



# Lambda Archives of San Diego

## Collecting, Preserving, and Teaching LGBT History

[www.LambdaArchives.org](http://www.LambdaArchives.org)

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Issue 52

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## Our Collections Are Growing... And Our Storage Methods Refining!



Special thanks to volunteer Keith for installing our wall racks!

### DIVERSE MATERIALS NEED DIVERSE STORAGE SOLUTIONS

It's not all papers and photos in here! Lambda has accrued a wide variety of objects over the years. From protest

signs to statues to military uniforms, every item has its own set of preservation needs, and we strive to meet those needs at the **highest archival standards**.

Sometimes that means buying oddly shaped boxes or barrels of tissue paper. Other projects can be a little more ambitious.

We made some great improvements to our space this year to accommodate our special collections. Thanks to the generous support of the **California Institute of Contemporary Arts (CICA)**, we added an enormous banner storage unit and covered our spare walls with sturdy art racks. Once these new fixtures were in place, our student volun-

teers swooped in to photograph, inventory, and label hundreds of banners, artworks, and framed items before placing them in their new homes.

(See the **ARCHIVIST'S REPORT** on page 3 for more)



200 vinyl and paper banners rolled, numbered, and stored



### New Exhibit at the Archives

Out with the old, in with the new. If you missed our last exhibit... what took you so long?! Our political homage, "20 Years at the Table" has now been taken down, and in its place is a cheekier look at who constitutes the LGBT community in San Diego.

**Out of the Closet: Wearing Our Pride** showcases more than 30 T-shirts from Lambda's 1,200 item textile collection. This display, which features a variety of events, organizations, and businesses, illustrates the way that people express pride in their community through the clothing they wear. In particular, we examine the use of the basic T-shirt.

The T-shirt has been a staggeringly popular statement piece since its adoption as an outerwear garment following World War II. Its simple construction makes it an easy canvass for slogans, and its cheap production makes it accessible across economic lines.

Greasers had their white ringers, hippies their tie-dye, activists their slogans, and consumers their brand names. T-shirts can be worn for comfort or for rebellion, for humor or for team competitions. They're a quick visual shortcut to group solidarity.

**What have you got in your closet?**

## President's Message



Maureen Steiner

Dear Friends,

As we look back on 40 years of Pride, two dates stand out in particular this year. 1) Stonewall riots of June 28, 1969; the day we commonly say "our movement" began. 2) US Supreme Court decisions re DOMA and Prop. 8 on June 26, 2013; the day we say our movement came of age.

Yes, it was just over one year ago that we celebrated the "beginning of the end." Same-sex marriage is now legally recognized in 16 countries and 20 American states. LGB

Military members can now serve openly. What progress we have made but our struggle is not over as **we continue to fight for the "T" in LGBT.** (How many states or countries can you name? Check your answer at the Lambda Archives booth at Pride festival or on-line.)

As we reflect back with pride, let us not be too proud, however. We should reflect back with gratitude, respect, and yes, reverence for those who fought the struggle, took the risks, lost livelihoods and sometimes lives for us to be where we are today. But look forward. Continue the work. Never stop thinking about tomorrow! See you at 50!

Yours in Solidarity,

Maureen Steiner

## LASD Joins CAVPP



In media preservation news, Lambda has now joined the **California Audiovisual Preservation Project**. Based in Berkeley, this program is dedicated to providing digitization and access services for historic California audiovisual recordings. Libraries and archives across the state nominate

primary A/V materials for the collection and CAVPP fundraises to have them digitized. The end result is an online database of film, video, and audio recordings documenting California history.

LASD is currently one of 77 institutions contributing to the database. Thus far our nominations include oral history interviews, footage of Prides and other events, and numerous reels of the mid-1980s KPBS radio show "Out in San Diego." Our first batch of recordings is posted on the Internet Archive at <https://archive.org/details/lambdaarchives>, and a second batch is underway.



This program has received funding from the California State Library, the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) and the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS). CAVPP is part of the broader **California Preservation Program**, designed by the California State Library to meet the preservation education, training, and assistance needs of California repositories. In addition to running the California Audiovisual Preservation Project, CPP also provides disaster preparedness workshops and preservation assessments. Lambda was thrilled to receive a preservation assessment from CPP last year, as well as assistance in the construction of our own disaster plan.

## New Archivist on Board

The Archives is delighted to welcome a new staff member this summer! **Cairie Riney** is joining head archivist Sam Mills to manage our growing collections. She comes to us by way of the Campo Stone Store Museum and the Julian Pioneer Museum. With a background including archival processing, photo digitization, volunteer management, and more, Cairie is going to be a great addition to the team!

## Digital Photo Services

We are always keen to try out something new around here... this year it's photo reproduction services! Though we are not yet equipped to produce physical prints, we can provide high quality digital files (for a nominal fee!) for reproduction in publications and other print media. Ask us about our non-profit deals.

The program in action



This summer **Wells Fargo** will unveil a new mural in their Hillcrest branch as part of the company's Community Mural Program. This program is dedicated to creating "unique, custom-designed, historical artwork that respects the community's legacy, celebrates its diversity, and honors the past upon which the community was founded."

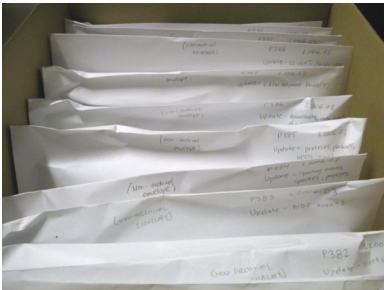
Previously decorated branches include ones in San Francisco, Washington, D.C., and Chelsea, New York. The San Diego mural will feature images from the collections of Lambda Archives and the San Diego History Center. Check it out— you may see some familiar faces and long-lost places.

## Digitization Update

### Springtime progress

The Archives always calms down a bit in the summertime before we launch into our Fall internship program. It's a time to review work done in the Spring and plan new projects for the coming semester. Our Spring interns did a fabulous job this year. Between January and April they took us from about 6,600 photos scanned, cataloged, and re-housed, all the way to a whopping **8,000!**

About 4,100 of those images are now posted on our Flickr account, where they have accrued **over half a million views** thanks to being shared around the web.



**Breaking down large boxes of photos into manageable photo groups**

### Summer plans

The summer lull has allowed us to tackle some long-awaited photo projects, including the breakdown of some of our largest collections. When a donor brings us hundreds (or thousands!) of images in one batch we break the collection down into more manageable photo groups—either single albums or a handful of developer envelopes at a time.

Most recently we broke down collections from Christine Kehoe and Update Magazine. Kehoe's collection broke down into 32 groups of political and civic events. Update Magazine broke down into an impressive 64 groups of diverse local subjects covered by the publication.

Another fun development in the photo department: **historical postcards!** Our first run includes eight of our favorite images from the digitization project and we can't wait to expand the selection. They are available onsite at the Archives or wherever we table for a suggested donation of \$1 per card or \$5 for an eight-pack.



### Images of Pride

Ever wonder what 40,000 photos looks like? Last November, San Diego Pride did some spring cleaning (or would that be winter cleaning?) and donated a wealth of material to the Archives. Posters, festival maps, awards, videos — and yes, 40,000 images of Pride events from 1994 through 2008.

This collection joins our existing Pride materials, which include newsletters, minutes, and flyers galore.

## Archivist's Report



Sam Mills, Archivist

Lately it seems that as soon as we find a little more space for collections, we fill it right up! This is great for collection development: as awareness of the Archives grows, we attract new and exciting materials. Our "Queer Artists Project" exhibit led to the donation of multiple gorgeous artworks. "20 Years at the Table" brought us papers from local politicians. Since summer of 2013 we've accepted over 65 linear feet of archival collections.

**Our growth comes with its share of challenges, however.** All of these materials must be cataloged to be accessible to researchers, and large, complicated paper collections can take weeks or even months of work apiece. We've brought on a new archivist with a collections processing background, so I'm keen to start tackling our backlog!

A rapid increase in holdings also means a rapid decrease of

available storage space, but we've got our eye on a solution for that, too. Thanks to support by City Council Community Projects, Programs and Services (CPPS), we are now converting our upstairs storage room into additional archival space. This means blocking out the sunlight, adding an air conditioner, and filling the room with sturdy metal shelves. Stay tuned... we'll see what fascinating new collections we get to fill it with!

### Recent acquisitions

I have the lucky job of going through all of our new collections as they come in. Here's a sampling of our recent acquisitions:

- Posters from Project S.T.A.R. and Transgender Day of Empowerment
- Personal and political mementoes of Charles McKain
- "Ex-Gay" research materials compiled by Ricardo Moran while completing his American Studies thesis
- Organizational and promotional records of the Outfest/FilmOut movie festival
- Don't Ask Don't Tell legal cases from Bridget Wilson
- Shirttails and Women's Chorus papers from Sheila Clark
- Additions to our collections on Dignity, SD Pride, Gay and Lesbian Times, and San Diego Democratic Club
- And much more!

## PHOTO HOME CARE PRIMER

### Photo Collections

Personal photo collections have been popular since the 1860s. As soon as families could afford portraits and travel cards they filled albums and covered their mantles. Digital cameras and cheap developing booths have made personal photography more popular than ever, but most people are unaware of the best ways to take care of their physical and digital pictures.

### Did you know?

When stored at 66°F and 35% humidity the average life expectancy of most photos is 75 years. Warmer and damper conditions hasten the aging process, and natural threats such as mold can attack overnight.



**DON'T! Sticky albums turn acidic**

### Environment

You don't need an archival cold room to take basic care of photo prints. Storing photos in a cool part of your home, out of direct sunlight, will lengthen their life span considerably. Digital photos are best served by maintaining a backup hard drive or cloud service. Otherwise one burned out drive can corrupt or destroy your entire photo collection.

### Housing

Oh save us from the era of sticky albums! The glue in sticky albums turns yellow and rock hard over time, trapping photos onto deteriorating paper and eating at them with acidic compounds. You should either slide photos into albums with plastic sleeves, or mount them on acid-free paper using photo corners (available at most craft shops).

### Documentation

Right now you know who your friends are and which family photo was snapped on which holiday, but twenty years from now? Fifty? Jotting down names and dates can transform any album into a priceless scrapbook. And



**DO! Use plastic sheets, acid-free paper, and write captions**

don't forget your digital files. It is easy for images to become disconnected from their date stamps and Facebook captions, so keeping them organized in labeled, dated folders makes a world of difference in identifying events later.

Finally, for images of enduring personal or historical significance, there is one great long-term solution: donating them to your friendly local historical society! Lambda Archives has the right supplies and environmental conditions to preserve your physical and digital images long into the future. *Today's hobbies are tomorrow's history!*

## Our Deepest Gratitude!

### Love from all of us

The entire Board and staff of Lambda Archives would like to extend our thanks to the people and organizations who have given us continued support.

Our ability to preserve and share the history of the San Diego LGBT community hinges on the interest and support of the community itself, and we deeply appreciate it. The Archives was founded in 1987 with the support of Club 100, and it is still our recurring donors, members, and volunteers who keep us afloat.

### Special thanks to:

- The California Institute of Contemporary Arts
- San Diego Pride
- The Human Dignity Foundation
- San Diego City Council
- San Diego County Supervisors Ron Roberts, Dave Roberts, and Greg Cox
- Diversionary Theatre
- Geri Rochino and the Human Rights Campaign

### as well as:

- Frank Stefano
- Ivor Kraft
- Mel Merrill

To our entire membership, our hard-working volunteers, and our other long-time supporters: we could not do this without you!

### More ways to get involved

There is always more to do around the Archives! Please contact us if you are interested in working with collections, fundraising, community outreach, or working with our Board of Directors. The sky is the limit, and we're keen to grow!

Thanks again from all of us. We look forward to continuing this work.

**I FOUND IT IN  
THE ARCHIVES**

### OPEN HOURS:

Tuesday through Friday 2-5 pm  
or by appointment

Visit our website for holiday closures and to find out more about who we are and what we do:

[www.LambdaArchives.org](http://www.LambdaArchives.org)

Email the archivist if you have a collection to donate or a research question:  
[archivist@lambdaarchives.org](mailto:archivist@lambdaarchives.org)

### Check us out on Facebook and Flickr:

[www.facebook.com/LambdaArchives](http://www.facebook.com/LambdaArchives)  
[www.flickr.com/photos/lambdaarchives](http://www.flickr.com/photos/lambdaarchives)

### Visit us behind Diversionary Theatre:

4545 Park Blvd, Ste 104  
San Diego, CA 92116

Or give us a call!  
619.260.1522

