



# news

Winter 2019

## The Stonewall 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary year ends

The History Project is coming to the end of a busy year as we conclude our celebration of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary year of the Stonewall raid and riots. Here are some of the highlights.

*The Long Road to LGBTQ+ Equality in Pennsylvania*, our traveling history exhibit that chronicles the efforts that activists have undertaken in Pennsylvania to achieve full equality for LGBTQ+ people, has been shown to thousands of people all over the state from Philadelphia to Erie and many stops in between, at nearly 50 venues. After February 2020, one copy of the exhibit will continue to travel upon request.



*The Bucks County Visitor Center was one of the first stops for our traveling exhibit, The Long Road.*

We mounted a series of collaborative exhibits with several arts organizations in central PA including the Susquehanna Art Museum, the Art Association of Harrisburg, and the Lancaster Museum of Art that brought new works of art inspired by items in our History Project collection to an estimated several thousand visitors in central PA.

We held our annual exhibit *History Comes Out: LGBTQ+ Spaces and Places*, October through December, at the Dickinson College Archives that featured historical materials related to the important places in our local LGBT history.

We held our first *LGBT History Roadshow* in the Keystone Building, in Harrisburg, on October 22. Although no one brought us new collections, quite a few visitors stopped by and enjoyed seeing a pop up exhibit of historical photographs, documents, and artifacts. This event gave us the opportunity to partner with The State



*Reception at the Susquehanna Art Museum for our art exhibit, Inspired.*

Library of Pennsylvania and the Governor's Council on LGBTQ Affairs and we hope to be able to work with them again next year.

On October 24, Curtis Royer delivered a fascinating lecture, "Rediscovering Early Queer America: A Celebration of Queer Historical Scholarship," at the LGBT Center in Harrisburg.

We mounted an exhibit of History Project collections related to HIV/AIDS, donated by John Folby, which will be on display at the LGBT Center, 1306 N. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street in Harrisburg, through the end of the month. On December 2, more than 30 people attended a reception and showing of John Folby's oral history interview. John passed away on July 11 and was an HIV/AIDS activist, state AZT program administrator and consultant for more than 35 years as well as volunteer with our History Project.

## PHMC awards grant to History Project

The Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission awarded a \$10,000 grant to the Dickinson College Archives to help fund the digitization of a significant portion of the LGBT History Project collection. A new staff archivist will be hired for one year to digitize more than 2,000 documents, photos and artifacts in the collection. The grant will be matched with a \$15,000 grant received this year from the Schlegel-Deibler Foundation and \$5,000 in additional funds from the History Project. Dickinson College is also contributing nearly \$12,000 toward the project, for a total project cost of about \$42,000. The project is expected to begin around June of this year. PHMC's Historical and Archival Records Care grant program awarded 29 grants from 54 applications submitted from all over the state.

## New traveling exhibit in development

In January, 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 immigrants.

This groundbreaking exhibit, *With Open Heart and Open Arms*, is now being adapted to become the next traveling exhibit in a collaborative effort with our History Project through the PA LGBT History Network.



LGBTQ Cuban refugees pose at Fort Indiantown Gap in 1980, courtesy Lebanon County Historical Society.

The exhibit will be similar in format to our current traveling exhibit, *The Long Road*, and will debut on April 21, 2020 which is the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the start of the Mariel Boatlift. Plans include showing the exhibit in selected venues in Harrisburg, York, Lancaster and Lebanon before making it available to other venues throughout the state upon request.

## Digital exhibits to debut

Four digital exhibits for the History Project have now been completed and await formatting and uploading to the web site. The topics include the local response to the HIV/AIDS crisis, stories of discrimination, the impact of religion on LGBTQ lives, and the military experience of LGBTQ service members. A fifth exhibit, a history of the local LGBTQ bars is also expected to be completed by this spring. We have obtained a web hosting site and should have these up by the spring. A digital version of our traveling exhibit, *The Long Road*, will also be on our web site this spring, along with a lesson plan for high school teachers.

## Tour of Harrisburg LGBTQ+ History Sites

A tour guidebook and map of Harrisburg LGBTQ+ History Sites has been developed and a companion phone app is in final stages of development. We plan to debut the guidebook and app with a guided tour in the spring.

The guide will include three tours in different categories of historic sites including Bars, Organizations, and Pioneers & Activism. Nearly 30 sites are included and feature some historical information and in most cases historical photos.

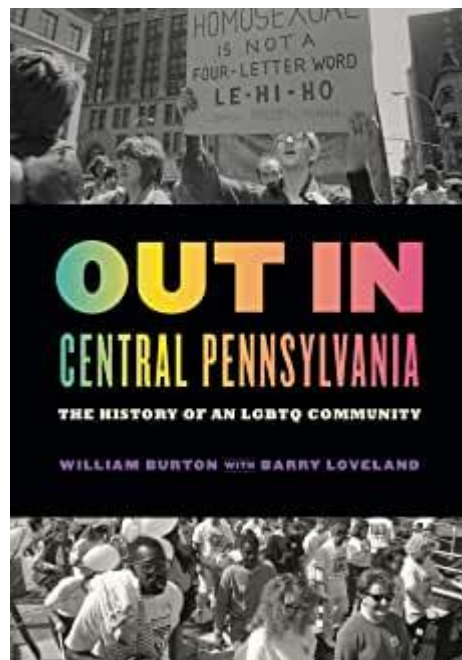
## *Out in Central Pennsylvania*

Our book *Out in Central Pennsylvania: The History of an LGBTQ Community*, by William Burton with Barry Loveland is now scheduled for release in May 2020 by Penn State University Press. Pre-orders are now being taken on the web sites of Amazon, Barnes and Noble and Books A Million. More than 200 books have been pre-ordered according to the publisher. A special book launch event is in the planning stages for June in Harrisburg and details will be announced in the near future.

## Progress continues

We continue to make progress on many fronts with the History Project, including oral history interviews, transcriptions and exhibits. We currently have oral history interviews completed with 151 individuals (and transcriptions completed for all but four interviews). We have more than 100 linear feet of artifact and archival collections.

Visit our web pages at [www.centralpalgbtcenter.org/lgbt-history-project](http://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 and a Google map showing hundreds of locations of LGBTQ+ historic sites in central Pennsylvania.



Cover design.

# Clean out your closets

We are always looking for historical materials pertaining to local LGBT 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 LGBT organizations, events or other aspects of the life of the LGBT 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](mailto:history@centralpalgbtcenter.org). Thank you!

## LGBT Center of Central PA History Project

*Founded in 2012, celebrating our 7<sup>th</sup> anniversary!*

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

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<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>

