



news

Fall 2020

New traveling history exhibit debuts

In January 2019, the William Way LGBT Community Center in Philadelphia mounted an exhibit on the LGBTQ+ Cuban refugees who came to the United States as part of the Mariel Boatlift in 1980. Many of the refugees came to Fort Indiantown Gap, one of just a few processing centers set up to resettle the Cuban refugees.

This groundbreaking exhibit, *With Open Heart and Open Arms: LGBTQ Cuban Refugees and the LGBTQ Community's Response to the Mariel Boatlift*, has been adapted to become the next traveling exhibit in a collaborative effort with our History Project through the PA LGBT History Network.

Despite delays from the COVID-19 pandemic, we were able to debut the exhibit at the Historic Harrisburg Resource Center on September 1, now with an extended run through October 30. The exhibit is open weekdays 9 am to 4 pm, and during 3rd in the Burg on October 16 from 6-9 pm. Masking and social distancing is required. The most current information on the schedule of future dates and venues for the exhibit will be posted to our web page, www.centralpalgbtcenter.org/withopenheart. There is also a link on that page to a digital version of the exhibit, for those who are not able to see the exhibit in person.



Garry Lenton, photographer, Cuban refugees at Fort Indiantown Gap, 1980

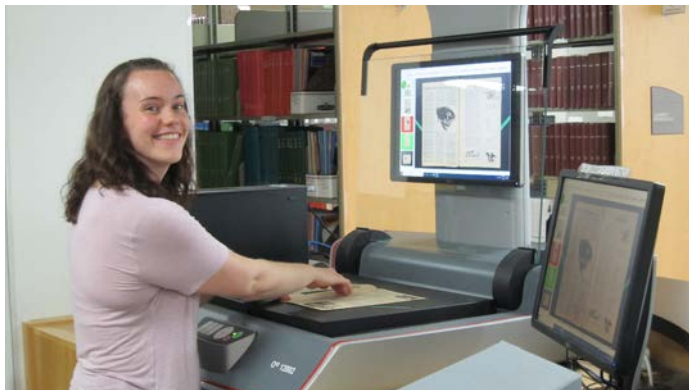
New staff archivist heads up digitization project of the History Project collection

Sarah Wakefield was hired by Dickinson College in July as a staff archivist to undertake a major digitization project of our LGBTQ+ collection.

Sarah graduated from Dickinson College with a major in history. As an undergraduate she completed an internship with the Pennsylvania House of Representatives Archives.

Since receiving her bachelor's degree, Sarah has been working in the Access Services department of the Dickinson library. In August

2020 she received her MLIS from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. Sarah has a particular interest in community archives and has experience with event planning and the use of social media in libraries.



Sarah Wakefield at the scanner at Dickinson College

The project will include scanning materials from the collection, creating metadata, or descriptive information that will be tagged to each document file, and posting to an online catalogue of the collection. Collections are being prioritized for digitization to include most of the oldest, rarest, most popular and most susceptible to damage from excessive handling. The project will last at least one year and may be extended if additional funding is available.

The project is being funded by a CARES grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities, a grant from the Pennsylvania State Archives, the Schlegel-Deibler Foundation and Dickinson College.

Ship launches campus LGBTQ+ history project

Shippensburg University launched a new project to document LGBTQ+ history at its campus on September 14 with a virtual webinar via Zoom. Barry Loveland discussed his efforts to document and share the stories of LGBTQ+ individuals and organizations for the LGBT Center of Central Pennsylvania History Project. He was also joined by professor emeritus Dr. Mary Libertin of the Shippensburg University English Department, and several Shippensburg University alumni who will share their stories of LGBTQ+ life on campus.



The Shippensburg University LGBTQ+ History Project is a joint effort of the Shippensburg University History and Philosophy Department, the Shippensburg University Pride Center, and the Shippensburg University Archives and Special Collections. The project seeks to document and share the past and present history of LGBTQ+ students, faculty, staff, alumni, and organizations at the university.

Students, faculty, staff, alumni, and community members, past and present, are invited to share your stories, photographs, documents, or other materials documenting LGBTQ+ life at Shippensburg via the LGBTQ+ History contributor portal: <https://ship.libwizard.com/f/lgbtqhistoryproject>

Barry Loveland's talk was co-sponsored by the Department of History and Philosophy, Applied History Master's Program, Pride Center, Shippensburg University Archives and Special Collections, Shippensburg University LGBTQ+ Advisory Committee, Office of Multicultural Student Affairs, Shippensburg University Women's Center, Women and Gender Studies Minor, Department of English, Department of Counseling and Student Personnel, and Gerontology Minor, and the APSCUF Social Justice Committee.

For questions about the talk, please contact Dr. Steven Burg, sbburg@ship.edu

If you are interested in contributing or copying materials to donate to the Shippensburg University Archives and Special Collections, please contact University Archivist Christy Fic, cmfic@ship.edu.

The LGBT Center of Central PA History Project is proud to collaborate with Dr. Burg at Shippensburg University and help launch this new project.

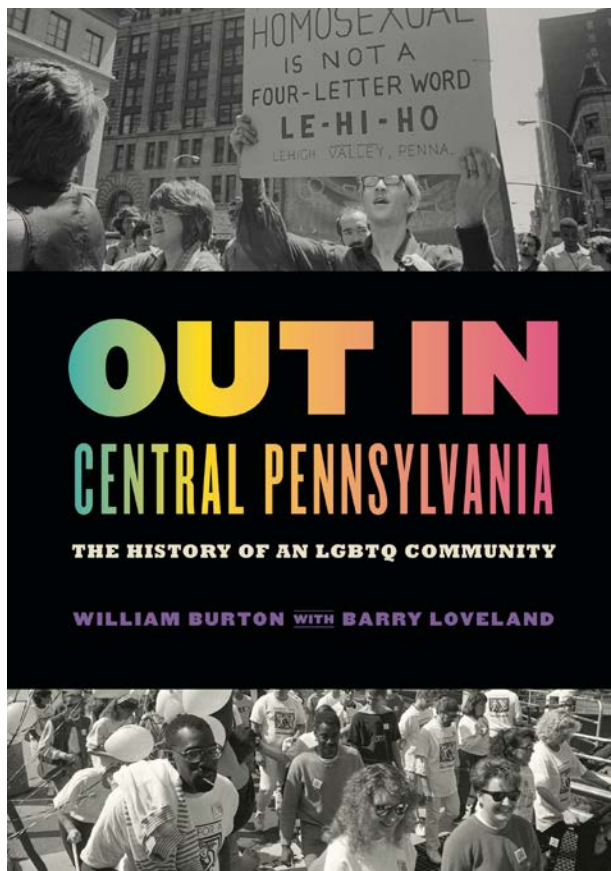
Book sales strong

Sales of our book, *Out in Central Pennsylvania: The History of an LGBTQ Community* has been quite strong and better than expected during this pandemic, according to marketing staff at Penn State University Press. Some very good reviews and several virtual author events have helped fuel book sales.

Visit our web page at <https://centralpalgbtcenter.org/out-in-central-pa> to see the latest on author events, reviews and ordering information.

Presentation at oral history conference

Barry Loveland, History Project chair, will be giving a presentation at the annual meeting of the Oral History Association, a national organization devoted to the work of oral history. His presentation is part of a panel discussing three rural LGBTQ+ history projects in the session called Collecting, Archiving and Sharing LGBTQ+ Histories in Rural and Semi-Rural Communities on October 24. This year, the entire conference is being held virtually over Zoom.



Progress continues

We continue to make progress on many fronts with the History Project. We currently have oral history interviews completed with 152 individuals (and transcriptions completed for all but four interviews). We have more than 110 linear feet of artifact and archival collections.

Happy LGBT History Month!

We wish we could offer more in-person programming during October to celebrate LGBT History Month, but with our current pandemic it is still not a very safe time to do so.

But if you can, catch our traveling exhibit mentioned in the article on page 1, or visit our webpage at

www.centralpalgbtcenter.org/lgbt-history-project which

features links to the full transcripts to our oral history interview collection, descriptive guides to the artifact and archival collection, a Flickr album with nearly 400 photos of artifacts, documents and historical photos in our collection, digital exhibits online, a map/guide to Harrisburg's LGBTQ+ history sites, and a Google map showing hundreds of locations of LGBTQ+ history sites in central Pennsylvania.



Cleaning out your closets, drawers, etc.?

Many of us are stuck at home during the COVID-19 pandemic and doing those little projects around the house of cleaning out our closets, drawers, cabinets, basements and attics to get rid of stuff we have accumulated but no longer need or want. We are always looking for historical materials pertaining to **local** LGBTQ+ history and many of you probably have such items buried in closets, attics, basements and in drawers you rarely look through. Please take some time to check for any items like organization newsletters, flyers, photographs, videos, newspaper clippings, t-shirts, buttons and other documents and artifacts that you may have that relate to LGBTQ+ organizations, events or other aspects of the life of the LGBTQ+ community here in central Pennsylvania. We are also always looking for people who would like to be interviewed for our oral history collection. Contact us to donate these materials or sign up for an oral history interview at history@centralpalgbtcenter.org.

Thank you!

LGBT Center of Central PA History Project

Founded in 2012, celebrating our 8th anniversary!

Winner of the 2014 J. Franklin Jameson Award from the Society of American Archivists

history@centralpalgbtcenter.org; 717-920-9534

<http://www.centralpalgbtcenter.org/lgbt-history-project>

[facebook.com/LGBTcentralpa](https://www.facebook.com/LGBTcentralpa)

Working in partnership with the Dickinson College Archives and Special Collections

<http://archives.dickinson.edu/lgbt>

