Southwest Virginia LGBTQ+ History Project
General Meeting at Roanoke College
October 14, 2015

9 people in attendance.

Agenda
See the original meeting agenda here:
https://docs.google.com/document/d/1OfS5W2eEiG5LEgZ2zhT6slQfRP2PjEpFxbivT3 2ZyGw/edit?usp=sharing

(7-7:15pm): arrive
(7:15-7:20pm): Check-ins
(7:20-8:30pm): ARCHIVES
(8:30-8:50pm): ORAL HISTORIES
(8:50-8:55pm): Other Projects? Ideas?
(8:55-9pm): Check-outs

ARCHIVES:

Gregory discussed a potential partnership with the Virginia Room, Roanoke Public Library, to create a dedicated LGBTQ+ History Collection, and to encourage local community members to donate their LGBTQ+ historical materials to help found this collection.

Questions/Comments:
1) VOLUNTEERS: KW: Roanoke College student groups, LAMBDA & Historical Society, could provide volunteers to help process collections at the library, if we held a "document drop-off" event.
2) FORMS: Is the Roanoke Public Library's Deed of Gift form confidential? Who will have access to this form at the library, and how can we protect a donor's anonymity if so desired?
3) PROMOTION:
   a. DD: offered to make flyers; take photos to document future History Project events
   b. Strategy suggestion: mobile document pick-ups around the community, especially in rural areas. We could even potentially use a Roanoke College van as a mobile "LGBTQ+ History Project" unit to pick up historical materials in more rural communities?
4) QUESTIONS/CONCERNS:
   a. THIRD-PARTY CONFIDENTIALITY: if people are present in historic photos, or mentioned in writings, or otherwise "outed" in the historic materials, do we need to get their legal permission to donate this material to the library? Lots of debate and uncertainty about this legal

issue. We need to look into legal and ethical questions, and models for doing this.

b. TRANSGENDER COMMUNITY: It is noted that the Transgender community would be uniquely "exposed" by the donation of old photographs and other materials, and third-party confidentiality issues become most important when considering implications for the Transgender community

c. DIGITAL FILES: questions were raised about legal issues regarding submitting digital files to a digital archive. How do donors legally hand over property of these files? We need to look into models of how other crowd-sourced digital archive projects have handled this.

d. USING AN "IN HOUSE" DROP-OFF LOCATION: We discussed at length the idea of using the Roanoke Diversity Center (RDC) as a drop-off location for historical materials, rather than the library. We talked about how the Public Library may not be a "safe space" for LGBTQ+ folks in the same way that RDC is. It was suggested that people could drop off materials at RDC, and then RDC would get those materials to the library. Questions:

 i. Would donors hand over property to RDC, and then RDC sign a Deed of Gift form for the library? Or could donors sign the Deed of Gift form at RDC, and then RDC brings it all over (form and all) to the library? How can we make this work?

Solutions:
We came up with the following outline on the whiteboard…

1) Roanoke Public Library --- physical collection --- most visible space
2) RDC / LGBT Library --- physical collection --- safest space
3) Digital Archive @ lgbthistory.pages.roanoke.edu --- digital collection --- most accessible space

After much debate, we decided to go with an "all of the above approach":
1) Roanoke Public Library (RPL): we will plan for a February 2016 "open house" event to kick-off a new LGBTQ+ History Collection!
2) Roanoke Diversity Center (RDC): Gregory, RDC, and RPL will meet in late October to draft a memorandum of understanding, or some kind of document, detailing how materials will be transferred from community members to RDC to RPL. Once that is in place, we can start promoting and collecting.
3) Digital Archive: once legal/technical questions are answered, we can start collecting immediately

ORAL HISTORIES:

Gregory discussed his "Sex and Storytelling" queer public humanities course, which has been approved for Spring 2016 semester. For this course, students will conduct oral histories with LGBTQ+ community members. We need to recruit 8-16 interview subjects by January 2016 to make this work.

Questions/Comments:
1) FORMS: there are a lot of legal forms for doing oral histories. Let's try to make the forms as easy as possible for interview subjects, so that they do not feel overwhelmed by the paperwork.
2) EQUIPMENT: we briefly discussed audio vs. video, and whether to conduct interviews offsite or at the college. We reached no consensus.
3) QUESTIONS/CONCERNS:
   a. STUDENTS: If interviewees are unsure about talking to a student, we could always pair up students with a community member, so that every interviewer has at least one other person their age in the room?
   b. ANONYMITY: We discussed the need for anonymity options (and/or pseudonyms, and other such options) for interview subjects. There must be clear options in the legal forms for when interviewees sign-up for the oral history interviews.
   c. THIRD-PARTY CONFIDENTIALITY: same issues as with the archives project, are we legally required to get written permission from every third-party person mentioned in any oral history interview?
      i. Could we perhaps ask our speakers to try and use pseudonyms, or just "avoid naming names," in their interviews, to minimize our need to track down and get permissions from third parties?
   d. WHERE TO DEPOSIT THE INTERVIEWS: we discussed the possibility of the interviews (recordings and transcripts) being added to the Roanoke Public Library LGBTQ+ History Collection (if we start up such a collection). We did not get around to discussing other options.
   e. INTERNET ACCESS TO RECORDINGS: we raised the issue of how visible/accessible the finished recordings should be, and what options to give interview subjects on this matter. We did not reach any consensus.

OTHER PROJECTS? IDEAS?

- WALKING TOURS: we did not get around to discussing Gregory's walking tour ideas
- WRITTEN HISTORIES: the idea of people submitting written life histories came up. We nodded toward the fact that RDC already has a "Submit Your Story" tab on their webpage? Also raised legal issues, again, about whether people are transferring copyright of their stories to an "archive" or not. We left these questions open ended.

NEXT STEPS
We agreed to schedule monthly meetings. <u>Our next meeting will be in mid-November.</u> We will use Doodle to schedule the next meeting date.

ACTION ITEMS:
1) Look into <u>third-party confidentiality issues</u> regarding historic photographs, oral histories, and all other media. By next meeting, devise a policy for dealing with third-party issues in a legal, ethical, and responsible way.
2) Look into models for <u>hosting a digital archives</u>, especially best practices regarding the submission and transfer of property for digital files.
3) Arrange meeting between RPL and RDC to discuss <u>using RDC as a mid-way "drop off" point for historical materials.</u> Discuss issues of transferring property (Deed of Gift) among hands. By next meeting, draft a memorandum that lays out a policy by which materials will be transferred from RDC to RPL.
4) Start planning "<u>Document Drop-Off and Open House</u>" event for February 2016 at the Virginia Room.
5) Start <u>creating promotional materials</u> that explain our ARCHIVES initiative. Highlight our three-pronged approach: RPL; RDC; and, digital archive... (and that collecting will begin sometime in late autumn?)
6) Complete and submit <u>IRB Forms </u>for ORAL HISTORIES initiative
7) By next meeting, figure out <u>what equipment is available for</u> doing oral histories, and be prepared to reach consensus about which technology we want to use
8) Start <u>recruiting interview subjects</u> for oral histories project
9) <u>Rewrite all oral history forms</u> to make clear options for anonymity and/or pseudonyms, and figure out how/if we can limit electronic reproduction of oral histories, or make such options available