

**Southwest Virginia LGBTQ+ History Project  
General Meeting at Roanoke College  
March 24, 2016**

3 people in attendance.

**AGENDA**

(6-6:15pm): ARCHIVES  
(6:15-6:30pm): ORAL HISTORIES  
(6:30-6:45pm): WALKING TOUR  
(6:45-7pm): DIGITAL EXHIBITION  
(7-7:15pm): PUBLIC RELATIONS  
(7:15-7:30pm): SEPTEMBER 2016 PLANS  
(7:30pm): Departure

**ARCHIVES**

- 1) DIGITAL ARCHIVES:  
<http://www.socommons.org/openlibrary/welcome.html#3|collections|7730775||Southwest20Virginia20LGBTQ2B20History20Project||>
  - a. No updates since our last meeting
  - b. Still to come: waiting on *Virginia Gayzette* vol. 1, no. 1 to be uploaded, plus three issues of the *Virginia Gayzette* from 1978. These are scanned and just need to be uploaded. We also now have permission to upload relevant articles from *The Roanoke Times* and *The Roanoker*.
- 2) PHYSICAL ARCHIVES:
  - a. STATUS OF COLLECTION: Many new donations since last meeting!
    - i. The oral history initiative resulted in archival contributions by three new donors.
    - ii. The March 23<sup>rd</sup> event at The Park resulted in contributions by an additional three new donors (one of whom requested to be listed as 'anonymous.')
    - iii. Our website now reflects the expanded content of our physical archives: <http://lgbthistory.pages.roanoke.edu/physical-archives/>
  - b. ARCHIVES COLLECTION EVENTS:
    - i. ROANOKE DIVERSITY CENTER (March 14<sup>th</sup>): no one came. No new donations. ☹
    - ii. THE PARK (March 23<sup>rd</sup>): about 20 people came. Three made donations to the archives. Everyone participated in a two-hour story circle: a very vibrant conversation. We all think this was a very successful event!
    - iii. INTIMATE PATH: DG spoke at the most recent IP dinner about the History Project. He also sent an email out to IP members

about the project. We heard at The Park (March 23<sup>rd</sup>) that some of the people who came did so because they had heard about it from DG.

1. The next step is for GR to go to an IP dinner.
  2. There is talk of potentially holding a Collection Event at an IP dinner. This needs more planning.
  - iv. OUUT: RW gave an update at The Park event: all is good to go for our Archives Collection Event at the UU church on April 4.
  - v. MCC: We are scheduled to do an Archives Collection Event at the church on April 24.
  - vi. STUDENT VOLUNTEERS: We have three dedicated Roanoke College students helping to process donations at all of our Archives Collection Events. Thank you students!!
  - c. CONTEMPORARY COLLECTING: No new updates.
- 3) Policy on THREE-DIMENSIONAL OBJECTS: Key members were absent for this discussion, so we have tabled it (again) and will put it on the agenda for April's meeting.

## **ORAL HISTORIES**

- 1) The INTERVIEWS are completed (<http://lgbthistory.pages.roanoke.edu/oral-histories>). Now we're just editing, indexing, and processing the collection.
  - a. WHO'S INVOLVED: We ended up with 14 interview subjects. Making gross generalizations: they are 8 cisgender queer men, 4 cisgender queer women, and 2 transwomen. 13 are white, and 1 is black. The student interviewers, on the other hand, were predominantly white cisgender straight women, 18-22 years old.
    - i. We lost only a handful of interview subjects over the course of this process, and we will put them back at the top of the list for our next round of interviews, scheduled for spring 2017.
  - b. RECORDINGS: All audio recordings were completed March 1.
  - c. TRANSCRIPTS: About 85% of written transcripts were completed by the March 22 deadline. GR will continue to push to get the remaining transcripts in by the end of the month.
  - d. EDITING AND DEPOSITION: GR is now reviewing, editing, and indexing every transcript, with the goal of depositing the recordings and transcripts into the LGBTQ History Collection at the Virginia Room by May 1, 2016.
- 2) NEXT ROUND OF INTERVIEWS: Will take place in spring 2017.
- 3) GR mentioned that a graduate student at Virginia Tech—the project manager of VIRGINIA TECH'S LGBTQ ORAL HISTORY PROJECT—reached out earlier this week about collaborating in order to identify LGBTQ subjects in the Blacksburg / NRV region. Virginia Tech's project plans to begin interviewing subjects in that region, and would like our help identifying interested folks. Anyone with thoughts on this, please contact GR.

- 4) **DROPBOX OF RECORDINGS?:** Finally, some History Project folks requested access to all the oral history recordings for our review. GR will make a dropbox for the recordings so that project members can listen to them at their pleasure. This will also help with making curatorial decisions about which oral history excerpts to use in the Digital Exhibition.

## **WALKING TOUR**

- 1) **TOUR SCRIPT:** We have received feedback from one project member so far on the content of the tour script. GR is incorporating this feedback and will be making v. 3 of the script available within the next week or so.
  - a. **BUS / VAN TOUR:** We are still committed to offering a special bus or van tour for those with limited mobility. We aim to schedule this tour for the weekend before Pride in the Park.
    - i. **A NEW SCRIPT?:** We need to write a script for this tour, which may very well include stops not normally included on the walking tour.
    - ii. **GUEST SPEAKER?:** We discussed perhaps inviting a knowledgeable local speaker to join the bus tour and provide first-person content about “what it was like” as we visit various stops.
    - iii. **WHEELCHAIR-ACCESSIBILITY:** We discussed that the 12-passenger vans available through Roanoke College are not that easy to get in and out of, and do not accommodate people in wheelchairs. If we are marketing this as a tour for those with limited mobility, perhaps we should rent a real bus, and a driver, for the event.
      1. **RSVPs:** If so, we need to budget how much that would cost, and then create an online ticketing system for the event for RSVPs, and charge people a reasonable rate to recoup our costs.
- 2) **SCHEDULE OF ROLL-OUT:**
  - a. **NEXT TEST-RUN:** Sunday, April 10, 2pm – 4pm. Next practice run of the walking tour. All History Project members are invited to attend and review the tour content. We will be using our new laminated images on the tour for the first time. We’re printing 14 double-sided laminations, with almost 30 total images that help explain “what it was like” on the tour!
  - b. **PUBLIC LAUNCH:** Pride in the Park is Sep. 10-11. So we plan the following schedule of tours for September:
    - i. Sunday, Sept. 4, 2pm = BUS / VAN TOUR
    - ii. Sunday, Sept. 18, 2pm = WALKING TOUR
    - iii. Sunday, Sept. 25, 2pm = WALKING TOUR

- iv. If folks have different ideas for the best time to schedule these—say Saturday afternoon versus Sunday afternoon—please let us all know.
- c. SUBSEQUENT SCHEDULE OF TOURS: Once a month starting in October 2016. We talked about potentially training Roanoke College students to learn and lead these tours as they continue into 2017.
- d. Create an ONLINE AUDIO WALKING TOUR: We would like to begin development of this in October 2016.

## **DIGITAL EXHIBITION**

- 1) CONTENT: GR showed the “Coming Out” exhibition as it currently stands: it is about 20-30 slides in length, with a mix of maps, photographs, newspaper clippings, and oral history excerpts as illustrative media. Textual content is written for every slide. And GR is slowly working on writing HTML script to add hyperlinks and other bells and whistles.
  - a. The goal is to get a full draft of the exhibition script to Project members for review by May 1.
  - b. If anyone wants to see the bells & whistles, because the site is password protected as of right now, it would be best to make an appointment with GR to take a look at the exhibit design in person. And, of course, we always show off the exhibition draft at every project meeting!
- 2) NARRATIVE: We have received feedback on the Introductory text for the exhibit from two Project members. Thank you for your feedback!
- 3) EXHIBITION BOOTH at PRIDE IN THE PARK: We talked about the need by mid-July to have purchased the necessary materials for our booth:
  - a. Purchase iPad
  - b. Purchase exhibition-style mount for the tablet device
  - c. Purchase unique domain/URL for the “Coming Out” exhibition
  - d. We talked about soliciting donations internally among History Project members to help cover the costs of these purchases. In all likelihood, GR will purchase everything out of pocket, and then History Project supporters can make “donations” to him as you see fit?
  - e. We don’t have a treasurer! Do we need to establish such an office to handle money and purchases?
- 4) A PHYSICAL EXHIBITION? We briefly discussed the idea of doing a physical exhibition in Year Two of this project. Perhaps a pop-up exhibition at The Park, or at the Roanoke College History Department (which has gallery space). We could invite community members to lend their objects for a brief period of time, without having to ask them to make permanent donation of those objects to an archive or museum.

## **PUBLIC RELATIONS**

- 1) PR IDEAS (ongoing and/or brainstormed):
  - a. ROANOKE TIMES: Anyone want to reach out to *Roanoke Times* about doing a story about the project?
  - b. UNITE VA MAGAZINE: SM has submitted an essay about the History Project for their April issue.
  - c. DISCOVER HISTORY & HERITAGE MAGAZINE: GR has reached out to the editor about writing an essay for their 1950-1975 issue.
  - d. #MAKEROANOKEQUEERAGAIN BAR CRAWL: We agreed to go forward with organizing the bar crawl, which has been a popular idea floating around among Roanoke College students.
    - i. We decided to schedule this event for Friday, April 29, 7pm start time. We will visit seven total bars, with the final two being Backstreet and lastly The Park. GR will make a facebook event page to start promoting the event.

## **SEPTEMBER 2016 PLANS**

- 1) PRIDE WEEK
  - a. Elect a PRIDE IN THE PARK POINT PERSON for the History Project? We were unable to move forward with this. Will put on the agenda again for April's meeting.
  - b. Pride in the Park TO-DOS:
    - i. Need to reserve a booth for Pride in the Park
      1. JG says they will begin taking applications for booths in mid-April
    - ii. Need to design a banner (w/ logo?) for our booth and/or the Pride Parade
    - iii. Design pamphlets to hand out at Pride about our project?
    - iv. Digital exhibition presented at our Pride in the Park booth
  - c. ONE-YEAR ANNIVERSARY PARTY / YEAR-TWO VISIONING WORKSHOP
    - i. Tentative date: how about Tuesday, September 20, evening?
    - ii. We were unable to have conversation about this topic. We will put on the agenda again for April's meeting.
  - d. SUMMERTIME LEADERSHIP VACUUM:
    - i. We were unable to discuss this during our meeting, due to the low attendance at this month's meeting. We will put on the agenda again for April's meeting.
    - ii. April is our last regularly scheduled History Project meeting until at least late July if not August. So it's

important that we discuss what the heck we plan to do (or not do) over the summer!

### **ACTION ITEMS**

- 1) Our next meeting will be Thursday, April 28, 5:30 – 7:30 pm @ Parrott Room, Roanoke Public Library.
- 2) Complete uploading the 1970s-era material to the Digital Archives.
- 3) Continue to promote our April Archives Collection Events.
- 4) Complete our 2016 Oral History Initiative! And make a dropbox for the recordings to share internally with project members.
- 5) Everyone come to the Test-Run of the Walking Tour on April 10!
- 6) Continue to design and budget the limited mobility bus / van tour.
- 7) Complete a full draft of the Digital Exhibition for review
- 8) Begin planning for our booth at Pride in the Park in September
- 9) Have fun. And Make Roanoke Queer Again! ☺

### **UPCOMING EVENTS**

Monday, April 4: Archives Collection Event @ UU church:

<https://www.facebook.com/events/916152595170834/>

Sunday, April 10: test-run of the LGBTQ+ History Walking Tour!

Sunday, April 24: Archives Collection Event @ MCC church:

<https://www.facebook.com/events/939413439440635/>

Thursday, April 28: our next monthly History Project meeting @ Roanoke Public Library

Friday, April 29: #MakeRoanokeQueerAgain Bar Crawl!

By May 1: deposition of oral history recordings and transcripts @ Virginia Room

By May 1: completion of a full draft of the digital exhibition “Coming Out”

June 17-19: “Queer History South” conference @ Charlotte, North Carolina?

mid-July: purchase exhibition materials for our booth at Pride in the Park

Sunday, September 4: LGBTQ+ History Bus / Van Tour?

September 6-9: Pride Week events? Launch of digital exhibition? Public talks / forums / workshops?

September 10-11: Pride in the Park Festival @ Elmwood Park

Sunday, September 18: LGBTQ+ History Walking Tour?

Tuesday, September 20: One-Year Anniversary Celebration & Year Two Visioning Workshop?

Sunday, September 25: LGBTQ+ History Walking Tour?