

**Southwest Virginia LGBTQ+ History Project
General Meeting at the Roanoke Public Library
January 12, 2017**

6 people in attendance

AGENDA

6pm: Check-ins
6:05pm: QUICK UPDATES
6:15pm: ORAL HISTORIES
6:25pm: COMMUNITY CURATION
6:40pm: GEOGRAPHIC EXPANSION
6:45pm: DEMOGRAPHIC EXPANSION
6:50pm: ARTS INITIATIVE
7:20pm: OTHER IDEAS
7:30pm: 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), Volume 1. Meanwhile, RB and HA have scanned in all the PALS newsletters (1980-1983).
 - ii. GR visited the Lesbian Herstory Archives in Brooklyn in early January and scanned in all remaining issues of the lesbian newspaper *Skip Two Periods*. We are waiting on permission to upload these to our archives.
 - 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: Updated script to add story of Paul Holt. Need to create new lamination with picture of PH on courthouse steps.
 - i. GR gave a private tour to 18 Hollins students on Wed., Jan. 11.
 - b. OSW tour: GR sent out the revised tour script to everyone in early January. Please review and suggest edits to the script.
 - i. Next test-run of the OSW tour: Saturday, April 8, 2pm-4pm
 - c. New guides: CP is currently training to be a guide for our Downtown tour. Her first public tour may be in March.
 - d. HOMEWORK: review OSW tour script. Become a volunteer tour guide!

3) LGBT LIBRARY

- a. We will be moving the library downstairs into the newly-expanded RDC space sometime in late January or February. Stay tuned for massive volunteer needs!
 - i. Maybe either Saturday, February 11? or Saturday, February 18?
- b. Librarathon: We are looking to hold a day-long (or maybe even overnight) library cataloging marathon, which will include cataloging books, food, music, dramatic readings, etc.!
 - i. Maybe either Saturday, March 11? or Saturday, March 25?
- c. HOMEWORK: Weekly library cataloging sessions continue nearly every Sunday, 2pm-5pm, at MCC church. Get in touch with GR to get involved. Bring a laptop.

ORAL HISTORIES

- 1) Phase III (QPOC Histories): We have six confirmed narrators—two black gay men, one black trans woman, one black gay woman, one black former sex worker, and one white gay woman—to participate in Phase III of the Oral History Initiative, which was initially conceived to focus on LGBTQ African American life stories. GR will reach out to two remaining white women to round out the eight narrators we need.
- 2) More Oral Herstories: JG plans to conduct at least two or three more oral herstory interviews with women who were formerly involved in First Friday.
- 3) Phase IV (Collectivization): we began to discuss what comes next, after May 2017 when Phase III is over. GR will not be teaching his queer oral histories class again until Spring 2018, if not even later. So, in Fall 2017 (Phase IV), we will focus on collectivizing our oral history process. GR will run community workshops to train History Project members in how to conduct oral histories, and then everyone will go out and collect stories on their own. Stay tuned!
- 4) HOMEWORK: If you would like to help JG with transcribing oral histories over the next few months, please be in touch. Training will be provided.

COMMUNITY CURATION

- 1) We began our Community Curation initiative by taking 15 minutes to write out ideas on a big piece of paper with markers: what are the key events on a timeline of Southwest Virginia's LGBTQ history in the period 1980-1989. We got started brainstorming, but realized that this will take a lot of time and hard work on everyone's part to do research and synthesize information!
- 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 resume 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!
- 3) Community workshop: We discussed possibly holding a community workshop in March or April at which we would present a draft of our community-curated 1980s timeline, and get more input/feedback from the public.
 - a. Where should we hold this event?
 - b. When should we hold it?

GEOGRAPHIC EXPANSION

- 1) Updates
 - a. Lynchburg = OM has worked with the Lynchburg Diversity Center to schedule an LGBTQ History Workshop at the LDC for Tuesday, February 7, 6pm-8pm. OM will take the lead in organizing this event. RB will help with promotion/social media. GR will help draft a proposed workshop agenda and suggest some source materials. Anyone else who wants to help out, please let us know!
 - b. Blacksburg = JG is in contact with a lesbian organization in Blacksburg. She will work with them to come up with a date/time/location for a Lesbian Herstory workshop in Blacksburg in April.
- 2) The following amended calendar of events is suggested:
 - a. Tuesday, February 7, 6pm-8pm: workshop in Lynchburg (LDC)
 - b. Thursday, March 16, 6pm? 7pm?: History Project meeting in Lynchburg (location?)
 - c. April: workshop in Blacksburg
 - d. May: History Project meeting in Blacksburg

DEMOGRAPHIC EXPANSION

- 1) NM met with folks at the Gainsboro branch library about co-hosting an African American LGBTQ History workshop / storycircle event there. They seem interested, and the conversation is continuing.
- 2) We are marching in the MLK Parade in Lexington this Saturday, Jan. 14. We should use this event as an opportunity jumpstart our outreach to queer people of color.

ARTS INITIATIVE

- 1) LGBTQ+ History Zine!

- a. RB: next meeting is January 27 with Community High School students. They will be drafting a timeline / process for making the zine.
 - b. RB also brought up the Lycée event being held at Community High School on Tuesday, February 21, daytime, and suggested proposing an LGBTQ+ History Project workshop.
 - i. We talked about maybe doing an interactive theater workshop with the students based on historical materials in our collection. A workshop in which each student gets one piece of paper with information about their historical “character”: pulled from the newspapers, oral histories, et. The students then become that character and act out that role using the source material in their hands.
 - ii. RB will take the lead on the drafting the proposal (due Feb. 6). GR will put together a draft list of “characters” and source material for each character. We hope to also get OM and JM involved to help us with the theater components of this proposed workshop!
- 2) Historical Marker Campaign
- a. OM says that the UU church is pleased to host our Community Forum anytime we want. GR will ask OM to work with Rev. Alex to find a weeknight in February that is open for us.
 - b. GR will reach out to people who used to attend The Trade Winds and try to get them to come to our Community Forum.
 - c. AH has proposed to create a mockup of a historical marker for us to visualize the marker at the forum.
 - d. If the forum is successful, then we will schedule a launch party in March at The Park to launch our crowdfunding campaign for the marker.
- 3) Recreative / Performative Events
- a. Sunday, April 9, 2pm: #MakeHighlandQueerAgain Mattress Party – commemorating histories of public sex and the erasure of our stories
 - b. Friday, April 28, evening: Second Annual #MakeRoanokeQueerAgain Bar Crawl
- 4) Valentine’s Day Card-Making Party: Monday, February 6, 7pm-9pm @ Roanoke Diversity Center.
- a. RB has made a facebook event page and flyer. Everyone should invite their friends!
 - b. GR will make a list of contacts & mailing addresses to send the valentines out to.
- 5) Elmwood Art Walk proposal
- a. The proposal is due February 6, 2017. If accepted, the sculpture/installation will go up in May 2017.
- 6) Participatory / Interactive Theater idea
- a. The Lycée proposal in February perhaps gives us a chance to test out ideas for this initiative. A larger goal is to prepare materials for a larger-scale interactive theater workshop to hold at Diversity Camp in

June with LGBTQ youth. GR is interested in an interactive theater piece focused on historical trans experiences. Others suggested that we should expand that to include historical personages across the LGBTQ+ spectrum.

OTHER IDEAS / CONCERNS

- 1) March in the CARE MLK Parade in Lexington, Saturday, January 14, 10am-12pm
 - a. We held a sign-making / banner-making party on Tuesday, January 10 @ RDC.
 - b. We have transportation set up for Saturday. We're ready to take on the white supremacists.
- 2) Queer History Dinner Party
 - a. RB proposed the idea of a queer history dinner party. Perhaps we would dress up in costume and take on the character of an important LGBTQ historical figure?
 - b. New idea: schedule for August, as a way to get people revved up in advance of big volunteer needs for Pride Week in September.
- 3) SUMMER STRATEGY:
 - a. We began to discuss a deliberative process to decentralize operations within the History Project so that more people can take leadership roles over different aspects of the organization and help run the organization through the summer (as Roanoke College faculty and staff are away on break). Here are some ideas / proposals:
 - i. Monthly meetings in the summer (May-August?) can be facilitated through a "round robin" of rotating meeting facilitators?
 - ii. We might wish to form different committees responsible for different aspects of running the organization. GR will map out a draft of what these might be.
 - iii. GR should write out instructions for "How to Run the History Project." They will draft these in advance of our next meeting.

ACTION ITEMS

- 1) Our next meeting will be Thursday, February 9, 5:30pm-7:30pm @ Parrott Room, 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 2pm-5pm @ MCC church. Bring a laptop.

- 5) Help with transcribing recorded oral histories. Training is provided.
- 6) Help with community curation of our 1980s exhibition timeline. Suggest key events/people/places for the 1980s exhibition. Scanning/research sessions on Friday afternoons.
- 7) Help us our plan our first Lynchburg-based history workshop!
- 8) Help us plan an interactive theater workshop for teens.
- 9) Help brainstorm ways to decentralize the History Project so that we can grow in just and sustainable ways.
- 10) #MakeRoanokeQueerAgain!

UPCOMING EVENTS

Saturday, January 14, 10am-12pm: March with us in the CARE MLK Parade in Lexington

<https://www.facebook.com/events/340596596297968/>

Sunday, January 22, 2pm-4pm: Downtown Roanoke Walking Tour

<https://www.facebook.com/events/218611745260612/>

Monday, February 6, 7pm-9pm: Anti-Heteronormative Valentine's Day Card-Making Party @ Roanoke Diversity Center

<https://www.facebook.com/events/1666296173671331/>

Tuesday, February, 7, 6pm-8pm: History Project workshop @ Lynchburg Diversity Center

Thursday, February 9, 5:30pm-7:30pm: General Meeting @ Roanoke Public Library

<https://www.facebook.com/events/147251542432636/>

Saturday, February 11 or 18?: LGBT Library moving day? --- volunteers needed

Sunday, February 19, 2pm-4pm: Downtown Roanoke Walking Tour

Tuesday, February 21, time TBD: Lycée event @ Community High School?

February, date TBD: Community Forum (Historical Marker Campaign) @ UU Church in Roanoke?

Saturday, March 11 or 25?: LGBT Librarathon @ Roanoke Diversity Center?

Thursday, March 16, time TBD: General Meeting @ Lynchburg (place TBD)

March, date TBD: Launch Party / Fundraiser (Historical Marker Campaign) @ The Park?

Sunday, March 26, 2pm-4pm: Downtown Roanoke Walking Tour

Saturday, April 8, 2pm-4pm: Second Test-Run of OSW Gayborhood Walking Tour

Sunday, April 9, 2pm-4pm: #MakeHighlandQueerAgain Mattress Party?

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

Friday, April 28, 7pm – onward: Second Annual Queer History Bar Crawl

April, date TBD: Lesbian Herstory workshop @ Blacksburg?