

LGBT Center Central PA History Project



*Discovering stories of
extraordinary lives*

NEWS

Summer 2015

Pop up museum exhibit at The Arch Gallery

The History Project will have a pop up museum exhibit at The Arch Gallery in Lancaster opening on Friday June 5 which is Lancaster's First Friday gallery walk. It will run about a month. The exhibit will feature some artifacts and documents from the History Project collection related to Lancaster's LGBT history. Video clips from oral history interviews will also be shown. The Arch Gallery is located at 118 North Water Street in Lancaster.

Lecture to focus on Frank Kameny

The LGBT Center of Central PA History Project is presenting a program on Monday July 20 from 6 to 8 PM, at the LGBT Center, 1306 N. Third Street, Harrisburg, commemorating the 50th anniversary of the first of the gay rights demonstrations known as the Annual Reminders. The pre-Stonewall demonstrations at Independence Hall in Philadelphia and the White House in Washington, D.C., were held on July 4 starting in 1965 and were organized by Franklin Kameny and other early gay rights activists. Dr. Michael Long will speak about Franklin Kameny, one of the leaders in the Mattachine Society and gay rights pioneer. Dr. Long is the editor of a newly released book, *Gay is Good: The Life and Letters of Gay Rights Pioneer Franklin Kameny*.



Dr. Michael Long

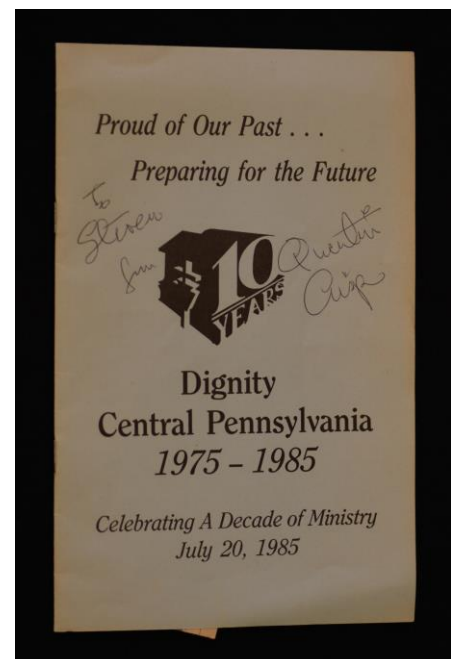
Contrary to popular notions, today's LGBT movement did not begin with the Stonewall riots in 1969. Long before Stonewall, there was Franklin Kameny (1925–2011), one of the most significant figures in the gay rights movement. Beginning in 1958, he encouraged gay people to embrace homosexuality as moral and healthy, publicly denounced the federal government for excluding homosexuals from federal employment, openly fought the military's ban against gay men and women, debated psychiatrists who depicted homosexuality as a mental disorder, identified test cases to advance civil liberties through the federal courts, acted as counsel to countless homosexuals suffering state-sanctioned discrimination, and organized marches for gay rights at the White House and other public institutions. *In Gay Is Good*, Long collects Kameny's historically rich letters, revealing some of the early stirrings of today's politically powerful LGBT movement.

These letters are lively and colorful because they are in Kameny's inimitable voice—a voice that was consistently loud, echoing through such places as the Oval Office, the Pentagon, and the British Parliament, and often shrill, piercing to the federal agency heads, military generals, and media personalities who received his countless letters. This volume collects approximately 150 letters from 1958 to 1975, a critical period in Kameny's life during which he evolved from a victim of the law to a vocal opponent of the law, to the voice of the law itself. Long situates these letters in context, giving historical and biographical data about the subjects and events involved. *Gay Is Good* pays tribute to an advocate whose tireless efforts created a massive shift in social attitudes and practices, leading the way toward equality for the LGBT community.

Dr. Michael Long is an associate professor of Religion and Peace and Conflict Studies at Elizabethtown College. He has a B.A. from Geneva College, a M.Div. from Lutheran Theological Seminary and a PhD. from Emory University. He is the author or editor of several books, including *Must Resist: Bayard Rustin's Life in Letters*.

Case exhibit to commemorate Dignity/Central PA's 40th anniversary

In July, Dignity/Central PA celebrates its 40th anniversary as the oldest continually operating LGBT organization in central PA. And we are helping them celebrate with an exhibit in our showcase at the LGBT Center with Dignity artifacts, photos and documents on display, including this program (right) for its 10th anniversary signed by guest speaker Quentin Crisp; and button, (left). The exhibit will open June 19 and run through mid-July.



History Project outreach

Barry Loveland will be speaking to Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG) at their monthly meeting on March 17 at 7 PM at the Mechanicsburg Presbyterian Church. If you are involved with a local organization looking for a speaker or program, suggest the History Project to them and put them in touch with us and we would be happy to make a presentation to their group.

Mark Stoner completed designs for business cards and post cards for the History Project and they look great. We will be distributing business cards to volunteers to carry and hand out when they meet people who express interest in the History Project. Post cards will be used at various venues and events as a convenient hand out. We are currently getting prices from printers and should have these materials available soon. The History Project thanks Mark Stoner for the generous donation of his professional graphics and design skills.

An article on the History Project by Barry Loveland has been published in the spring 2014 issue of *Pennsylvania Heritage Magazine*. The magazine, published by the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission and the Pennsylvania Heritage Foundation, has a circulation of about 4,000 throughout Pennsylvania and beyond.

Winter fundraiser held

A house party fundraiser was held at the home of Teddy and Cara on Friday February 21. Attendees enjoyed delicious hors d' oeuvres and beverages and some updates on the History Project and other programs of the LGBT Center. \$1215 was raised for the History Project. The History Project thanks all of our generous donors who attended, or were unable to attend but sent in contributions and thanks to Teddy and Cara for their generosity and opening up their home to us.

The LGBT Center also received a \$600 grant for the History Project from the Franklin GLBT Justice Fund of the Unitarian Universalist Church of the Cumberland Valley. This is the second year in a row that UUC-CV has provided a grant to the History Project. The Fundraising Team, led by Peg Dierkers, is working on a couple of other grant applications for submission this year. John Folby is researching potential corporate donors.

About \$21,000 will need to be raised over the next couple of years to implement the strategic plan, including the development of a content-rich interactive web site that will present the stories of the LGBT History Project to the public. The current balance of our funds in account is \$2,219.65.

Meet our spring interns

The History Project is fortunate to have two enthusiastic interns for the spring semester, both students at Dickinson College in Carlisle.

Sara Tyberg (class of 2016) and Chalise Saunders (class of 2014) are both working on transcriptions of completed interviews. In addition, Sara, who is majoring in Sociology, will also be doing some video editing to compile video clips of our interviews for the web site. Chalise, a Women's and Gender Studies major, will also be doing some processing of archival donations recently received for the History Project collection.

The History Project thanks Malinda Triller-Doran, Special Collections Librarian for Dickinson College for supervising these interns for the History Project.

We have available work for students for unpaid internships during any semester from any college. Location is flexible. Contact us at history@centralpalgbtcenter.org to apply.

Penn State class partners with History Project

The History Project is working with a graduate level seminar class in Ethnography and Society at Penn State University – Harrisburg, thanks to Dr. Anthony Buccitelli, Assistant Professor of American Studies and Communications. Eight of the 11 students in the class chose the History Project as their mid-term project for the seminar. The assignment will include conducting a full oral history interview with one of our narrators and doing a written transcription of the interview. Dr. Buccitelli anticipates this class being offered once a year so there may be opportunities to work with his class again in the future.

Narrator waiting list progress

We have completed interviews of 24 narrators (interviewees) while more than 80 narrators are still waiting to be interviewed. Trained volunteer interviewers may now contact Pat Van Horn at the LGBT Center by email (pvanhorn@centralpalgbtcenter.org) to obtain names and contact information from the narrators' waiting list, as well as to schedule the camera equipment for the interview. We are asking all of our interviewers to commit to doing at least three interviews in the next 3 months to keep from having our narrators wait too long to share their stories.

We are also making progress on the backlog of transcriptions of the video interviews to text documents. Several have been completed and our interns are working on several more.

We are sorry to say goodbye to Rosemary Mirocco who has led our Transcription team for the past year and has additional job commitments that is requiring her to reduce her involvement in the History Project. We thank her for her help over the past year and wish her well with the new job. We are seeking a volunteer who is interested in coordinating the Transcription team and also serving as a representative on the steering committee for the History Project. This person coordinates the



Spring interns Chalise Saunders (top) and Sara Tyberg

transcription of the video interviews, reviews transcriptions by volunteers and interns to ensure compliance with standards, and attends a monthly steering committee meeting to report on activities. Please send us an email if you are interested.

Story Circles add to the historical record

A Story Circle was held on Thursday January 23 from 6 PM to 8 PM at the LGBT Center for the regular monthly meeting of Aging with Pride. This was an “open mic” type of event and several of the participants shared stories and asked questions. It was a lively evening of discussion and discovery. In addition to making the History Project come alive to new people in our community, these Story Circles help us to discover new historical information and new leads for narrators and archival and artifact materials. The next History Project program will be on Thursday April 24 from 6 to 8 PM at the LGBT Center when we plan to show an historical film with an LGBT theme.

Virtual tours planned with HHA

The History Project is in the process of developing a new partnership with Historic Harrisburg Association (HHA) to develop virtual tours for the web and a mobile AP of sites important in local LGBT history. HHA is currently working on a mobile AP of several walking tours of Harrisburg and are interested in adding an LGBT tour. Plans call for developing a pilot project this year and adding more sites and locations in future years.

Support our friends

The Harrisburg Gay Men’s Chorus and the Central PA Womyn’s Chorus have been supportive friends to the History Project, welcoming us to be part of their information tables and providing free ad space in concert programs. Please support them in their events.

May 3 and 4, Harrisburg Gay Men’s Chorus spring concerts, details at <http://www.harrisburgmenschorus.org/>

May 31 and June 1, Central PA Womyn’s Chorus spring concerts, details at <http://www.cpwchorus.org/>

And don’t forget upcoming events at the LGBT Center including 3rd in the Burg at the LGBT Center Gallery every 3rd Friday evening: check out the full calendar of events at www.centralpalgbtcenter.org/

LGBT Center of Central PA History Project

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

facebook.com/LGBTcentralpa

Working in partnership with the Dickinson College Archives and Special Collections

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