

Interview with Kelly Quiros

CCQAP

Narrators: Kelly Quiros [KQ]

Interviewer: Michael Morris [MM], David Weisman [DW]

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Transcript prepared by: Michael Morris and Steven Ruszczycky

[0:00:08] Michael Morris: We're here today at Cuesta College on October 27 to speak with Kelly Quiros. This is for the Central Coast Queer Archive Project, and thank you, Kelly, for being here and lets just begin.

[0:00:24] Kelly Quiros: Thank you for inviting me.

[0:00:26] MM: Yeah so you mentioned that you moved out here... Can you just start off by telling us where you're from and a little bit about your hometown?

[0:00:35] KQ: Yeah I was born in, Mom says Hollywood, but the birth certificate says Los Angeles. And my dad died in 62'. I was in the second grade, I remember getting a U in conduct and pretty much was a troublemaker up until the seventh grade, and I'd moved to Fresno or family moved to Fresno in 63' and went to... I went to parochial grammar school in Fresno and then parochial high school as well. Both my grandparents are, from my dad's side and my mom's side, they were immigrants to the United States. My dad's side from Mexico, my mom's side from Madeira Island, part of Portugal. I think I had a nun in the seventh grade who probably you know, got a stallion to the point where you could put a saddle and ride him, so she kinda settled me down and I was quiet pretty much as a kid going into high school. I guess sort of leading up to that, I really kinda had, after 12 years of parochial education, somewhat of a naive concept background of the world. There was even a point where I was gonna interview, and I did, for the Maryknoll Priesthood, and they wisely suggested that I come back at age 30 or older, if I was still interested in, and well, by then, I'd had discoveries of myself in life and that did not happen, of course. I'm glad now looking at news stories and how events have played out in the world that I didn't do that. In high school, there was a friend who had received word of summer jobs here, actually just nextdoor... At Camp San Luis Obispo. There's a forest division, a forestry office there. And he asked if I wanted to come over and I said, sure, otherwise I was gonna go to Fresno State and return

after the summer. I was bored on the weekends when we weren't working, so I went into the office and asked them, is there any work that I can do, I kinda worked my way into the office, and then from there into night dispatching and basically I relieved the foreman. They didn't have to stay out here. They were just on call, I would call them whenever order came in from Sacramento, and that had to do with hand crews that we would request out of the west facility for fires, and I'm sure that's still going on. I just lost track of all that activity over the years. But having done that, I was offered a permanent part-time position there, if I could get transferred into Cal Poly. And so it was like the beginning of August when I started that process. And we're talking 1973 here. So I did get notification by the end of August that Poly would accept me, but I missed all the stuff about getting involved and WOW [week of welcome] and I was living off campus anyway. So it just worked out really well. They had nice rooms, little cabins, you can see them still, the little quonset huts as you're driving over, if you're going west, I guess it would be in there on the north side of the freeway there. And we were just a bunch of kids back then, and it was called the California Ecology Corp, kind of had a bad rap, but... And it got switched to the California Conservation Corps later on, which I think it's still called today. During that process of being away from high school and all the friends... In high school, we sort of just did everything as a group, and so being here now, it was like I'm an individual, I began my self-exploration, and I actually... At some point, I'm not sure how I even became aware of the club back then, the Gay Students Union [GSU], they weren't-- '73' in that time period''they weren't on campus yet, so I remember contacting someone by phone, maybe there was an ad, or maybe it was one of the flyers on campus. And I met, now I know him as Dream Weaver, and I don't know if some of these people are alive still or not, 'cause of the AIDS and stuff, but we met somewhere and we talked, I guess he wanted to make sure about my inclination and whether... What kind of risk I was in the sense of coming to their off-campus functions. We definitely determined at that time from the dreams I was having and some of the stuff that I was

expressing that, yeah sure, come to the gay functions and they were off-campus. So I remember we went over to someone's house and there was just... A whole variety of ages and people. So that was seemingly so long ago. I think, though, I was still struggling in a sense until about 75' or 76' in terms of a public coming out and telling my folks and friends, and that was... Thinking it was those years I had to kind of go look at where I was living in terms of different pay stubs and things that I might still have, and I determined somewhere 75', 76' must have been when I finally came out. And even though I don't even know, at that age, I was probably like 21, and it wasn't until 1980, 81'. No, the fiscal year of 1980. I remember I took a reduction to half-time at work so that I could focus on going to school, and I don't know how it happened in terms of focusing on going to school, but I ended up becoming a GSU President, and that year went fast. [laughs] I don't know, there's a bunch that I could talk on... I think that in hindsight too, looking at it from, I'm like 65 now-- I'll be 66 next year--and Latin American family, my dad dying early, I think that I would have been in a much more conservative family with the Hispanic father still around, and so not having him there... It's like everybody's fits into... I think that everybody fits into our lives--and my life for reasons at different points in time--and he kind of did his job and I was here, and then it was up to me to sort of lead my life, make my choices and I think it was harder and easier in a way, in a sense, to become myself as a gay male, Hispanic, without the burden of the machismo aspects in life that he could have brought... So, I can ramble, if you never interrupt me I'll just keep going [laughs]

[00:08:48] MM: Can you talk a little bit more about your relationship with your family?

And it sounds like-- What religion was it? What exact school were you in?

[00:08:58] KQ: [Laughs] San Joaquin Memorial High School, for the high school. It was, geez... And my grammar school, it's was like Our Lady of Immaculate Conception in Montebello, and then the grammar school in Fresno was... Oh dear, I knew there would be some things that slipped. You know that at 65 it's like sometimes they're there and sometimes they're not. It was Our

Lady of Victory Grammar School. And so Catholic for sure. And I learned a lot, it was funny back then. Dress codes, girls and boys separated, different parts of the school at the beginning of my freshman year. As well we were divided by grades in terms of the classes that you got into, so there was a lot of segregation that way, but then grouping together, socially as a group doing things, instead of always individually, just sort of helped people mix together. That was nice. But I learned-- I got my ham radio license from working with one of the nuns in high school. I think it was probably my sophomore year, the coach in PE called my mom in and said, "You know...."-- And I don't know if this is 'cause of my shyness in the showers, or whatever, or my not shyness in the showers, whatever it might have been. It was like, "I think your son's gonna do better in band." So I got moved over to band... And that's where I picked up my interest in musical instruments. Played the trombone in high school, and later learned the recorder... Which I bring up 'cause I did then come to the class here as an adult in education, and met with a group of people interested in learning the recorder, and you kind of think of that noisy little soprano that everybody squeaks around with in the fourth grade maybe. But it really has quite a history to it, and some of us formed a quartet. We'd play weddings, and wineries, and bookstores. And it's a whole family of instruments, you know, bass, tenor, soprano, alto... great bass. So that was a part of my life here in San Luis that I enjoyed a lot. And Covid since-- I'm not wearing a mask, but you're wearing a mask-- It sort of like changed everyone's behavior, we haven't even done a full year of this and musically... It's sort of like, how do we still do this? But anyway, that was... Like I said, I'll ramble.

[Video cuts forward due to technical error]

[00:11:57] David Weisman: I just had a quick question... You're talking to mid-70s now?

75', 76', 77'?

[00:12:08] KQ: Right. 'Cause I came to poly in 73' and then yeah it was 75, 76 probably when I came out, I had a supportive roommate at the time who also worked with me at forestry, who was a year behind me in high school. And he was on the basketball team, and there was a group of us that moved into a house in Monterey Street.

[00:12:34] DW: I'm curious to hear a little bit about that. You say you had a supportive roommate. At the mid-70s looking back on queer history, that's sort of a brief window between stone wall in 69' and the dawn of AIDS in 81'.

[00:12:51] KQ: Right, right.

[00:12:52] DW: Some people look at the mid 70s as kind of a high point in gayness, and I'm wondering if and how, as you were only just coming out then, how you experienced or felt it here in the San Luis area. I mean it was in New York, and in Christopher Street it was happening. But what about out here.

[00:13:09] KQ: I think that pre-AIDS... Pre-Aids, pre-Ronald Reagan... I mean to sort of answer that, as GSU President, I remember talking to an instructor-- they must have been on faculty, a faculty person, I don't know what department, but we were in the UU Plaza, and I was still all ecstatic about what we had done in the year of my presidency. We were gung-ho, there was GALA [Gay and Lesbian Alliance] that was meeting. We had the MCC church [Metropolitan Community Church] that we were involved with. There was a bar scene so to speak with Journey's Inn I think it was called. And actually it was pretty nice. I think everybody... We were all gung-ho and we were having fun, we were young adults. I think, with the AIDS or when the AIDS and Ronald Reagan, I was 26 by then, so I was 26 as GSU... So I was a little older than some of the freshmen students at Cal Poly. But I think it would be... It was a high period for sure. I think we were all pretty proud, we were all pretty happy, we were working hard on being visible, socially active, community-aware... And Ronald Reagan, he sort of just put a "ka-posh" to that. I think the

instructor, what he was trying to tell me was that things are gonna change. And I was young and not really aware of what to expect, and he ended up being right. Even not bringing into AIDS at that point, but just the change to...In politics alone. But so yeah, I agree... I knew we were getting together to talk about GSU and history from that perspective, but then your question, and so far to this point is also involving some of my points of view and perspectives, and they're not gonna necessarily be everyone's perspective of what was going on there, they are just my experiences, so... One thing that I know is that we didn't have cell phones. The first commercially cellphone wasn't until 1983. Well how did newspapers-- newspaper ads were a way that you could make connections with people... We didn't have apps like you do today, a lot of this, I'm sure you've talked about in other interviews elsewhere, but this is just what I'm experiencing or experienced, and that was how you could interact, but I actually kinda lucked out in that my phone number that I still have to this day. I didn't realize when I was assigned my new phone number that it seems to have been in many restrooms up and down the Pacific Coast, Central Coast, and so there was a lot of calls that I got that didn't understand, but sometimes they were a welcome voice on the other end of the phone, so that was kind of interesting. But I think that there was a lot of acceptance in those years to getting the club on to campus. I remember my spouse telling me stories that they would have dances at Ethel Reds, I think it was. And gay people, cowboys, whatever, they could, go in there and dance together as part of a fundraiser for getting whatever funds and support the club needed to get on to campus back then, and I don't think-- I have a very fine memory of those years from a support on campus and support in the community, and I think without the phones-- I think we've lost something with the cell phones because the only thing that's important now is the person that is the end of your cell phone. We've got this trauma of relating to people eye-to-eye, but back then that was just part of how you could get to know someone from the first off was eye-to-eye contact. So, you know, there were these little clues and things that I read back in books, you know the whole

cruising thing and how to meet people and... Here in San Luis, you wanna meet people. I mean, back, students, we were students and so... Was it that the hormones were running rampant at that age? So... Yeah, there's a whole thing about the handkerchief, I'm sure a lot of it has just fallen out of awareness, but different color handkerchiefs, what side you wear them in, the keys if they're attached to your belt, what side you wear those on. You know, if you're walking down the street and you stop in a window because you're interested in somebody, you kinda look at the window and see the reflection and whatnot and kinda decide. It's just sort of like stuff out of the movies now...

[00:18:41] MM: Could you explain a little bit more about what the handkerchiefs mean for the people who might not know? And just a little bit more about how you were going about meeting people back then.

[00:18:55] KQ: Yeah. Certainly you wanna be aware of the different colors, so you don't get yourself in trouble. And you wanna know if you're wearing them--I don't even know if they still do them--but anyway, you... I think it was like on the right side, you're somewhat passive, perhaps? The left side was more dominant and so same with the keys. I don't know what the keys represented then. And at some point there was a thing about earrings too, I remember that, what side you'd wear your earrings on. and then the colors... There's just all kinds of colors to represent different activities you know. White is like... I think white was like jack-off or something, and it makes sense, but red, you probably wouldn't wanna wear red unless you were BDSM or something like that kind of stuff. And I don't remember if I had a favorite color now, but I was aware of the codes anyway, and even... And when we were the research--Well, we haven't even gotten into it yet-- but we did research for the GSU booth that we did for Poly Royal, and we went to West Hollywood to do some more research. There was a--I wish I could remember the name--anyway, there was a place that was like a repository for books and materials for gay and lesbian information at that time. And we went down there, I'm sure at least once to do research, and then of course, we were in the big

city, it's not like you're not just gonna drive back home, you stay the night. So you go to [Studio One](#) and dancing and stuff, and so that was fun. It's just being a student back then. It was part of... It was all part of the growing up and coming out, and in many ways, we were naive, and I don't know what it's like today, for a person that's coming out... You have so many more resources. I hope that it's not as traumatic, that some groundwork was laid and things are easier, but I don't know, politics and, religion still control a large part of many people's life, so it's hard to say...

[00:21:13] MM: Yeah so I'm-- Okay, so the kind of method of meeting people through handkerchiefs and other things is obviously a little bit more secretive, but you also talked about the kind of gun-ho spirit of the 70s and making your presence known on campus, so I'm kind of wondering about how you guys went about that, you already... You mentioned you guys set up a booth on campus and we're doing some research, but what other sort of things did you guys do to make your presence known, I guess?

[00:21:45] KQ: A big thing was like the posters, and you see the stories about the posters being torn down, maybe it was a waste of money, but it was a thing of putting the posters up everywhere and getting people to help. And it's sort of a thing of you know... How exposed do you feel going out there and posting, stapling, or attacking a Gay Student Union meeting notice? It was a part of learning about yourself and dealing with your issues, your internal issues, and being comfortable as well with yourself. And there was-- Most of our social activities, I remember a lot of potlucks at different people's houses sometimes on campus, sometimes. And I remember too before becoming President, before coming out, I walked by that meeting room where they were gonna have-- Where the club meeting was going on. And I never went in, but I'd walk by, just kinda see who was there. And it took a long time before I went in, and I remember some of the different presidents. I actually got-- One guy came over to help me tutor. I think I needed some help in Math, and that's really what we focused on. I think he could have been a little disappointed and that was it,

but I needed math tutoring. [laughs] Ads in the paper, meeting people. I think there was *The New Times*, *The Tribune* way back then. I remember being really excited in terms of my roommate once--the supportive guy--that I eventually, he helped me in the process of coming out. That I was all excited about. Look, we've made it to the big city, we've got ads in the paper about people you can meet. Again, cell phones have brought you some advantages, and the apps, that we didn't have back then. Let's see, maybe word of mouth, maybe a way a person was dressed in the sense of holes in their pants or something, and there's this whole thing is, it must still work today, when you catch a person's eye and you're able to have some kind of energy exchange, I mean there's obvious, I think, science behind the eye contact and energy that flows between the people with the eyes. So there's just little things like that. Do they still... Do you still? I gotta ask, how old are you, Michael?

[00:24:30] MM: Me? I'm twenty one.

[00:24:32] KQ: Yes. So at your age today. How does it work? I just need to know for comparison sake, I suppose, I'm surprised for example, that GSU went to something today on campus called the Pride Center, so lots changed in 39 years?

[00:24:32] MM: Yeah being honest with you, I don't really... I don't know if I can speak on that as much as maybe you or David I don't know.

[00:24:32] I3: The kind of stuff I've seen it's either kids who are really--I say this nicely--but fill in a very stereotypical appearance, or it's the kids who don't get profiled much so ever. I was a homeschool kid. This is literally-- I never even set foot in a high school, but out of my experience that's essentially what I've seen though... They're either gonna be really stereotypical, very flamboyant, or they're just gonna be more... You seem just like a regular person.

[00:25:34] KQ: It almost sounds the same in that regard. Huh. Certainly with the GSU, since I was much more involved, and I mentioned the Metropolitan Community Church or MCC. I may have referred to it as... I don't even know if it's still around. They were active here. GALA was

active, and I remember with the MCC, getting off campus, and so meeting more community members, and so being exposed to not just students. And so different people that have different things had happen to over the years. I remember... Well, and like my spouse when he was growing up, they put him through electric shock therapy, and one of the people that I met as president was also-- Had been through electric shock therapy and with him, it definitely had done some damage to him, and so... It's thankfully something that's still not happening as far as I'm aware in the United States anyway. So MCC though was a cool place. It was like getting away from the Catholicism, the heavy duty religious stuff but more into the-- Maybe like a Unity Church could be something like today you know... People, more personal, and then bringing some aspect of a divine being into our lives as well. And it filled in the niche socially and spiritually, so that was good. I don't remember all the people's names... But I did since you were asking me about this interview thinking about-- trying to rack my memory for different experiences, and people, and MCC definitely came into play as a major function for me. And then as President there was like being a representative for GSU on committees like GALA. So we were able to exchange information that way, and so those became ways, at least for an activist, somebody to meet people as well, by being involved and getting out there and doing things. Which is true, I'm sure, today as well.

[Technical Interruption]

[00:28:15] MM: Yeah... I'm wondering if you could describe a little bit about the people who came to these different events? You mentioned potlucks and maybe some of the places you guys met?...

[00:28:27] KQ: Oh my gosh that's right! Yes.

[00:28:29] MM: Anything like... You mentioned dancing a little bit was a popular activity. But you also talked a lot about the collaboration between different community groups, and it kind of seems--definitely correct me if I'm wrong--but that these different organizations all came together,

so I was wondering if you could just describe the people at these events, some of the places you might have went...

[00:28:53] KQ: I think that some of the highlights that we were kind of touching upon in the 70s was all these groups and then working together before AIDS became this other thing to focus on... And yes. And it was so funny that you mentioned places, you just brought into my mind a new location that was--I'd forgotten about. There was a Howard Johnson's here in San Luis Obispo, I think it's now Taco Temple off of Highway 101 and the Los Osos Valley Road. Well that was a Howard Johnson's. And they'd have meetings, they'd take over the bar area and maybe one of the other rooms, and socialize there. Just, you know, meet and greet kind of a thing. So that was ya know--. But as community members. That was--. Maybe there was Cal Poly people there. I was there. So I assume there'd be others; I don't really remember. But most of the community, people, and all kinds of people. Although I do remember mostly men back then, certainly in GALA I believe, and MCC, there was women as well. But socially, maybe my perspective was so oriented on the men, I'm only remembering that aspect, so I apologize to the women if they were also there. [Points to head'] But it's also 65, so my memory is not great... Let's see... Mostly a lot of young people, twenties, thirties for the most part. I know of one person though now still living in San Luis Obispo, he's 87, so he'd have been back involved in these group activities as well back then. And it truly was a social thing and activism at the same time.

[00:31:08] MM: Yeah, could you describe some of the activism you guys were a part of as well. You touched on a lot about social life, but you also mentioned in the same gung ho spirit some different moments of activism. Because obviously you took the presidency of the club just after--a couple of years after-- a long legal battle for it to become established.

[00:31:32] KQ: I'm not even sure how I ended up doing that, but I know the President before me, his name was, we called him Joe--Joey--and I sent you like an archive file of some pictures,

he's in there, and he was a very attractive kind of gung ho guy as well and I just came in behind him. We were pretty much concerned about our rights as gay people back then, I believe. And we had to do... We had to do silly things back then in the sense of ownership to houses and things. You had ya know, a single male and a single male and on the deed--. I think some of the pre-ground work that got interrupted with AIDS probably. But towards getting relationships recognized and formalized, I think. There's so much that maybe we take for granted today. But you know, acceptance in the workplace. And I never had any problems at Cal Poly, like I said, even at work, that was--. I worked at Cal Poly from 77' to 2010, and I didn't ever have any issues with the people that I worked with and interfaced with from other departments. Because for sure, the only thing there was work, and it was a thing of working, it wasn't a thing of who you were. So [Cal] Poly as an educational facility, I think, was a good place to come out, even though perhaps San Luis Obispo felt conservative, but it really wasn't. There was a lot of community people who were in support of us, and I think that as gay people, homosexuals as they maybe were called back then, in the community. So it really, I thought was supportive in that aspect, if there were any issues, it was me more internally and accepting of myself, the same thing most people im sure go through as part of the coming out process. There had already been some of the protests around Diablo Canyon and not wanting it here as a nuclear facility. So a lot of some of those people, you just sort of... You learn that the power is in numbers, that you sort of can't do it alone as just all gay people, you can't do it alone as all nuclear protesters, you cant--. And I don't even want to venture into today's politics, but you can't do it as just black people, or people of color. You need to work as a group. And I think that maybe was some of the things that people from the 60s could bring to us, and that may be revisited, I guess would be the word, and re-employed during those times.

[0:34:46] MM: Yeah could you.... Do you recall any specific examples of people coming together under the spirit of activism...

[00:34:55] KQ: Well, I don't know so much from the gay aspect, but certainly the demonstrations here for, against Diablo Canyon. I mean it seems to me that it was just the field, the other side of--I was so surprised they have solar panels or something in that field now--but it seemed to me that that field held a musical concert for demonstrating--all the people--get together and demonstrate against the Diablo Canyon--. And it's so funny, the lady that did Russ'--that I asked through that 87-year-old friend now to do Russ' memorial service--I said, You know, you look really familiar. And it's like, how do I know you? And then she mentioned being here in San Luis during the 70s, being an activist in the 80s, and I was like, oh, that's how I know you. And it was funny, you showed me that--. You made a link to the lady that owned... Breezes, was it? And it was like, oh my gosh, I remember her. And it was funny to see--. We just all got together and worked for our rights, and support. I don't remember, other than our working on putting together the Cal Poly, GSU [Gay Students Union], Poly Royal booth that we did that year. That was a big thing for a club. Because like I said, we went to West Hollywood, we got information, people's names, dates through history, we did a timeline. You'd think we're a bunch of artists, but we were tracing these pictures off of something that we found down there, the material. And I don't know if we then blew them up and then traced them, but they became part of the booth and... Which seemed to be well accepted at Poly Royal. We didn't have any problems. I did spend the night inside of the booth, the Friday night before Saturday--you do the setup on Friday, and then Poly Royal starts on Saturday--and so I stayed the night in the booth and I remember noises, but I don't think there was any issues. And then some of the other club members came by to see how we were doing, and it turned into a little gathering, social event, party or whatever. But the weekend itself was uneventful at Cal Poly. And then at some point in time--I meant to look it up, I don't know the dates--but we took the booth down to Santa Barbara, there was some Santa Barbara event going on, and... It was funny. This woman and I drove down to Santa Barbara, and we set up the booth--. Oh and we did

this big drive in a U-Haul vehicle. It was like, I don't know how to drive this thing! And she drove back, in fact. But we made it, set up the booth--. And the booth was designed by our vice president back then who was an architect student. And we had lattice on the top and he did the colors--I don't know if you saw the pictures yet that I sent in that file email-- and you had a big lambda, so it was like that was the way you enter in, and we had the timelines on the inside. And to exit out the back, we had a little closet with colorful hangers hanging on it, so you symbolically walked out the closet after you've done the look at the timeline. And I remember maybe, and it was, I was older [clears throat] I had the job at Poly, and I probably made the mistake of buying ads in the *Mustang Daily*. Because after I was president then it was like, well, you can't get free ads anymore because you had of history of buying ads, but I just wanted to do what we could do to get visibility, and I remember that at work--I worked in IT at Cal Poly, the computer center--and one of the students that I worked with was on the Rose Float committee. And that year they got an award, so I remember we stuck an ad in the *Mustang Daily*, "GSU Congratulates the Rose Float Committee." So I tried to keep an image out there. And we entered the--although I didn't know about [], which I soon learned about quickly--we entered the milk boat race I think. Milk carton race at Laguna Lake. The AG (Agriculture) department put on this race, some group, club, whatever, we entered it, and we had a good chance maybe, but we didn't have a rudder, so we sort of floundered, but it was fun, it gave us something to do, it gave us something to be part of a... [Air quotes] 'The community at large.' And I guess, sadly, that somebody has said there was a history at the time a history and faculty was an advisor to the GSU and after my presidency, I think he let that--. Another person took over that position, which ended up being a position that somebody that I worked with... And so I met Russ in 81, my spouse, and I focused on our relationship, and apparently I left this vacuum that to think of the way he was... The new faculty advisor was explaining it to me, that was destructive to the club, but again, now you can see that there's a pride center on campus. So it might have gone through

some growing pains, but it's survived quite well... Let's see, what else?

[00:41:26] DW: When you talk about all this being out in the community, I'm sensing you weren't feeling the hate, you weren't getting the stares, it seems pretty...

[00:41:34] KQ: Oh yeah, no, I don't think so. I personally maybe didn't have the... Maybe even still with my partner, we just came from a generation where we wouldn't hold hands walking down the sidewalk, but... And didn't do it back then, we still didn't do it a year ago as far as that goes, but... No, there was a lot of support, I think... And I don't know, maybe just there was just... In the interest of belonging, being part of a community, I remember Lambda Delta Phi, I think I referenced that in some of the pictures, and you were probably like, well what the heck was this, and it was sort of evolved out of a counselor had a group of us that specifically she was helping us with working through our acceptance issues, and one of the members that was an AG soil, an AG something... That I kinda had this thing for, and he was working on... I wanna be part of a fraternity. So she figured out, Well, make your own fraternity then, and it was a whole thing of coming--. Lambda Delta Phi I think came something to be a change in brotherhood, something like that. And so he proudly, in those pictures, you can see, you know, he probably is wearing this shirt. And she helped us go through that process of how do you do that, how do you reach a goal, how do you... So there was... We had this counseling group that was going on as well. I don't even know if I'm answering your questions as you ask them, 'cause I kinda go off on tangents, but he had a... It was just very interesting. He eventually went up to the University of Idaho in Moscow, Idaho to complete his studies, I think. Which kind of led up to a break-up, that was sort of this time I had to make a choice. Do I go with my aggy friend or my new found technical love? And I went, I don't know, there was just more stability, more connection, connectivity with Russ. But you can see obviously, Poly Royal while I've got a cowboy hat on and that just sort of is the AG person... My mirroring, something that I was attracted to, I think. But no, in answer to your question, I think that

we didn't really have... I felt safe here in San Luis. And I hope... I hope others did too back then.

And still do.

[00:44:51] DW: So the siren call you went to West Hollywood, you saw West Hollywood.

May have gone on a trip to San Francisco or not...

[00:44:59] KQ: I don't remember back then, but if I did it certainly was personal, but not club related.

[00:45:04] DW: But even so, the lure of the gay community in those bigger cities didn't pull you away from the little quiet rural... The luster of the city wasn't enough to draw you away from this kind of a rural set-up...

[00:45:19] KQ: No, I am me, myself, Kelly. So again, I'm answering these questions from my perspective and experiences, and I think like a lot of Cal Poly graduates, they want to kind of stay here when they have finished at Cal Poly. And I was fortunate to be able to do that. Because I started--. I took 76' as a student operator in the computer center. So as volunteer training at the same time. Hired as a staff member in 77', and stayed till 2010. And a lot of that has to do with my meeting Russ. And there's a calendar, I was so surprised. You were talking about the history, and there's a web page out there that has a calendar... Example, February, 1981. I don't know if it rings a bell to you about whose website that is, but it's like that's my writing on that. It's like, What is that doing there was... I found it when... After you had contacted me and it was like, Wow, it's my writing, I remember all the different things as far as seeing them, I don't remember all the things behind them, but I remember that was a thing, a way of trying to centralize the different activities. You know G.O. was like 'Great Outdoors.' I don't know, I think they went defunct last year. But it was a way of meeting people and being outdoors at the same time. There are different organizations. Again, like I mentioned, MCC. Then the people that I did meet and have relationships with. They were safe. They were loving, respectful. And I think that... I remember Ken

Williams... Sorry, last names. I remember my vice president was living with the people who at the time, and they still do own the Palm Theatre downtown. And again, they were all supportive. It's not like we were all living with gay people and we just were the standard normal students fitting in with the people we rent with. And I moved a lot. Maybe 14 times in my first two years at Cal Poly, some of that is work-related, but the moves weren't because I had issues with roommates or anything... I remember--Poly is an interesting school. I remember going up with one of the roommates that I had at the time, and we went up to the... I don't know, cow unit, whatever it's called, and he had to get a sperm collection from a bull. And it was like, wow, I can tell someone I saw this now. This is like a very different school. I helped my aggy friend that I was talking about. We got one of the calves from the dairy unit it was, I think. And stuck it in his truck and drove it over to the... I don't know, back then it was the English building, and he had a lecture inside the--. We took it up the elevator--one of the few elevators on campus. [clears throat] Excuse me. And I remember waiting for him to tell me that okay we can bring in the calf now. And we were out in the hallway and it's like the calf just unloads on the floor, and it was like, oh my gosh, this is like eh... And he does his lecture and we take the calf back out to where it came from in the pen, and then I had to go to my stats class and I just reeked of cow, and it was like... Nobody said anything, it was like, this is Cal Poly. Those were just some of the things that we did, and we were students, so it was a good time in life. Again because it was, I think pre AIDS, pre Ronald Reagan... So that's kind of what life was like

[00:49:50] MM: So I guess... I guess not necessarily a final question on this, but as you've said, you're speaking from your own perspective and experience, and I... Going into this, I only know what I was able to find in a couple... Looking through the Mustang News. And so a lot of the things that I found earlier, you stopped... After you said someone's last name... Hesitated, because one thing I found is that people--GSU members--stopped using their last names in the paper

because they were afraid of being targeted either by jobs or just... I think one, I think it was Michael Perlman.

[00:50:45] KQ: Michael, yes. He was the one who came over to help me with my math problems. He was very handsome.

[00:50:50] MM: [Laughs] But I think he got some... He put his name out in the paper and got some phone calls, and then people were kind of not using their names in the paper, and I don't know if you would have been there or not, but a couple of news articles said there were some explosives thrown into GSU [Gay Student Union] meetings. And there was--this might have been after you kind of tapered off your involvement--but there was a bomb threat in 1983. So I don't know exactly where this question is going.

[00:51:27] KQ: That's the... And you sort of founded it with Perlman before me, and the bomb stuff after me. I don't remember any issues like that... When Russ came over, we were having a meeting in September, maybe it was one of the first ones of the year, and there weren't a lot of people so we decided to just quickly throw together a potluck party at my apartment. And I think we put the address and phone number on the blackboard, but I never had any issues. I don't remember phone calls, there could have been maybe threatening type phone calls, but that seems kind of normal if you're gonna put yourself out there. But nothing ever came of anything that I had to worry about and never had physical violence against myself. In fact, the one thing that is kind of funny that stands out, I was getting ready for a computer science class and somebody tracked me down. Actually, it was more than a couple of people tracking me down on campus, and it's because they were pledging for some fraternity they had to get my signature, like that was gonna be their big threat or something, and it was like. Yeah I'll give you my signature... You want my phone number? It's like yeah. But maybe it's just my personality... I think it's sort of like my mom, she's like 87 and afraid of everything, and today's world. And it could be just like not using your last name now

because it's today's world, and I can see how you can be concerned about that, but also if you... I think our minds create, you know, we create our experiences, we create our reality, and we have this government religious type structure that imposes fear on us. And they thrive off of that. And so it's like, why contribute to that? So the thing would be is, if I don't think of... I could like for example, it was like, my sister is in all of her wisdom, but she's very religious. They do these classes for Catholic confirmation and communion type training, but live in a conservative town. She was concerned, like well, do you know this guy? I mean, he used the word miss at the beginning. He didn't know that you're a guy? That's the whole thing about Kelly--Springfield Tires is where it comes from--and it's... I'm used to that, but it's sort of like there's that fear thing, and it was like, no, if I don't become afraid and give energy to the fear then that's not gonna happen, and I think that's something that we need to realize is that thoughts don't create the experience if you don't want it. And I think maybe that's just what--. What I'm saying is that's how I envision it. Maybe it was just my perspective. Certainly, maybe there was other issues, but I don't remember any problems on campus, and just a lot of meetings as GSU president, for Poly Royal meetings, and I think it was a ham radio club back then, so I was representing them on the Engineering Council. And anybody who knew me... I didn't ever have pushback.

[00:55:13] MM: Okay, yeah, so I think I might... Just one last question about the GSU. You talked earlier about the counselor who helped you guys out, and I had read a little bit about that. I was wondering if you recall any experiences or I guess efforts for you guys to help people within the community. And specifically, I know you mentioned you might not remember it, but work with the Atascadero State Hospital.

[00:55:48] KQ: Yeah, I saw you mentioned that in an email prior to our interview, and I don't really remember that, although I did look at it on Google and I found there's a Cal Poly digital commons or something, and there was an ad that obviously is my doing that mentions tonight we

have a guest speaker from AGE [Atascadero Gay Encounter], I think it was, but I don't remember. And I didn't know--. When I was done, I remember giving my material from that era to the Cal Poly archives, I guess it was in the library, and then maybe that's what some group then took over, and so I don't know if they've been through that and we're able to see any more flyers or information by digging through the physical stuff, but I quite frankly don't remember what that was about. I did look at them online, but I don't remember if it was just that one guest lecture or if thereafter some of those people came to our club meetings, because we had invited them to come and speak, and again, it was just a way of socializing and networking, so they could meet people and we could meet people and get different perspectives.

[00:57:16] MM: Okay, well, maybe one last thing. Throughout this project, there's kind of been a theme of connecting across generations, and I was wondering if you had any advice for young people today or... We kind of talked on this a little bit, but I guess there's... Any general advice? Any last things you wanna share with us?

[00:57:43] KQ: Well I think that there's a lot, probably... A lot of it stems from different parts of my life. I think that we come here to learn on this planet, and I think that we need to find and do the thing that brings us the most passion in our life. And to be... To work on accepting yourself maybe is the hardest thing to do, because no matter what other people think, and you're not a mind reader... Most of us aren't mind readers, so you really don't know what someone thinks. You only know this, what the news might tell us, and in any part, you really can't tell the news is fake and fake news is real. So work from within. I think it's important to... I think it's important to be compassionate to everyone, but I think it means also to be compassionate to yourself. That there's like this whole thing of, how can you love someone if you don't love yourself? You can, you can go through the motions, but I think in a way, being gay... It's easier now to talk about being gay than it is to say talk about UFOs, and that's because we've made some big progress in society about earning

our acceptance, but you don't earn the acceptance I think without working internally on ourselves, and so however difficult that might be... There was my old high school buddy who was from the basketball team. I would have never expected him to be somebody that I would eventually become friends with because I just wasn't into sports. And he ended up being a supportive person. I remember that one night, we drove all over town, and I was particularly down and depressed and he got me through the night, and so... Find those people in your life that can help. Today's internet, maybe is a blessing in disguise, but it certainly can make things easier to find resources, and if you can't interact personally with covid... We can still read books. I did a lot of book reading, researched the internet, find people and resources you can trust, and then just work through within. So I think that in the sense that having gone through all of that work has made me a stronger person, it's given me--. Well it's who I am at this point, I mean, it's made... It just made my character... Made me more appreciative, I think of who I am. So it's that talking to... People talk about knowing now at 12 years old or something, that you're gay and have these feelings, and I don't know if I did at 12, but I don't think as a Catholic kid if I even knew what gay was until I actually got out of high school. But the world's different, and so I don't know if the deformation is archaic, but so that avoiding everything--. Just boiling it down to the simple part of, be you, whoever you are. And be honest to yourself, don't give your power away to someone, an organization, or government, or another person, but be who you are.

[01:02:11] DW: I have a question if we have an extra minute or two here. So a lot of we discussed was about your time obviously as a student at Poly, but you still stayed in San Luis and your time as a student seems to have been during this golden period, and then a lot of your sentences ended with... Until Ronald Reagan in the 1980s.

[01:02:31] KQ: Yes, because my activism didn't stop and the activism in the community didn't stop after I was no longer GSU president. We had our first--. And I'm sure you've probably

spoken with other people from GALA [Gay and Lesbian Alliance], and--we called it the AIDS support network, but we had our first AIDS person in the county, and the county shipped them off to San Francisco with the bottle of oxygen, as I recall. And then there were others after that that we just--. Obviously, it was in 1981, that was the end of my presidency, began this whole issue, and so we started to get group people together and we had Halloween parties and stuff, but we had a lot of meetings about putting together the... What do you call it? The contract, whatever it is, that we're going to govern the AIDS support network, and then we had--. Then we brought in hospice people to lecture us. We had people from Hollywood that would come up and help us with learning to deal with the health issues and educating us on the different drugs, and what to expect, the different diagnoses that someone would have. So we stayed--. I stayed and by then I'd met my partner Russ from the GSU meeting that we'd had that phone number and address. Well he's one of the people that came over to the house, and like I mentioned later in the year, it was a thing of deciding between him and another person, and he was very much in my life when we were getting into the AIDS work, and that kept us going a lot, in the 80s--. 85'. And at some point though... We just had too many people that we had to say goodbye to. And each person that we--. A client, because it was this whole hospice kind of thing of: only spend 15 minutes in a visit. So you're wanting to be professional, and you don't wanna get emotionally attached, but it was impossible. So a lot of people back then just didn't have a good prognosis, and so after a while, we lost too many friends that we'd become close to and assisting them through their illness. And we sort of dropped out, and it sort of also ties in with a period when Russ at work was getting a security clearance, because he worked for AT&T as part of that clearance we sort of wanted to--well he felt that we needed to--back out of relationships that might be unhealthy towards him maintaining his clearance. We started... We began to really just sort of focus as us as a couple, and that I think is kind of sad because I've lost a lot of contact with people. But if I may, may I read this? This is something that

he... Let me just read this then. It was something that he signed in 1986 for completing his security clearance, and he was the last one in his office to get the clearance, and I really think what happened was both of us probably got ran through the process, even though he was the one that was going to have the clearance. And as the last part of his getting the clearance. So this is a statement. I don't know if it was--. Oh. DIS, Department of Investigative Services, I think it was part of DOD [Department of Defense]. "I am homosexual, and do not attempt to deny that fact, my friends, family, co-workers, and professional associates are aware that I am gay. I have had a long-lasting relationship with my roommate, Kelly Anthony John Quiros since September 1980. I am not promiscuous, I have had three long lasting relationships with men since 1968. My roommate, Kelly Quiros, is also open about his homosexual relationship with me. His friends, family, co-workers and professional associates are also aware that he is gay. Neither of us could be pressured or blackmailed due to our gay relationship. While neither of us have ever been secretive about our homosexual relationship, we are both circumspect in our behavior in public, and have never been blatant about our sexual preferences. I have always preferred lasting relationships, and I have not had any transient or temporary liaisons since 80'. I have never had any homosexual relationship with minors, there is nothing in my past which would permit anyone to blackmail me or apply pressure on me, either directly or through my friends. At my request--. Person assisted me in the preparation of the statement." And I think that kind of framed the rest of our life together and our time here in San Luis Obispo. So I sort of lost contact. All that activism and what not through the ages. We sort of just focused on ourselves. But it was still a safe place to be for both of us. And it was home, and he passed away last year, October, from pancreatic cancer that I think maybe he knew he had, but he didn't do the doctor's stuff fast enough. And so what was like getting a diagnosis and then being dead like seven days later, so it was really sad, but again, I think that's something that we probably--. On some level, it was a contract we agreed to, to meet each other and

help each other through life, and that experience makes me stronger still. So for whatever I'm going to be facing and doing in my future... And I could have never imagined doing this, so this somehow enters into that. I don't know how, but it does...

[01:10:06] DW: Sorry for your loss. What year was that signed?

[01:10:11] KQ: Um... 1986.

[01:10:20] DW: So 35 years later, what do you think your reactions would be? If you were to go back to work at Poly, and you were handed something like that today, which is almost inconceivable, and how do you put that in the perspective of how things have changed in those 30 years?

[01:10:39] KQ: Well I don't think I'd be signing something like this to work at Cal Poly. He was working in a special--In AT&T special services--and they have a government contract. I don't know what a person today signs in that capacity as an employee, no matter what company they work for, but as part of a government contract. It was kind of horrible actually to think about it then, and I guess I probably brought it along, I don't know. He's here, probably. And I didn't lose my voice reading it, so he wasn't trying to stop me. I think that we were concerned about why. Because it was his job basically was on the line if he didn't get the clearance then he was gonna be reassigned. And it took so long, yet everyone else in his... Where he worked under this contract knew they already had passed and received their clearance. And so we just sort of figured out it was gonna be this issue, and it did turn out to be that, and I suspect that... Although I don't have anything in writing, I maybe was a part of why he got a delay. In High School I got my ham license, short wave listening was really cool because we didn't have the internet back then, it was like listening to radio, so radios became a big deal in high school. We had a mock UN [United Nations]. I chose Cuba. And listening to the Ham radio, the shortwave radio. I had written Cuba. You know, send me information. I used to get these annual cards from Cuba. Christmas greetings, and you know... I

should put them online as a collection because they were rather unique photos, political statements of the... Oh whatever, just the times And so maybe that entered into it, I don't know. But I do remember as part of a project, because I had scanners and stuff that he'd... He'd get a phone call and would dash off to work sometimes, and I'd turn on my scanners and see if I could find something. And I did one day. And then he came home and I said, well, you know the signal is still here. And he goes, well, what frequency? And I told him, and his face kinda went white and he got on the phone, called somebody and it dropped. And again remember what era we're talking about. We're talking Ronald Reagan and the Pacific White House. He was in... So whenever he came to California, there would be all the stuff going on. So that, I think, was part of the work that he was involved with. Not entirely, but just part of it. So I think it was a rather unique statement he had to sign for his job. I think that it's sad to have to go into those parts of their life, because I would wonder if a straight person would have to say the same things, and I doubt it. Because--. And I don't know what they expect in today's world, but it really was rather... Well one, he got to keep his job. And the other one it was like, well, this was kind of a cost, but it wasn't really... I suppose the other cost was in a sense socially, because if somebody was too much into alcohol or bad behavior or drugs, even marijuana, that we sort of just stopped associating. And so that did change our life in that we became very much more an internal couple and less involved in the community. There was a choice back then. It was a requirement for work.

[01:14:52] DW: So since you then withdrew--and this is the 80s--that's when you're gonna have picked up the AIDS Quilt and so much, so were you really pulling back? So did you not witness any of that in San Luis Obispo at the time--.

[01:15:06] KQ: Oh my gosh, there was an AIDS quilt here in San Luis. Of course there was. Were we directly involved with it? Not necessarily, but we certainly knew that it was going on... We both had jobs. The least we could do, like the common thing that you do when you get older,

maybe is you could make donations to the organizations that support your viewpoints. So we did that. But yeah, no, the AIDS quilt was here. There's just different names... Meeting still with GALA [Gay and Lesbian Alliance], maybe we were a little more involved with GALA for a while, because a lot of the people that were doing the AIDS support network paperwork to bring it forward as an organization... We'd be meeting those people. We were involved again, so at some point then-- probably this point--when we stop, but we did what we could up to that point, and otherwise just maintained awareness because it's part of our culture, it was our gay culture here in town, this was home. But we maybe just weren't out there perhaps.

[01:16:26] DW: So like did Anita Bryant ever come to this town? Was there anyone to pickit or protest during that whole very violent anti-gay period in the mid to late eighties? Maybe, it's because I was living in New York at the time of course

[01:16:41] KQ: Yeah, yeah. No I remember her issues in Dade County and stuff in Florida, but I don't remember if she ever came to town... Yeah I don't recall. I think, seriously, we just were so much focused on... Maybe it was also because of there was all these kind of attacks going out... That what we probably also internally withdrew as a safeguard to ourselves. Protecting as opposed to being out there. Protecting ourselves by not being so involved as well, it's possible. I can't really recall all of it right now.

[01:17:25] DW: Well you mentioned that you've heard the name Lisa Dean from Breezes. Breezes was there in the nineties. 90' - 97'. So do you recall ever stopping by or visiting... In the 90s?

[01:17:36] KQ: Yes, yes, yes. Because of course, there was the old Journey's Inn, that was where on broad street kind of across from the car wash that's there before South Street. And then there wasn't anything after Journey's Inn... There was the old Howard Johnson's, but I think that had gone away and then there was Journey's Inn and then there wasn't anything. And then of course

there was Breezes. Yeah, I think--. I for sure, we must've--. I know I can remember being there. I don't know that it was--. What we were looking for at that stage of life, but it was there and we were there.

[01:18:15] DW: Do you have any particular memories of Journeys Inn because there's less evidence on that one than breezes...

[01:18:20] KQ: Oh, Journey's Inn, yes, of course. Because I was still a youngster, I was still coming out, and not involved in all the security stuff. So socializing, drinking was just what kids did-. Kids do still. probably. And god, you could go--. You didn't have to go to L.A. to dance. It was a disco bar... I do remember one of the last memories... I mean it was fun. Yeah there was--. Eventually, there was some people that were there that became roommates at some point. You know, we had different lifestyles. We got conflicts, whatever, but I met people there and it was fun. It was dancing. It was... I love dancing. It was a blast.

[01:19:09] DW: What was the physical space like?

[01:19:11] KQ: It's kind of small. It was a small space. Yeah, but I think they even had the little ball, disco ball. And when you walked in, there was the bar area... I don't remember tables and chairs because it's too small, but there might have been maybe only one or two, but it was pretty crowded. If it was a Friday night, Saturday, it was crowded, and it wasn't a thing like, I think waiting until ten and leaving it at closing to get crowded, I think you could get there at eight and it'd be a good group of people... Not like going to West Hollywood and going from place to place, and having it really, really crowded, but still crowded at Journey's Inn. I do remember though, one of my--. Oh I think it came about because of the phone number I inherited... I met this person in Atascadero... [Corrects self] Templeton. I think it was Templeton. And you talked about worrying about getting, being in danger or something. And it was like we met up. But he wanted to drive out into the hills somewhere, and he had a pick-up truck, so I was like, wow, I kinda finally get to have

an experience in the bed of a pick-up truck. And I wasn't even worried about the location. And then I met him some years later, after the AIDS thing. And he was there, at the Journey's Inn there, and it was kind of like lambasting me because "You didn't tell me about AIDS. And what kind of fool jumps into the back of a strangers pick up truck and goes into the middle of anywhere!" And I was like. well, I guess I did. I didn't think about it, I just... It was the moment, but that's one of the things I remember about Journey's Inn. And that was cool that was here. I wish we still had a place like that, but I think in general, I'm reading that the bar scene is just kind of fading away. But it filled a role and niche back then. That's for sure.

[01:21:37] DW: Given San Luis' rural character, you weren't afraid someone was gonna drive by, or kind of guys with baseball bats waiting for anyone later, or anything like that? Was there a sense of... Yeah, it's two in the morning...

[01:21:52] KQ: Oh at the bar. No, I never thought of that. No, that's... I don't know, maybe it's just that if I don't create fear in my mind as a process, then it's not gonna create a situation that exists. And so it never--. It didn't cross my mind and probably it didn't because it wasn't happening in general, so... I don't know. I hope San Luis has still felt as a safe place to be, but I felt safe then. And maybe it's true. Because we didn't have the cell phones, and didn't have the internet, we didn't have the bigger picture of always what was going on. So we just had our local news and our local newspaper and word of mouth and... From what I recall, it wasn't a danger. But truly, kind of like you said, it was that high period, and San Luis had its own little high period.

[01:22:53] DW: And it was followed by this National low...

[01:22:55] KQ: Yeah, yeah, yeah... Oh yeah the national vote, this kind of stuff [referring to spouse's security clearance] with I guess, Reagan's second term and whatever else was going on. Today's... Today, I don't know.... Again, I think today is just keep the mind--. I think one of the things that, from my personal other projects... Hey, I had music, I had ham radio, I had my

computer science... I said that little thing about people can talk about being gay better than they can talk about UFOs, but I'd like to think that we're not--well I don't think--I know we're not the only life. I think that every star system has life, sentient life. So by 2050, I think that--. Thirty years, so you'll be Thirty-one? Forty-one I mean. So before You're 50, you're gonna know about these other life forces, life beings, and I think it's sad that we didn't learn about them in the 60s and we had whatever distractions going on in the 60s. That all this turmoil that we're having... God, it's sort of something that we have to work out in the sense of our differences as... Because if we stay... If we're forced to be divided and conquered, then they can control us. They, being the governments, and churches, or the people that actually control those organizations at another level. Cabal, let's say. Or what's the cabal? Mafia let's say. So there's this thing of keeping us divided, and we're still seeing a lot of that today. And to get to the place--Oh I was maybe alluding to this in one of the email closures of--where everybody can be accepted for who they are, we've gotta go through this process on our planet first, because how can we accept an alien... A life form alien to what we think of on our planet without accepting ourselves first? So that is a kind of a process that I think that we're way beyond the halfway point in terms of dealing with right now. And so in a positive sense then gay has just been for me, finding out my uniqueness and then accepting myself, and so then understanding that--. It's kind of fun in a sense, to go to... I'll go to Fresno where my mom lives and we'll go out to, I don't know, Sizzler or something for a quick cheap dinner. And looking at all the clientele, and it's kind of like wow there's really differences from the people here in San Luis and Fresno. And so it's sort of like, I just kind of laugh and think to myself, how do I deal with this? Well, they're all aliens, they're all from... There just species from another star system and were all just here having dinner, and that seems to be so much easier to deal with for me than thinking of us as this conflicted group of people, and so maybe that in the sense is it says I have something to work through, but it also gives me something to work towards. So, and you know... So kind of

answering in the sense of why San Luis, why staying so long. Because it's kind of a secure place. It's been friendly, supportive, it's given me the chance to grow and explore myself, and social issues, as well as the future. I kind of have this memory issue in the sense that the past, at certain points, the past becomes less important as the future. So I'm really looking forward to 2029, the range year 2030 to 2050, and let's say 2039. Some major points of change, the part that we're living through, now through 2029 is going to be somewhat turbulent, the whole period to 2050 is gonna be turbulent, but it's all part of our growing as earth humans. So we just work through that. And knowing that it's not the end. What's happening today is not the end, it's really a rebirth, it's a birthing process that's happening, and as we work through this something new comes out of it. And where we fit in as gay people... Were just part of those aliens the rest of the world hasn't learned to deal with yet, maybe...

[01:27:53] DW: That sounds like a really great bumper sticker for gay people. Those aliens, the rest of you just haven't learned to deal with yet. Or a t-shirt.

[01:28:01] KQ: Or a t-shirt. I love coming up with t-shirt designs.

[01:28:03] DW: There you go. Well thank you very much.

[01:28:09] KQ: Thank you. It's been an honor. I know my sister in-law is very curious to see how this turned out, and I hope I did well. I didn't know that my memory of day-to-day things... As you review this, it'll be obvious--clear--that I didn't really have a full grasp in memory on a lot of this stuff. But I hope that on some level I was able to bring here what you were looking for.

[01:28:40] DW: Thank you.

[01:28:41] MM: Thank you so much.

[01:28:42] KQ: Thanks.

Summary: Kelly Quiros focuses on his life in San Luis Obispo since he moved and started going to Cal Poly in the 1970s. Quiros speaks on his time as a member and then president of the Gay Student Union at Cal Poly and his memory of other queer organizations. Quiros provides his perspective on San Luis Obispo as a friendly and safe place to be for the time he has lived here. He talks about the local gay bars that existed in San Luis Obispo's past and contrasts the high period of 70s with the 80s as a low period. Quiros explains how during the 80s, he and his partner had to take a step back from some of the gay organizations they were involved in due to job concerns.

Metadata:

- Gay Students Union
- Howard Johnson's
- Journey's Inn
- Security Clearance
- AIDS
- Safety