

**Southwest Virginia LGBTQ+ History Project  
General Meeting at the Blacksburg Library  
May 22<sup>nd</sup> 2017**

5 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.
- 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.

**2) WALKING TOURS**

- a) Downtown tour
  - i. May 21<sup>st</sup> tour led by RB had no attendees (it was raining). Next tour is June 4<sup>th</sup>. Help us spread the word! Tours are being alternated by RB and CP this summer.
  - ii. Want to be a tour guide? We'll need more for the fall. Get in touch with RB via email or Facebook.
- 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.
- 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 every Thursday from 4-7 at the RDC. Get in touch with RB or OM

for more information.

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—this will probably be completed by June.

b) Extra Oral Herstories underway: JG mentioned meeting a couple folks at Blacksburg Workshop who were interested in doing interviews. These could be done over the summer, in the fall, etc.

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.

**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. Maybe doing one in July or August. There was interest in this, we just have to work out the logistics and pick a date.

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.

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) This meeting was held at the Blacksburg Public Library. Three Blacksburg locals came out to get involved (including JG—our fabulous Blacksburg connect). Thank you all!

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.

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 sent an email out to organizers but have not yet heard anything back. RB and GR are definitely planning on going. JG is also interested in going. Waiting to hear back on how many folks we can bring and what this is going to look like exactly. Will give updates as they come in.

### **DEMOGRAPHIC EXPANSION**

1) We discussed our ongoing outreach goals. Meeting attendees agreed that this will take time and effort on our part, echoed the importance of hosting more private, intimate events and forging relationships with communities organically. We'd like to host more outreach events in the future, but we need ideas on what these events should look like and good places to host them. Let us know your thoughts!

### **ARTS INITIATIVE**

1) LGBTQ+ History Zine!

- a) RB has nearly finished putting together the rough draft! She has a copy printed out and is adding hand-written finishing touches. Next steps: printing out subsequent copies for distribution. Printing costs are pretty cheap so RB can take care of this. She does need help with distribution. At June meeting, RB will bring copies of the Zine so project members can help hand them out. Project members who have an idea of how many zines they want should contact RB so she has an idea of how many to get copied.
- 2) "Living Trans History" Interactive Theater workshop.
  - a) Plans for Diversity Camp: Giving a workshop to campers Friday, June 16, 9-10:30am (middle schoolers); 1-2:30pm (high schoolers and young adults). We discussed potentially having a group of campers do a performance of their scene at Pride as part of our Pride festivities. We'll gauge interest for this at camp.
  - 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 needs 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 fundus.
- 2) 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?
  - b) At the meeting we discussed ways to quantify public interest in a historical marker at the Trade Winds, E.S suggested drafting up a petition of sorts that we could bring to future events, have at our pride booth etc.
- 3) Recreative / Performative Events
  - a) Second Annual Queer History Bar Crawl was held on Friday, April 28. Attendance was good. GR, OM, and RB had way too much fun!
  - b) Project members would like to hold at least one social event over the summer. We talked about recreating a retreat and doing a day of "Gay Olympics." Maybe we could do this at a local 4H camp? We're thinking late July or August right now. JG suggested hosting a softball game as homage to lesbian softball leagues. This would be fairly easy to plan. We just need to reserve a baseball field for an afternoon.

## **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. Thoughts?
- 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 May 22<sup>nd</sup> meeting. Next meeting is scheduled for June 22<sup>nd</sup> @ the Parrot Room at the Roanoke Public Library. RB can lead this meeting too, but anyone is welcome to help.

### 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.

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 also discussed doing a fundraiser of sorts to help us cover merch costs. Thoughts?

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. JG mentioned potentially doing a “Living Queer History” skit.

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 was also a popular idea. 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!

RB led the April 11<sup>th</sup> meeting and will lead the May meeting in Blacksburg—she’s hoping to alternate with other project members on running meetings and writing minutes for June and July.

4) 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. Still undecided on one day or two. RB thinks two days would be good.

ii. We need new merch at the booth: we’ll have a new walking tour guide and our classic hats, but we need other ideas. Everyone liked the idea of recreating old gay activist merch and doing “Make Roanoke Queer Again” buttons/bumper sticks.

c) Digital / physical exhibition: our next exhibition won’t be ready in September 2017, so we’re brainstorming other ideas on how to highlight the queer history within Elmwood park: here are suggestions from last month’s meeting that we need more feedback on:

i. Big poster on “Queer History of Elmwood Park?”

ii. Soapbox and speeches?

iii. Human historical markers (this seems to be the most popular idea right now—we would need to begin planning for this soon, maybe do a test run sometime in the spring and try out different historical markers/posing ideas).

iv. Design flyer/pamphlet with map of Elmwood Park queer history?

v. Cover over the existent Elmwood Park signs/maps with our own queer history versions?

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