

**Southwest Virginia LGBTQ+ History Project  
General Meeting at the Roanoke Public  
Library**

**June 22<sup>nd</sup> 2017**

8 People in Attendance

**Agenda:**

6pm: Check ins

6:05pm:QUICK UPDATES

6:25pm: COMMUNITY CURATION

6:30pm: GEOGRAPHIC EXPANSION

6:40pm: DEMOGRAPHIC EXPANSION

6:45pm: ARTS INITIATIVE

7:10pm: SUMMER/FALL PLANS

7:30pm:Departure

**QUICK UPDATES**

**1) ARCHIVES**

a) Physical Archives: No new donations.

i. Discussed with new attendees where our physical Archives are and how to access them at The Virginia Room and get in contact with project staff about new donations.

b) Digital Archives

i. All five volumes of PALS (50 issues from 1980-1983) now uploaded. All of the *Skip Two Periods* newspapers now uploaded. *Blue Ridge Lambda Press Newspapers* still in the process of being uploaded. This work will likely be put on hold over the summer. Showed new attendees how to access collection online.

**2) WALKING TOURS**

a) Downtown tour

i. RBs tour on June 4<sup>th</sup> had one attendee. CP is giving the tour on July 16<sup>th</sup>. Spread the word so she has a decent group!

ii. Want to be a downtown tour guide? Contact RB at [rmbarton@mail.roanoke.edu](mailto:rmbarton@mail.roanoke.edu)

b) OSW tour

i. Test run on the tour was completed on April 9<sup>th</sup>. Training of tour guides for OSW tour is still scheduled to take place in August. The debut of the public tour is still scheduled for September. Some at the meeting expressed interest in training to be a tour guide during August. Reach out to RB at above email for more info.

c) New tour brochure

i. E.W is working on updating the tour brochure to reflect new OSW tour.

### 3) LGBT LIBRARY

- a) We are now at over 2000 books! Cataloguing sessions are continuing over the summer in GR's absence. OM and RB are scheduling the sessions for now. We're having them most every Thursday from 4-7 at the RDC. Get in touch with RB or OM for more information. Also, like the facebook page for the library! GR is updating it and RB will be posting info. about cataloguing sessions there.
- b) Our goal is still to complete the online catalogue by September.

### 4) ORAL HISTORIES

- a) Phase III underway: GR has finished most all of the transcripts for Phase III. They are working on updating the website to reflect recent changes.
- b) Extra Oral Herstories underway: JG mentioned at the May meeting knowing a couple folks at Blacksburg Workshop who were interested in doing interviews. These could be done over the summer, in the fall, etc. JG, any updates on this?
- c) Phase IV (collectivization): we are interested in conducting community workshops on oral history interview practices in Fall 2017. Folks at the Lynchburg Diversity Center are interesting in undergoing this training. Blacksburg might also want to do this.

## **COMMUNITY CURATION**

1) Planning for new digital exhibition. Tentative title: "Finding Each Other: LGBT Community Organizing and Activism in Southwest Virginia, 1980-1989" A draft of this new exhibition that HA and GR put together can be found here:

<https://cdn.knightlab.com/libs/timeline3/latest/embed/index.html?source=1sQ4w5HXCMIK-R08K87->

[8bdcZn8Qo98bM9uAxwsBubFg&font=Default&lang=en&initial\\_zoom=2&height=650](https://cdn.knightlab.com/libs/timeline3/latest/embed/index.html?source=1sQ4w5HXCMIK-R08K87-8bdcZn8Qo98bM9uAxwsBubFg&font=Default&lang=en&initial_zoom=2&height=650)

a) Our last Archives Research Party was Thursday, April 13<sup>th</sup> 5:30pm-Close at the Virginia Room. We discussed having other research parties over the summer. RB is thinking the 27<sup>th</sup> of July might be a good date. She can follow up with the Virginia Room and reserve this time 5:30pm-close.

b) HOMEWORK: Project members can still use the Oral History Subject Index on our website to comb through interviews for evidence related to the 1980s so we have audio clips for our exhibition. Project Members should also be on the lookout for relevant images we could use.

c) Once we finish reviewing data/images/audio, we will plan a community workshop to discuss our research. This is probably going to be in September of 2017.

2) Exhibit launch still planned for September 2018.

## **GEOGRAPHIC EXPANSION**

### 1) Lynchburg

a) No updates since our last meeting. We are still planning on doing workshops with Lynchburg in the fall. Lynchburg folks are coming with GR and RB to the statewide mini-con this weekend.

### 2) Blacksburg

a) LGBTQ History Workshop held in Blacksburg on Thursday April 20<sup>th</sup>, JG led this and met possible oral history subjects who are interested in talking about First Fridays and Blacksburg LGBTQ history. She is open to scheduling these interviews independently.

b) Our last meeting was held in Blacksburg (May 22<sup>nd</sup>). A few locals came out to support us and we hope they will continue to get involved with the project. GR will make sure they're on the mailing list.

3) Rockbridge/Lexington: OM has a possible contact in Lexington. A possible connection in Lexington was also brought up at the African American LGBTQ Story Circle. We are still feeling this out.

4) Statewide Queer History Mini-Con -June 24: A meeting of LGBTQ History Project members from across the state to discuss common goals, such as creating a common website/clearinghouse for Virginia queer history and discussing possible collaborations. GR and RB are going this weekend with a couple Lynchburg folks. Things to discuss: viability of a queer historical marker in Roanoke, how we can connect our project visions, how we can connect to each other via technology. We will update y'all on insights gleamed from this.

### **DEMOGRAPHIC EXPANSION**

1) A couple ideas for future demographic expansion initiatives came up at this meeting: we discussed doing a cookout in a public park, doing an open mic in a public park, or doing a private cookout in somebody's backyard. We all agreed that right now we need to work on fostering connections and building trust with communities that we don't often interact with so that planning events will be more feasible in the future. RB, NM, and OM talked about having history project staff show up to other orgs events and represent the project. RB and OM have committed to going to Soul Sessions poetry readings at 16 West. RB will continue trying to table at People's Power Network events. **If you see an event you think we should be represented at, please send us info. on Facebook and we'll try to be there.**

### **ARTS INITIATIVE**

1) LGBTQ+ History Zine!

a) The Zine is done! Sort of. RB has to fix a printing issue, and THEN the Zines will be officially done. NM and OM have volunteered to help RB fix this printing issue sometime next week (thank you!!) and the Zines will be officially ready by the 1<sup>st</sup> of July. RB really needs help distributing Zines to coffee shops, schools, community centers, and anywhere else that will take them. We have 100 copies right now. Please email RB at [rmbarton@mail.roanoke.edu](mailto:rmbarton@mail.roanoke.edu) if you can help distribute. She'll get you however many copies you need.

**2) "Living Trans History" Interactive Theater workshop.**

a) GR and RB gave this workshop to campers at Diversity Camp on Friday, June 16, 9-10:30am (middle schoolers); 1-2:30pm (high schoolers and young adults). Skits are not so developed at this point that they could be used for pride, but the workshops went well. The older group had a bit more success with it than the younger group and we spurred great discussions about the trans experience and the act of bringing that to life. Woo!

b) Plans for Fall 2017 and onward: We're still interested in applying for a grant through the Southern Equality Fund that would allow us to work with local LGBT youth on putting together a theater project using our Oral History/Archival records as a source of inspiration—could involve both trans youth and older trans community members. GR's students could also work on this project during Spring of 2018 in his "Sexual Ethics" Seminar Class.

c) HOMEWORK: We still need folks to reach out to theater professionals who could help us bring this to life. Research grant opportunities through Virginia Foundation of the Humanities, the Victory Fund, and any other organizations that could help fund us.

**3) Historical Marker Campaign**

a) We'd like to discuss our progress on this at the conference in June so that we can gauge how other projects in the state feel about a historical marker in Roanoke. Questions to ask: What are our chances? Is there a better place for a marker like this? GR and RB will update with findings and we will decide to proceed from there or perhaps devote our time to a more feasible queer historical marker elsewhere.

**4) Recreative / Performative Events**

b) We discussed having a day of "Gay Olympics" at a local 4H camp (OM said his lovely wife JM can probably hook us up with this) in August. Possible dates: August 19<sup>th</sup> or 20<sup>th</sup>. We're thinking just one day, morning to afternoon, three or four hours. RB doesn't know anything about sports so help planning this would be really great. What activities could we do? What supplies do we need? Obviously lots of glitter, but what beyond that? Come prepared to discuss at July meeting.

c) We also talked about reserving a few hours on a Sunday/Saturday afternoon in July and doing a "Lesbian Softball" scrimmage (akin to Lesbian Frisbee). We could bring info on what we know about the lesbian softball league that existed in Salem and hand it out. We're thinking a field in Salem: Kiwanis or Oakies. We could do the 29<sup>th</sup>/30<sup>th</sup>. Again, RB doesn't know ANYTHING about sports ball. She can call and reserve a date/time but she'd like help planning the actual game.

## **SUMMER / FALL PLANS**

1) Queer History Dinner Party: scheduled for August, probably a couple weeks before Pride. Still looking for someone to host this! ES suggested having a dinner at the U.U and using their kitchen. This seems like the most viable option right now.

2) Summer Strategy / Exec. Comm.

a) RB and OM have stepped up to help with executive duties over the summer while GR is out of town. More project members are welcome to step up—there's plenty of work to go around! RB's email is [rmbarton@mail.roanoke.edu](mailto:rmbarton@mail.roanoke.edu). She distributed this to project members at the meeting and is happy to answer inquiries about the project directly. Reach out to her about getting more involved. We need help planning for our summer and fall events!

b) GR has typed up instructions for "How to Run the History Project" for exec. Committee. RB currently has these instructions. She is happy to share them with anyone who would like to help with meetings, Facebook outreach, event planning etc. Now is the perfect time to get involved!

c) RB led the June 22<sup>nd</sup> meeting @ the Parrot Room at the Roanoke Public Library. OM has mentioned being interested in leading/writing minutes for the July meeting.

3) Plans for SEPTEMBER 2017:

a) Third Annual History Forum @ The Park: We'll discuss this more closer to Pride when Roanoke Pride reaches out to us.

b) Pride in the Park booth:

i. Currently, project members are hoping to do a booth both days. At our booth, we want to be able to hand out: New Walking Tour Brochure, Pamphlet describing Elmwood Park History, promotional materials for our yearly envisioning meeting and our forum at The Park, and buttons! We'll need to spread out the responsibility of making these items among project members.

ii. We need new Merch! Looking for suggestions for cheap, reliable places to produce buttons/bumper stickers/etc. Project members like the idea of doing History Project Logo buttons. We could do a fundraiser in August or September to help us cover the cost of merch.

c) We talked more on interactive ways to bring local LGBTQ history to Elmwood Park for Pride.

i. Big poster on "Queer History of Elmwood Park": Not the most popular idea but would be easy enough to make.

ii. Soapbox and speeches: We discussed having history project members on stage to talk about the project. GR did this last year, perhaps more folks could be involved this year?

iii. Human historical markers: a popular idea but would require a lot of work and planning (do we have enough volunteers to make this work?) If enough volunteers express interest in acting as historical markers, we could probably

- plan to do this on either Saturday or Sunday—both days may not be feasible.
- iv. Design flyer/pamphlet with map of Elmwood Park queer history: Project members thought this would be very doable and a great handout for folks who stop by our booth.
  - v. Cover over the existent Elmwood Park signs/maps with our own queer history versions: This is still probably much more doable than human historical markers. We discussed covering up political signage with images and blurbs about Elmwood's history and the history of Pride in Roanoke and placing them throughout the Park. Something short, image-focused, and catchy. These signs could direct Pride-goers back to our booth where they can learn more via the handout.
  - d) Launch of OSW Gayborhood Walking Tour – We are still planning on September 17<sup>th</sup>, 2pm-4pm. Tour guide TBD.
  - e) Second Anniversary Party / Year-Three Visioning Workshop – Still planned for Wed, Sep. 20 @ CoLab. We'll have to reserve the colab in advance and make promotional materials to hand out at pride.

**NEXT MEETING: Tuesday, July 18<sup>th</sup> @ The Parrot Room, Roanoke Public Library.  
5:30-7:30pm.**











