

**Southwest Virginia LGBTQ+ History Project
General Meeting at the Lynchburg Diversity Center
March 16, 2017**

7 people in attendance

AGENDA

7pm: Check-ins
7:05pm: QUICK UPDATES
7:25pm: COMMUNITY CURATION
7:30pm: GEOGRAPHIC EXPANSION
7:40pm: DEMOGRAPHIC EXPANSION
7:45pm: ARTS INITIATIVE
8:10pm: SUMMER / FALL PLANS
8:30pm: Departure

QUICK UPDATES

- 1) ARCHIVES
 - a. Physical Archives: no new donations.
 - b. Digital Archives:
 - i. We have successfully uploaded all of PALS (Positive Alternative Life Styles), Volumes 1 and 2. We have also uploaded all of the *Skip Two Periods* newspapers. Meanwhile, RB and HA have scanned in all the PALS newsletters (1980-1983), and HA is now scanning in *Blue Ridge Lambda Press* newspapers.
 - ii. Our goal is to have all of PALS uploaded and accessible in the digital archive by May 1.
 1. It was suggested that some folks affiliated with the Lynchburg Diversity Center might have the first seven missing issues of PALS from 1980! We need to look further into this.
 - c. HOMEWORK: Weekly scanning/research sessions in the Virginia Room are on Fridays, 2:30pm-close (5pm). All are welcome to attend. (If that date/time doesn't work for you, we can figure out other times, too. The Virginia Room is open Tuesday and Thursday evenings until 8pm, if that helps.)
- 2) WALKING TOURS
 - a. Downtown Tour: We have added the new lamination of Paul Holt on the courthouse steps to the downtown tour. CP is trained to give the tour and will give her first tour in April, meaning we now have three trained tour guides.
 - b. OSW tour
 - i. Next test-run of the tour: Sunday, April 9, 2pm-4pm

- ii. GR showed everyone the new laminations (22 images) that we plan to use on the OSW tour
 - iii. Training of tour guides for the OSW tour will take place in August
 - c. Brochure: EW has agreed to update the tour brochure to reflect the addition of the OSW tour. Our goal is to have a good draft of this done by early April before she leaves town for the summer.
 - d. Schedule: We decided that the OSW tour will be offered in September, October, and November and from that point after offered every other month. The downtown tour will go on an every-other-month schedule beginning in October. In other words:
 - i. September: Downtown Tour & OSW Tour (launch)
 - ii. October: Downtown & OSW
 - iii. November: OSW
 - iv. December: Downtown
 - v. And so on...
 - e. HOMEWORK: review OSW tour script. Become a volunteer tour guide!
- 3) LGBT LIBRARY
- a. The Librarathon on March 11 was a success. Eight total people attended, and we catalogued nearly 200 books, bringing us to a total of about 1,650.
 - b. Our goal is to complete the entire catalog by September.
 - c. HOMEWORK: Weekly library cataloging sessions continue nearly every Sunday, 1pm-4pm, at the RDC. Get in touch with GR to get involved. Bring a laptop.
- 4) ORAL HISTORIES
- a. Phrase III (QPOC Histories): These are underway with four black LGBT narrators and four white queer women. Interviews were completed by March 1. Transcripts will be done by March 23. Edits and “publication” of the audio and transcripts should be done by May 1.
 - b. Extra Oral Herstories: JG has completed two long interviews with First Friday members. Volunteers and RC students have completed the transcripts. These will also be published by May 1. Therefore, total, we’ll be adding 10 new interviews to the collection this spring, bringing the total number of oral histories we’ve collected to 29!
 - c. Phase IV (collectivization) will begin in Fall 2017 with a month-long series of community workshops on oral history theory and practice.
 - i. We talked about offering this workshop both in Roanoke and in Lynchburg for Lynchburg Diversity Center members.

COMMUNITY CURATION

- 1) We are developing an online exhibition about LGBTQ history in Southwest Virginia in the 1980s.

- a. We had our first Archives Research Party @ Virginia Room on March 9. Four people attended. We looked through probably 10-15 folders of archival material from the 1980s and compiled our notes. We plan to hold more of these archives research parties, about once a month.
 - i. The next Archives Research Party will be: Thursday, April 13, 5:30pm-close (8pm) @ Virginia Room. Bring a phone/camera/laptop/or some method of taking photos and taking notes.
 - b. Ongoing: everyone should also use the oral history subject index (on our website) as a guide to looking through and listening/reading to some of our 19 completed oral histories for evidence related to the 1980s and looking for choice audio excerpts (1-3 minutes in length) that we might want to embed in our exhibition.
 - c. Third: Once we have reviewed the entire archive and the oral history collection for 1980s-era data, then we should schedule a community workshop and invite people to see what we've come up with and give us feedback and suggestions for improving the exhibit.
 - i. Our first Community Curation workshop will probably be in Fall 2017.
 - d. Our deadline for launching the exhibit is now set at September 2018.
- 2) HOMEWORK: Go down to the Virginia Room to look through our archives and take notes on 1980s-era materials. Suggest key events/places/people/etc. for the 1980s exhibit.
- a. Weekly scanning/research sessions on Friday afternoons, 2:30 – close (5pm). Feel free to go to the Virginia Room at other hours, too, to look for material for our exhibition!
 - b. Attend the next Archives Research Party!

GEOGRAPHIC EXPANSION

- 1) Lynchburg
 - a. Workshop / Storycircle held at the Lynchburg Diversity Center (LDC) on March 7. It went really well! Total attendance of 13 people.
 - i. Many Lynchburg folks said they would like the History Project to share tools and resources so that the LDC can collect, preserve, and interpret their own history. (Collaboration, not colonization!)
 - b. We held our general meeting in Lynchburg on March 16.
 - i. At this meeting we further determined the nature of ongoing collaboration with the LDC:
 - 1. We'd like to offer our proposed month-long oral history workshop series for Lynchburg-based LGBTQ folks, through the LDC, sometime in Fall 2017
 - 2. We'd also like to start working immediately with LDC to help then build their library and archives

- 2) Blacksburg
 - a. Our NRV workshop / storycircle will be held Thursday, April 20, 7:30pm @ Blacksburg Public Library. JG is taking the lead on this.
 - b. We will follow up by holding our May general meeting at the Blacksburg Public Library on Thursday, May 18, 6pm-8pm.
- 3) Rockbridge / Lexington: OM will be in touch with a contact there about holding a possible workshop / storycircle in Lexington this summer.
- 4) Statewide Queer History Mini-Con: GR reported back from the Virginia Forum, held at Norfolk State earlier this month, that they and others across the state are planning a Queer History Mini-Conference for Saturday, June 24 in Richmond. All queer community history projects and their people will be invited to attend, with the goals of creating a central website / clearinghouse for Virginia queer history, and thinking more about how we can collaborate statewide.
- 5) HOMEWORK: To help with the Blacksburg workshop, get in touch with JG.

DEMOGRAPHIC EXPANSION

- 1) Gainsboro
 - a. African American LGBTQ Storycircle, facilitated by Jenae Thompson, organized by NM and others, will be held Saturday, April 8, 2pm-4pm @ Gainsboro branch of the Roanoke Public Library.
 - b. There's some concern about the limited nature of outreach/advertising so far, and that the only people signed up online so far are white folks!
 - c. So, we brainstormed the following outreach ideas:
 - i. RB: will share the FB event to various local black activist FB group pages
 - ii. GR: will reach out to the Harrison Museum
 - iii. RB: will do more flyer-ing in Gainsboro (at the YMCA? Where else?) Who wants to help out?
 - iv. Everyone: send personal invites to your black queer friends, even if they themselves don't want to go; ask them to spread the word
 - d. And, of course, it should be duly noted that we are a bunch of largely white folks doing this outreach, and there are large historical forces at work here influencing the levels of distrust and/or suspicion between white queer folks and black queer folks. We must remain cognizant of this, and understand that this event must only be the first of many such undertakings over years to come to make queer public history less white.
- 2) HOMEWORK: To get involved with the Gainsboro event, get in touch with NM.

ARTS INITIATIVE

- 1) LGBTQ+ History Zine!
 - a. The deadline for submissions is March 31. Only one submission received so far. People are probably procrastinating.
 - i. RB says: everyone please push the CFP on social media. There are also print flyers if people want to hang them up.
- 2) “Living Trans History” Interactive Theater workshop
 - a. RB led this new workshop for the first time on February 21 at Community High School. It went really well!
 - b. We are next scheduled to offer this workshop at RDC’s Diversity Camp this summer. Our workshop schedule is as follows:
 - i. Friday, June 16, 9-10:30am (middle schoolers)
 - ii. Friday, June 16, 1-2:30pm (high schoolers and young adults)
 - c. We discussed that we want to offer the workshop basically as is to both age groups, without significant changes
 - d. We want to invite the trans narrators featured in the “Living Trans History” script to attend Diversity Camp and be part of a “talk back” at the end of each workshop, talking about their lives and reflecting with the young folks about their performances and how “being trans” has changed over time.
 - e. GR mentioned some ideas for taking this forward into 2018:
 - i. We might apply for a Southern Equality Fund \$500 grant for work with transgender and non-conforming individuals. The grant idea would be to ask for funds to help us plan a semester-long extracurricular theater project in Roanoke working with area trans and non-conforming high schoolers (and perhaps college-aged folks, as well... maybe ages 14-20 inclusive? Something to think about). We would meet every week from September to December working with our archival and oral history sources and turning “Living Trans History” into a script for a full-length play. Perhaps part of this application is bring the older trans narrators into the process as well so that young and old trans folks are working together for the semester dreaming up this theatrical production.
 - ii. Then, in Spring 2018, GR hopes that his proposed “Sexual Ethics” first-year seminar class at Roanoke College can pick up this initiative---and, with another \$500 from Roanoke College--keep the extracurricular youth project going, with the goal of leading up to a April or May stage production! (So, script writing in the fall; acting / directing in the spring.)
 - iii. Let’s keep talking about these ideas, and also reaching out to professional theater people to get them involved in this conversation.
 - iv. On the topic of grant funding, AM says: we should apply for Virginia Foundation on the Humanities funding, which could

bring us thousands of dollars, for a project like this. Need to investigate deadlines for application, &c.

- 3) Historical Marker Campaign
 - a. The Community Forum will be Wednesday, March 22, 7pm-9pm @ UU Church. Attending are: Assistant City Manager of the City of Roanoke; the head of the Virginia Department of Historic Resources (in Richmond); at least one person who used to attend the Trade Winds back in the 1960s and 1970s. So, there will be both a panel of “experts” as well as hopefully lots and lots of discussion about how to move forward with this process.
 - b. AH has proposed to create a mockup of a historical marker for us to visualize the marker at the forum.
 - c. Please everyone: promote the heck out of this event so that we can get a good turnout! Thanks!
- 4) Recreative / Performative Events
 - a. Friday, April 28, 7pm-onward: Second Annual Queer History Bar Crawl
- 5) Elmwood Art Walk proposal
 - a. The City of Roanoke’s Arts Commission rejected our proposal. Whah whah. It was a good effort, though, and we can always reapply in the future.

SUMMER / FALL PLANS

- 1) Queer History Dinner Party
 - a. Scheduled for August, as a way to get people revved up in advance of big volunteer needs for Pride Week in September? Who’s hosting?
- 2) Summer Strategy:
 - a. RB and OM have stepped up as an “executive committee” to help lead meetings and be primary contact persons for the History Project in the months of May, June, and July.
 - b. GR has written out instructions for “How to Run the History Project.”
 - c. RB will lead the May monthly project meeting, and then we’ll see where we go from there.
- 3) Plans for SEPTEMBER 2017:
 - a. Third Annual History Forum @ The Park? --- we probably won’t be able to finalize plans for this until August when Roanoke Pride gets in touch with us
 - b. Pride in the Park booth!
 - i. One day or two? We did not decide
 - ii. Need new stuff to hand out at our booth?
 1. We’ll have the new walking tour brochure
 2. How about new merch?
 - a. Replica 1971 GARV Lambda buttons?
 - b. MRQA buttons?

- c. History Project logo buttons?
 - d. And of course, MRQA hats and STP t-shirts are still available
- iii. Digital/Physical exhibition at our booth: We decided instead of the iPad exhibit station, we want to go physical this time, but not necessarily an “exhibit.” Rather, here are some ideas:
 - 1. A big poster in our tent on “A Queer History of Elmwood Park.” (photos; map; primary documents; &c.)
 - 2. Consider using Aurasma: an app for mobile / digital storytelling
 - 3. How about having a soapbox in front of our booth and volunteers stand there and read from oral histories?
 - 4. How about volunteers stand with signs scattered throughout Elmwood Park that say things like “On this spot... such and such happened here”: human historical markers!
 - 5. We also discussed having a flyer or pamphlet to hand out that is a map of Elmwood Park with all the queer history sites marked in it.
- iv. Obviously, lots of good ideas to keep kicking around! We decided on an all of the above approach for now: booth, exhibit poster at booth, pamphlet/map to hand out, timed guerilla human historical marker activism throughout the park, and more to come...
- v. How do folks feel about making signs and doing a Human Historical Marker photo-shoot sometime this spring at Elmwood Park, or actually anywhere around town that we want to focus on, as a way to test out this super awesome idea??
- c. Launch of the OSW Gayborhood Walking Tour: Assuming Pride in the Park is Sep. 9-10, we will launch the tour on Sunday, Sep. 17, 2pm-4pm.
- d. Second Anniversary Party / Year-Three Visioning Workshop: we agreed to do this at the CoLab again. Target date is: Wednesday, September 20, 6pm-8pm. GR will check with the CoLab about reserving the space. We should advertise again by making Save-The-Date cards to hand out at Pride.

ACTION ITEMS

- 1) Our next meeting will be Tuesday, April 11, 5:30-7:30pm @ Parrott Room, 2nd floor, Roanoke Public Library
- 2) Help with scanning/research at the Virginia Room--- Fridays 2:30-5pm, or by appointment

- 3) Review the OSW walking tour script. Volunteer to become a walking tour guide! Training is provided.
- 4) Help digitize the LGBT Library catalog--- Sundays 1pm-4pm @ RDC. Bring a laptop.
- 5) Help with community curation of our 1980s exhibition timeline. Suggest key events/people/places for the 1980s exhibition. Scanning/research sessions on Friday afternoons. Next Archives Research Party: Thursday, April 13, 5:30-8pm @ Virginia Room
- 6) Help us plan and promote the Blacksburg-based history workshop and the African American history workshop.
- 7) Contribute to the Queer History Zine!
- 8) Help us plan the “Living Trans History” workshop for Diversity Camp. Help us write grants / long-range plan to put this on the stage!
- 9) Attend the Historical Marker Community Forum, and help promote it!
- 10) Help lead project meetings or otherwise be part of an Executive Committee this summer
- 11) Brainstorm / dream up ideas for Pride in the Park in September!

UPCOMING EVENTS

Wednesday, March 22, 7pm-9pm: Community Forum (Historical Marker Campaign)
@ UU Church
<https://www.facebook.com/events/215297728876379/>

Sunday, March 26, 2pm-4pm: Downtown Roanoke Walking Tour
<https://www.facebook.com/events/345663065827388/>

Saturday, April 8, 2pm-4pm: African American LGBTQ Story Circle @ Gainsboro Branch Library, Roanoke
<https://www.facebook.com/events/1869228203348709/>

Sunday, April 9, 2pm-4pm: Second Test-Run of OSW Gayborhood Walking Tour

Tuesday, April 11, 5:30-7:30pm: General Meeting @ Roanoke Public Library

Thursday, April 13, 5:30-close (8pm): Archives Research Party @ Virginia Room

Thursday, April 20, 7:30pm: LGBTQ history workshop / storycircle @ Blacksburg Public Library
<https://www.facebook.com/events/1687984011500689/>

Sunday, April 23, 2pm-4pm: Downtown Roanoke Walking Tour

Friday, April 28, 7pm – onward: Second Annual Queer History Bar Crawl
<https://www.facebook.com/events/593906734145036/>

Thursday, May 18, 6pm-8pm: General Meeting @ Blacksburg Public Library

Sunday, May 21, 2pm-4pm: Downtown Roanoke Walking Tour

Sunday, June 4, 2pm-4pm: Downtown Roanoke Walking Tour

June 13-18: RDC Diversity Camp

Friday, June 16: "Living Trans History" workshops @ RDC Diversity Camp

Saturday, June 24: Proposed Virginia Queer History Mini-Con @ Richmond

Sunday, July 16, 2pm-4pm: Downtown Roanoke Walking Tour

Sunday, August 20, 2pm-4pm: Downtown Roanoke Walking Tour

August, date TBD: Queer History Dinner Party?

Tuesday, September 5, tentative: Third Annual LGBT History Project Forum @ The Park?

Saturday-Sunday, September 9-10, tentative: Pride in the Park?

Sunday, September 17, 2pm-4pm: OSW Gayborhood Walking Tour Kick-Off Event!

Wednesday, September 20, 6pm-8pm: Second Anniversary Party / Year-Three Visioning Party @ CoLab?