertise at that time, so we were building the expertise in terms of the prevention, and in terms of the support. Building on the Buddies movement that had happened that Barry was so strongly involved in creating. And in that sense, we were creating together a lot of not knowing.

I know one of your questions later on is “What is the value of the Ontario AIDS network?” It really was important to network across the country, to learn on progressive positions, and to learn about skills that were needed, and training, and articulating positions politically. And in that sense we were gaining the expertise, which eventually of course became international. We'd learn from each other in different countries. In that sense, building an organization, one which is community-based, with recruiting staff with little money – still the same today – expecting a lot from people with little money. I don't know that salaries have gone up exponentially, but my guess is that they're still knocking around \$40,000, or something like that, \$45,000, for front line workers. It was really a pittance in those days, I think it was \$20,000 or \$30,000. I think I earned \$30,000 a year or something like that. So it was finding good, strong hearts with a values based relationship to life. They were the two criteria for getting hired and doing the work because it was hard work, long work, and controversial work. Of course we did it for probably nine months or so without an office.

AS: When did you finally find someone who would rent to you?

DH: Oh! Some really corrupt landlord! Who is still a bastard in Ottawa, but he saw a deal. And we forfeited something that I later regretted, which was an issue of accessibility. It had a very long staircase and lots of people with HIV couldn't get up it. Then we ultimately created a space that was on street level so that people with HIV could get in.

AS: One of the things we've been wanting to hear about is how the—there's obviously the political, the advocacy stuff, and also some of the stuff that was more involved with services—if you wanted to say something about how The Living Room came to be set up, or how... I guess this is broadly a question of

the relationship between that kind of prevention work that a lot of organizations did and also the more treatment organized, or attending to the needs of people living with AIDS or HIV work.

DH: Yes. It wasn't so dichotomized as it eventually became at the beginning. It was all about a community working to keep itself healthy and prevent HIV. They were synonymous in a way. But the AIDS Committee of Ottawa was not quick on the uptake in terms of providing a place for people with HIV. And a lot of people were dissatisfied with its lack of presence for people with HIV. So one young guy, called Brian Wilson, started a group for people with HIV. He had HIV and he used the last 4 digits of his phone number as the name of the organization. It was called 5662 Services. And he started out of his own home. It was one of the things I noticed that we should be doing, and everybody agreed that we should be doing something. However, we did not want to detract from the work that Brian had done. So we worked together. It took some months to negotiate a blending. We started by giving him money so that he could do his group and we'd start funnelling people there that wanted to connect. Eventually we decided that we'd start one night, and one of the board members resigned as a board member and became a contractor to run one night a week, which eventually became The Living Room. It was the PWA [Persons Living with AIDS] drop-in center. Again, up the stairs. And that group very, very quickly needed to find space. Brian stopped his group and eventually passed away. Our Living Room took on a life of its own. Initially purely with volunteers. It was sometime later that we had staff. It became a hub, a big hub for people with HIV.

I just had a visitor for 10 days, who - one of the people that got strongly involved with The Living Room was a nun. When I heard that a nun was visiting The Living Room I just blew a gasket. Because we'd been fighting the Catholic Church, as we all did. And I said, "What the fuck's a nun doing here?" But nonetheless, she became an anchor for those people who had multiple layers of problems: mental illness, addiction, social isolation. She just became an anchor for them. Eventually she got the Pope's Medal and the Order of Canada for her work in HIV. And her convent disagreed with this, so after nearly 40 years of nunning she gave up nunning, because she said her calling is to work with people with HIV. The convent disagreed, so she quit the convent. Anyway, she's just been staying with me for 10 days. She's 70 now. She's still a renegade and says "Fuck" and "Shit." Those early days were, with the Living Room, were providing a safe place. And it still continues today.

AS: Does she happen to live in Ottawa? Should we talk to her?

DH: Yes.

AS: Okay. Maybe you can connect us. That would be wonderful.

DH: For sure.

AS: I understand that also at this time there were some kind of competing committees that were floated. Barry told us about Dr. Alistair Clayton's proposal?

DH: That was before. That was in maybe '86, '87. Alistair Clayton, The Director of The Federal Centre for AIDS, started his own AIDS Committee of Ottawa. Barry has probably told you the story that the AIDS Committee of Ottawa was already formed, and Dr. Clayton's went away quietly, I think. It was short lived. One of the things we did try to do was to bring in Hemophilia Ontario. We succeeded at that. I hired a guy from California to do wellness workshops. He'd been doing it in San Francisco. So The AIDS Committee of Ottawa began wellness workshops for people with HIV way before the meds. We looked at spiritual work, we looked to creativity, we looked at decision-making. It was a course that we called "Living Positive." Hemophilia Ontario and people with HIV used to come to these workshops, and so we made that bridge, which was great. Eventually I hired their fundraiser to come and work with ACO to do that. So, in that sense we didn't have as much segregation from other organizing around HIV, as happened in some other cities, around those people that were impacted by HIV. Brian Wilson at 5662 Services was a tough little *en-tant*. But we had no other, I don't think.

AS: And it sounds like that came to be a quite harmonious...

DH: Right.

AS: That it still functions as a really solid place for people living, positive people.

DH: Yes. The Living Room, yeah, for sure.

AS: At what point does ACO start getting funding?

DH: 1987. It was provincial funding. I think we got \$166,000. Then, probably a year or 18 months later, the federal government came online. We got, I think, two salary positions—one for gay men's prevention, and I forget what the other one was. And

then subsequently we got a women's HIV worker. We had three, I think, federal funding positions after that. Of course, there was a shift federally around the policies related to HIV, when Brian Mulroney changed cabinet and took out Jake Epp and put in Perrin Beatty. That's when the federal government started to get engaged in HIV work.

AS: Do you want to say anything about the experience of having Jake Epp as a Health Minister and why that transformation...

DH: He was an abomination. We know that his religious and personal values are very different from a lot of the things that we believe to be important. And of course, the activism that happened was the thing that impacted the reputation of Mulroney. The same thing happened at the conference in Montréal when, I think Kenneth Kaunda was the visiting African Premier from Zambia

GK: Yes, he was.

DH: We all stood up and turned our backs on Mulroney. Tim McCaskell opened the conference with AIDS ACTION NOW! and others.

GK: Are you thinking about ACT UP from New York City?

DH: Well ACT UP New York City, but also there was a group from Paris that were part of that wonderful opening to the conference. Following that, I think it was then, when Brian Mulroney changed his cabinet and switched Perrin Beatty into the place. I think two days after Perrin Beatty got the job he phoned me up and said, "Can I come and talk?" It wasn't convenient for me. I tried to say, "I'm sorry it's not convenient." And I got slapped on the wrist for not accommodating a Minister at his whim. So I cancelled what I had planned and he came over. We laid out all of the things we had been talking about within the community of what was important for HIV. I was just down the street from him. I think it was convenient for him to speak.

AS: How did he respond? What was that like?

DH: Very sympathetically.

AS: Interesting.

DH: He was interested. I got a real sense of a shift in terms of an ear from the federal government. Of course, subsequently, the federal government got significantly

engaged in national AIDS strategy after that. I don't think it has changed much since then.

AS: We have one other question just about local opposition, which is a bit earlier. Just if you wanted to say anything about the ways that there were some of the people who were fighting funding from AIDS. So Jacquelin Holzman, who was a City Councilor, Andy Haydon...

DH: Oh yes, the dreaded Andy Haydon, right. So, I met with the mayor, a guy called Jim Durrell, shortly after I came. We had one city councilor who was championing our work, a guy called Mark Maloney, who I think is in Toronto now. He facilitated a lot of meetings for me to meet with city councilors. The mayor was fairly sympathetic, but he was more sympathetic about AIDS in Africa than AIDS in Ottawa. But Jackie Holzman opposed AIDS funding and, you can see it online now, I think her line was that "If you get this, it's your own responsibility." And then Andy Haydon, who was chair of the then regional municipality of Ottawa-Carleton, said that, "AIDS work was sexual perversion cloaked in human rights." So we were full out, we had a demonstration outside of his offices, and I did a lot of media work. That's when I learned, in some ways, of how to work the media. Because I watched the news that night and it looked as though there were hundreds of us, and we were probably about 35 people. And I said to the camera guy, "How did you do that?" He said, "Well, you think a camera is just there taking pictures, but we can make something look huge or we can make it look really small." It was harmful that we were fighting the Regional Chair. I met with him in council and we used to have these heated arguments. It was something that most Councilors froze around. They didn't like it because their boss was against us and we were loud. But eventually, of course, he disappeared. It was all part of—the irony of opposition to social change is that creates community dialogue, and it creates people having to make sense about it. In some ways it served us well, in terms of our articulation of our ideas and creating some change within the city.

AS: So, that's a nice leap off into talking about some of the ways that ACO was doing things. So if you wanted to talk about any of the other work that was happening, or about the condom blitz action that happened.

DH: You know, I've been racking my brain about what happened... You're talking about the Captain Condom thing that there was a controversy about? I've been racking my brain to think what that was all about. I know that Captain Condom was a cartoon series that had stories in the *Capital Xtra* every month. We had postcards, and we had visuals, and it was our way of bringing condoms into social discourse and acceptability. I forget who it was that opposed it and said that we'd gone too far. But clearly, explicit sexuality upset some people. For the life of me I can't remember what that was. Did Barry talk about that some more and say who got upset?

AS: He did, but I can't right now remember who he said. But I think he did tell us.

DH: But I think it was the explicitness of the sexuality that upset some people. I remember it as an issue, and all of the images of Captain Condom are coming in. And I remember Phillip Hannan who was the artist, who did the work, and developed it, doing his best to accommodate the concerns. But Captain Condom lived. I think those posters are still pretty iconic. I wish I could tell you more. I looked online to see if there was anything, and I couldn't find it.

AS: So, Phillip was also the photographer, he was the photographer in Ottawa also?

DH: Yes, he was. He was a photographer and writer. And he eventually ended up as Communications Executive with Foreign Affairs, I think. He became a bureaucrat, like some of us did about our other early activities—one, I think we had the first legal clinic, HIV legal clinic, in Canada. We developed a partnership with the University of Ottawa, where we had legal students come and work with us. One of them went on to be the Executive Director of HALCO, [HIV and AIDS Legal Clinic Ontario] Ruth Carey, she was a student with us. We had that for a number of years. We had the first healing workshop for people living with HIV. I talked with you about that earlier.

There was one of our colleagues, Michael Graydon, who you probably know, was a young HIV prevention worker. The three police forces in Ottawa (the RCMP, the Ottawa police, and the National Capital Commission police) were in an uproar about men having sex in bushes. And a woman had been walking through this place called Remic Rapids, and she came across two guys fucking. She said, "I did a bird whistle and they still carried on." The three police forces wanted to close down Remic Rapids—gay cruising grounds. And Michael was magnificent. He built a case that this was a place where people went secretly, and that it was likely to be that if the police did anything that would expose people, that it was going to result in suicides; that the days of completely open gay sex were still to come. He did a wonderful, wonderful job of getting the three police forces, plus a city councilor, to agree that the police would not raid the place but would protect it, so that gay men would be safe for sex. That was a great, magnificent piece of work that Michael did. To get three police forces to agree to take on the role of protector of the environment for people to have sex.

The other thing I think we did was that we got really good media confidence. The AIDS Committee built a good voice that the media trusted. That was very good. We took on the health care with the Ottawa General Hospital, which had a policy that all people going to the HIV clinic would see whichever doctor was available. We fought that, and really upset the Ottawa hospital because we went straight to the president and said that there was value in the relationship between the patient and the doctor,

and that getting to know each other was part of the work. That getting to see a different doctor each time made purely going to the doctor purely lab-based, and that the personal relationship was important. And we got that changed.

AS: And that would have been really important for a lot of people who come for medical care.

DH: Right. I got a really big dressing down from the HIV clinic. But nonetheless they changed the policy. And so, we each got our own doctor after that, which was great. We took on a controversy where the various municipalities around Ottawa were opposing the availability of condom machines in public places, so swimming pools, recreation centers, etc. So, we took that on and we were successful in getting that changed.

You're well aware that our Medical Officer of Health, Ian Gemmill, was a Section 22 fan. We fought, and fought, and fought that. Eventually Ian left, and the Section 22's dropped dramatically after he had gone. And that was the foreground for us taking on HIV and criminalization. That political activism and policy work still continues today, as you well know.

GK: For sure.

DH: That became a big part of work was creating a space, a police environment that was safe, and that there was not this oppressive public health policy.

GK: David, both of us understand what Section 22 is, but maybe people reading your transcript won't. So maybe you could just briefly describe why that was a problem—a Section 22 order from the public health officials.

DH: The HPPA [Health Protection and Promotion Act], gives the power to a Medical Officer of Health to issue an order to somebody to change their behaviour. It is an order that comes into place to prevent somebody having, what is perceived in public health terms as "a risk to society of public health." And Section 22 allows the Medical Officer of Health to force, legally, force somebody to not have unprotected sex, and it can extend that to not having sex. Which is to reduce the risk of HIV. It's a blunt tool, because we're talking about all of the things that underpin behaviour. But Ian Gemmill felt that the "hit hard first" was the best way to handle people who were having difficulty managing safer sex. He was issuing—it was fairly standard for two, or three, or five or six of these to be done in a large city—but Ian was somewhere up in the 40s, I think. 40 orders issued. And we talked about it and, eventually, working with him on it became impossible. So we went the Chief Medical Officer of Health, and then also went politically, and then publically. Ian subsequently left. I think to this day he still blames us for interrupting his career. And in some ways I think there's some validity to that.

Also along that line was the work, the AIDS Committee of Ottawa was a leader, in championing anonymous testing. That was not something that was automatic. Of course we supported it, but getting Public Health to accept this. And our Chief MOH [Medical Officer of Health] in Ontario, a guy called Dr. Richard Schabas was opposed to it. He liked to track things. He believed that identifiers were really important. Richard and I had several heated discussions. But ultimately, we got anonymous testing. And he attempted a number of times to reverse that. It still exists today. That was something else that we did.

Another thing that we did was, it was a part of our work – kind of an expansion – where we realized it wasn't all about the local scene or the national scene, that HIV was international. I think the AIDS Committee of Ottawa had one of the first exchanges with Africa. We had an African HIV worker for women come and work with us for six or nine months. We established an international connection there. And that was a wonderfully rich exchange. The other kind of little bits that we did was that we became the home for the first gay film festival in Ottawa. They needed an organization to be able to issue receipts, so we did that. We also became the home for the start of the HIV organization in Hull, Québec, now Gatineau—BRAS, Bureau Regionale d'Action SIDA. One of our board members became their first chair. He asked us if we could issue receipts and we kind of gave him a bank account. So that was interesting. And then there was—I don't know if you've heard of Paper Prayers, it's a smaller version of The Quilt

GK: Okay.

DH: People do little pieces of art, three inches by eight inches. And an organization started up in Ottawa for that. That's gone international. We were the supporter of that at the beginning. The only other thing that I can think of is the bizarre irony that we were all inaugural members of The Ottawa-Carleton Council on AIDS, along with Public Health and doctors from the hospital and local doctors. So, we set out to develop a strategic response with all the systems locally, and we were leaders in that. But we ended up with a bloody nose with that because we were fighting Gemmill. And it was Ian Gemmill and myself that were the co-chairs of this council. But because we ended up fighting him, we got severely chastised for wanting somebody's career head chopped off. I was not seen favourably for some time as a result. But, *c'est la vie*. There's the things that came up when "What else was the AIDS Committee of Ottawa doing in those lonely days."

AS: When you mentioned Schabas I was thinking, we had some conversation about some of the quarantine legislation that he was in favour of. Was there any—there was a strong response in Toronto about the quarantine legislation that Schabas wanted to bring in—do you remember anything about that in Ottawa?

DH: No. I think at that time I was on the Minister's advisory council in Ontario. I don't know. I had so many fights with Richard. Now, the quarantine, that would have been earlier on wouldn't it?

GK: It's around 1991. He wants to change the designation of HIV from communicable, I think to "virulent."

DH: Right. Yes, I remember that. Yes, I was on the Minister's advisory council at that time. We just pushed. It was just crazy public health policy. Richard's got a perspective, and it's not an open one, or a facilitative one. It's a control one.

GK: Right.

AS: I think we're moving into some of the last questions. I think there's sort of two different ways we are interested always in trying to remember some of the people who were involved in AIDS work who died, because we can't talk to them. I know that you must have known innumerable people. But if there's anyone who you'd like to put into the record as someone you remember who was important to the work, or just you want to remember.

DH: Oh! The first one that comes to mind is Bernard Courte. Who came speaking at the Toronto rally in '88, was very powerful. And Tim McCaskell, of course. And Michael Lynch. And locally there was some wonderful leaders Luc Levasseur, who ran The Living Room for a long time, Bernard Maté and George Mitchell followed. There were lots of foot soldiers, men and women, who were doing the work daily, that just gave up their lives for this. It was astounding how many people did that. Nobody considered themselves extraordinary, which was wonderful. It was what we did. I could spend a little bit of time thinking of some names if you wanted. I have faces flashing in front of me and, sadly, names are not easy to retrieve.

GK: Just bit more specific memories perhaps of—there were two Bobs that died, Bob Moore and Bob Read. Do you have any specific memories of them?

DH: Bob Moore was before my time.

GK: Okay. It's very early on, yes.

DH: Bob Read and I were good friends. He was opposed to my hiring. [Laughter] He said, "He doesn't know anything about HIV. He's not been doing HIV work." But then he told me afterwards he changed his mind. So, Bob and I became really good friends, and I was with him when he died. He was incredibly generous, both of heart and money. My favourite story about Bob is that when he died, we illegally put some ashes under a stone in a park in Ottawa. And it's a Pink Triangle stone, which has this quote on it "Oh! That's unfortunate. She spoke very highly of you." [laughter] So, that's Bob's memory. I think that he proposed the formation of the AIDS Committee

of Ottawa and Barry [Deeprise] seconded it. Although Barry might say it was the other way around. I can't remember. But nonetheless he's a founder. And he's sadly got a little bit forgotten in the history. But he was vigorous in his activism and his generosity of time, and his forthrightness. He worked his butt off, and then he succumbed to AIDS. Bob Moore I know by reputation. There was Glenn Janzen, who brought the AIDS Quilt to Ottawa. And then there were all sorts of people on the board: Kelly McGinnis, was an Ottawa doctor who died from HIV, and he wasn't on the board for a long time. I'll give some thought to other names.

GK: Sure. That'd be great.

DH: Is there anything else? Oh! What else did we do? Oh! Bruce House you were interested in.

AS: Yes.

DH: A member of the board of directors of the AIDS committee of Ottawa, Sally Eaton, who started Bruce House, came to us and said she wanted ACO to start housing, and the board didn't agree. But she went ahead. But we did support them. We, I think, helped them at the beginning with being a place where money could go through. And then we helped get it started at the beginning. And the Director of Bruce House, Todd Armstrong, worked closely with us.

GK: It's okay.

DH: He and I worked together a lot. He did a wonderful job with starting with nothing. So, Bruce House of course still goes, and, I don't know, it's on shaky grounds for funding and has been for 20 years. Just a minute, let me look at my notes to see if there's anything else... No, that's it.

AS: Yes. Really we're at the point where if there's anything else that you want to tell us, or that's come up.

DH: No. I think that the AIDS Committee of Ottawa became a strong part of community across the Ontario AIDS Network. I became the first sort of staff person of the OAN [Ontario AIDS Network]. We got money from the Trillium Foundation to expand fundraising and infrastructure. The OAN asked me if I would oversee that. So, we hired our first staff person, Judith English. We were vibrantly involved with the Ontario AIDS Network. I think Barry was the chair at one point. We were part of it; this was before it became formalized into an operation with staff. I think it then became incorporated. We were a part of that process. And we were vigorous with the Canadian AIDS Society, too. Of course it helped a lot that we were on the same floor.

GK: Of course.

DH: I learned a lot from Richard Burzynski, let me tell you. He's got a mouth on him, that guy, and he's not chicken about saying his opinions. And I learned a lot from him. So in that sense, that was good. There was some wonderful people at the time. Joan Anderson, and the different chairs of the Canadian AIDS Society. So it was a rich community, we certainly created something that I think was a powerful shift, and still to this day reverberates in public policy. So, that's good.

AS: Yes. It's excellent.

DH: Away we go.

AS: Okay, David, we thank you so much for talking with us.

GK: And David, it is great to chat with you and see you again after all of these years.

DH: Very good. And best wishes with the project.

[END OF TRANSCRIPT]