

# LGBT Center Central PA History Project



*Discovering stories of  
extraordinary lives*

## NEWS

*Winter 2016*

### ***Brother Outsider* film to be shown January 10**

The LGBT Center of Central PA History Project is presenting a program on Tuesday January 10, 2017 from 6-8 PM at the LGBT Center, 1306 N. Third Street, Harrisburg, showing the film, *Brother Outsider*.

*Brother Outsider* documents the life of civil rights leader Bayard Rustin, often called the “unknown hero” of the black civil rights movement.



*Bayard Rustin, left, with Cleveland Robinson at the 1963 March on Washington*

Forced out of the closet by circumstances early in his life, he lived as an openly gay African American man from the 1940's until his death in 1987. He worked alongside other major leaders of the black civil rights movement, including Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., beginning in the 1940's, but staying mostly in the background because of concerns by other activists that his being gay would be a public distraction to the goals of the movement.

Rustin, the visionary strategist and activist, is considered to be the architect and chief organizer of the 1963 March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom, at which Dr. King delivered his famous “I have a dream” speech. Later in the 1980's, he became an advocate for LGBT civil rights. Rustin was posthumously awarded the



*Bayard Rustin at a news briefing on the March on Washington, August 27, 1963*

Presidential Medal of Freedom, the nation's highest civilian honor, by President Obama in 2013. It was accepted by Rustin's longtime partner, Walter Naegle, whom Rustin adopted in 1982 because of the lack of legal marriage rights at that time. Rustin was born in West Chester, Pennsylvania in 1912 and attended Cheyney State Teachers College (now Cheyney University of PA).

Since its debut in 2003 at the Sundance Film Festival, millions of viewers around the world have been introduced to Bayard Rustin's remarkable life and achievements through screenings at film festivals, theaters and on broadcasts on PBS and Logo/MTV. The film is the recipient of more than 25 awards.

## **Video on history project to debut**

Our fall intern, Emily Armando, a sophomore at Dickinson College, has completed work on an introductory video to the History Project. The video runs about 27 minutes and incorporates some of the interesting stories and clips from the oral history interviews conducted by the History Project, as well as still images of artifacts, historical photos and historical documents from our collection. We plan to preview the video for the LGBT Center Board soon and then debut it at an upcoming History Project event in the spring. We then hope to post it on the web to attract a wider audience.

## **Making progress**

We continue to make progress on many fronts with the History Project, including oral histories and collections acquisitions. We currently have oral history interviews completed with 96 individuals (and transcriptions completed for interviews of 78 individuals). 92 people remain on the waiting list. We have about 50 cubic feet of artifact and archival collections.

Our current financial balance is \$1,673.37 (as a restricted line item within the LGBT Center's overall operating funds.) We are moving our winter house party fundraiser to April this year, so watch for information about that in our next newsletter.

We continue to seek additional donations of artifacts, old photos and archival documents related to LGBTQ history in central Pennsylvania. We are especially looking for materials from the York and Lebanon areas where we have very few items in our collection.

## **Networking effort draws big response**

The LGBT Center of Central PA History Project has been struggling with where to draw the geographic boundary line in our collecting of LGBTQ history materials in Pennsylvania and decided to reach out to determine who else in PA had LGBTQ history projects and/or collections, who were anticipating starting such efforts, and others who wanted to support networking and exchange of information, communications and potential collaboration among organizations and institutions interested in Pennsylvania's LGBT history. We reached out to places we knew and asked them to reach out to others they knew and before we realized it 25 people assembled for a meeting in Philadelphia and four more on a phone conference on December 2. Shortly after the meeting, the number had grown to nearly 45 and may still be growing as we speak. The PA LGBT History

Network is born. The group agreed to meet quarterly, assemble a directory of collections and projects around PA, create a Facebook group page and facilitate communications through an email group. There is much excitement about the potential of such a network to raise the level of awareness of LGBT history in PA and to collaborate and share resources for future programming and exhibits. The LGBT Center of Central PA History Project will host the next meeting of the Network in Harrisburg in March 2017.

## 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 check out their web sites for upcoming concert information and support them in their events.

<http://www.harrisburgmenschorus.org/>

<http://www.cpwchorus.org/>

And don't forget upcoming events at the LGBT Center including 3<sup>rd</sup> in the Burg at the LGBT Center Gallery every 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday evening: check out the full calendar of events at [www.centralpalgbtcenter.org/](http://www.centralpalgbtcenter.org/). The LGBT Center is located at 1306 N. Third Street in Harrisburg.

## LGBT Center of Central PA History Project

*Founded in 2012*

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

[history@centralpalgbtcenter.org](mailto:history@centralpalgbtcenter.org)

717-920-9534

<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/>