**James Falmer Extracts**

**Extract 1**

I just heard about, uh, about a gay group called Gogol, which stood for Gay Oxbridge Graduates of London, which was founded in early 1982. And I seen the ads for it in Gay Times or somewhere. And I'd never got, sort of got around to, to ringing the number until till, till one, one, one Sunday early in July of that year.And, um, The person on the other end of the phone sounded highly eccentric. It was his, his name is John. He's still a very close friend. Um, hadn't um, I I swear to this day, that he told me he was busy polishing the silver, and he, he swears that he never said any such thing. Um, But it turned out that it used to meet on Friday evenings once a month on the first Friday of the month. And I just missed the July one as it happened. It had happened two days before. And that time it didn't meet in August. Basically John went to work. We used to go away for the month of August. So I was going to have to wait until the beginning of September before I could attend the group.

But when I, when I, when I first went to it, I felt instantly at home, but I don't think the whole idea of it; was not meant to be an exclusive thing. Despite the name, the name was just meant to indicate sort of people who pretty much appreciate just going to a drinks party, which, um, was, was basically to.for chat, I'm not, I'm not, I'm not so sort of meat rack type thing. Um, yes. So over the year, a lot, lots of people met each other through it, including, including people who did enter into long-term relationships and others who just became good friends through it. Um, John resigned from running the group early in 1984, I think it was, um, and uh, said he couldn't cope with running it anymore or something like that, that I stuck my hand up and said, If, if anybody would, would support me, I would be happy to take it over. Not thinking for a moment that anybody would, and everyone said they'd love it. So I then ran it for about nine years until 1993, when I went off to work in Brussels. Um, and, um, During the time that I was away, a couple of people continued to, run it for a bit, but it was by, by the mid nineties.It's it's need I think it had more or less passed. They starting to get the internet and they where , many, many more places that you could go basically. Yeah. Um, if you were gay and they, you know the stigma was a little bit calmer by that the time,

**Extract 2**

I rememberI'd first of all, taken an interest in GCHQ communications headquarters, and thought that as a linguist, I might have something to offer to that. And, um, I was put in touch I remember with somebody who was sort of your junior management role in the civil service who had decided to come out at work. And I remember I took his advice and I said, do you think I should, I should say to GCHQ. Yes. Um, and his final conclusion was yes say. And in the thing they'll ask you to fill out, say yes, I am. I was actual. Yeah. But, um, I'm in a long-term state relationship on that basis. I don't believe that I've been any sense of security risk. Um, and I remember that I got a letter back about her term of post saying thank you for your letter of um we have we are unable to process this progress, this application any further, and we have so informed the civil service commission.

**Extract 3**

And so it was, um, it was in that way that I, I ended up in the, in the benefits office, dealing with the old benecol supplementary benefit. Um, the office was called Kennington, but was actually situated just by Oval Station. Oh yeah I worked for three years and it was um, I found it remarkable time there. I did have one or two gay colleagues, um, who were, um, both absolutely determined to be open about it, about the fact that they were gay and, um, which made it much, much easier for me to be so, but, um, certainly felt that there was quite a bit of prejudice around.

We were a fairly mixed, mixed bag of people or just, just under a hundred people in the office. So we all, we all knew each other by name. We did lots of work together. Um, and so on um, and I remember one of the, one of these, the managers of the office was known to be gay but he was absolutely not out and clearly felt that he couldn't be clearly felt a bit threatened by, by us.

I well remember that and, um, Pete, do you know, he was, he was known by some some of my openly gay colleagues too, to have a long standing boyfriend. And there'd be an occasion where they, where they'd been found at a staff party snogging in the stationary cupboard.

**interviewer: .** Did you see yourself as courageous that you were open ut work or did you just see it as a natural thing to happen?

**James:**  I probably did see it as a bit courageous because, um, I mean, even certain things like going on, going on marches on gay pride marches. I didn't do very often, but I did occasionally one felt quite courageous doing that. And the, you know, the police were not always hugely pro then.