



Archives and Records

Finding Aid

COLLECTION NUMBER: Coll.6
TITLE: Boston Pride Collection

COLLECTION SUMMARY

Creator(s): The History Project (primarily Libby Bouvier)
Title: Boston Pride Collection
Extent: 3 Linear Feet
Date Span: 1970 – ongoing
Location: The History Project, Archives and Records Department

Finding aid prepared for The History Project, Archives and Records Department, by Emilia Poppe Mountain, student in the History/Archives masters degree program at Simmons College, under the supervision of Andrea Still and Libby Bouvier, Spring 2008.

SUBJECT TERMS

Subject Names:

Eastern Regional Conference of Homophiles Organization
Gay Pride Committee
Lavender Rhino, Inc.
Lesbian & Gay Pride Committee
Pride Celebrations, Inc.
Pride, Inc.
The Boston Pride Committee, Inc.
The History Project
New England Pride

Subject Topics:

Gay pride parades
Gay pride parades—Massachusetts—Boston.

Document Types:

Buttons
Calendars
Flyers
Forms
Itineraries
Maps
Newspaper clippings
Party cards

Photographs
Programs
Shopping bags
Speeches

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Terms of Use/Copyright: Unrestricted, though some items in the collection are copyrighted by individuals and/or organizations outside The History Project.

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BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

In June of 1970, a small group of lesbian and gay activists from the Homophile Union of Boston, Boston Daughters of Bilitis, Student Homophile League, Gay Liberation Front, Gay Woman's Liberation, and the all-male *Fag Rag* collective marched from the Cambridge Common to the Boston Common as part of a Vietnam War protest. That summer, Boston commemorated the 1969 Stonewall riots in New York City, credited as the catalyst for the gay liberation movement, with a weeklong series of events. The first official Gay Pride march occurred the next year on June 26, 1971, as the culmination of a week of workshops on issues involving and relevant to the lesbian and gay community. There has been a Pride march/parade in Boston every year since then.

Boston introduced the Lavender Rhinoceros as the Pride mascot in 1974.

Since the beginning of Pride, there have been continual debates about whether Pride Week should be more of a party or a political rally, as well as debate concerning the involvement of drag and transgender issues in the march.

In 1977, Congressman Barney Frank and State Senator Elaine Noble marched in Boston Pride and many participants addressed Anita Bryant's attempts to repeal the gay rights ordinance in Dade County, Florida. Boston Pride was renamed the New England Lesbian and Gay Pride Parade in 1978, giving greater attention to issues particular to lesbian communities and individuals.

A major focus of the 1981 parade was the firing of Robin McCormack, Boston mayor Kevin White's liaison to the lesbian and gay community, after budget cuts. Other early 1980s controversies include: Chris Madsen being fired by the Christian Science Monitor, Mayor Kevin White's term limited ordinance protecting city workers against discrimination based on sexual orientation (1982), growing community awareness of HIV/AIDS (1983), the change of the rally site to a Lesbian and Gay Pride *Festival* (1984), and the question of whether or not to charge entrance fees.

Controversies during the mid- to late-1980s centered on Governor Dukakis's introduction of statewide legislation that would require listing the sexual preferences of prospective foster parents in order to provide "traditional family settings" for children, as well as increasing societal homophobia due to the AIDS epidemic.

In 1987, the Lavender Rhinoceros flag was raised at the Boston City Hall.

The 1988 parade was the first parade run by a formally incorporated Pride Committee, which required pre-registration for groups marching in the parade. In 1993, the Pride Committee changed the parade route, which would now run through the South End community (an area of town which then constituted a significant lesbian and gay population), and parade attendance exceeded 100,000.

Nineteen ninety-four marked the 25th anniversary of the Stonewall riots. Also in 1994, prizes for best floats were awarded by the Boston Center for the Arts (BCA) and local news coverage noted the increased corporate sponsorship and corporate presence in the parade. The "fun" versus "political" debate continued in coverage of the 1995 Pride week events. The Lesbian Avengers instituted the first Boston "Dyke March" in 1995, stating that the Pride parade had become too apolitical.

The next year (1996), the Lesbian Avengers received significant press after entering a bed float, unregistered, into the parade behind the mounted police, at the parade's end. The Avengers' simulations of sex acts upon the bed float outraged many, including the editor of *Bay Windows* who wrote a scathing piece on the Lesbian Avengers. In turn, many community members were outraged by what they felt was the overly negative press coverage and Pride's increasingly conservatism.

See the History Project's, "Routes of Pride," for more information about the history of Pride in Boston, including a discussion of these community debates and controversies and changing parade routes.

Currently, the Boston Pride Committee, Inc., runs many of the Pride Week events.

Since 1970, various groups have been in charge of the Pride march and surrounding event. The History Project has documentation for some of the following committees: Eastern Regional Conference of Homophiles Organization (see 1970), Gay Pride Committee (see 1974, 1975,), Lavender Rhino, Inc. (see 1974, 1975, 1990), Lesbian & Gay Pride Committee (see 1980), Pride Celebrations, Inc. (see 1982, 1988), Pride, Inc. (see 1994, 1995), and The Boston Pride Committee, Inc. (see 1998, 2000, 2001).

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The Boston Pride Collection consists of papers (some originals and some photocopies), photographs, and ephemera from 1970 to 2008 related to the Boston Pride March and Rally, as well as materials from various celebrations and events during Pride week. The bulk of the collection is news coverage surrounding Pride Week preparations, goals, controversies, and summaries.

The collection is arranged by year, and then by series. Most years contain folders for the following four series: *Pride Week Guides*, *News Articles*, *Flyers/Pamphlets*, and *Images*. Other series, which occur in certain years, are *Pride Week Committee Papers* (with folder titles stating the name of whichever committee was overseeing the Pride planning for that

year), *Speeches*, *Miscellaneous*, *Maps* and *Ephemera*. The series entitled *Pride Week Guides* may contain itineraries, programs, or calendars describing Pride week events. Many of these folders also contain notes on Pride week events for that particular year. The *News Articles* series may contain newspaper articles (originals and/or photocopies), journal and magazine articles, and/or press releases. The *Images* series may contain original photographs, photocopies, or enlarged photocopied images from newspapers.

The History Project has original slides and photographs for the following years: 1973-1975, 1977-1980, 1986-1987, 1990-1991, and 1997. The *Flyers/Pamphlets* series contains flyers, pamphlets, bar or party cards, and religious service/interfaith service leaflets. The only *Speeches* series included at present is from 1970 and contains the original manuscript to a speech given at the Massachusetts State House by Laura McMurry.

Some years contain series folders for the committee that was overseeing the Parade for any given year. These folders may contain correspondence, notes, forms and photocopies of incorporation documents from the Secretary of State's office. Also included are several 990 Federal Tax statements from some years.

There is a separate series for the Boston Dyke March, a separate march which has taken place 1994, and on the Friday before the Pride march.

The collection is arranged by year, with further arrangement by series. Every year contains a folder for Pride Week Guides and a folder for News Articles.

DESCRIPTION OF SERIES

- Series I:** Pride Week Guides (itineraries, calendars, and/or programs to Pride celebrations)
- Series II:** News Articles (Includes writing from newspapers, press releases, journals, and/or magazines, daily, monthly or quarterly)
- Series III:** Flyers/Pamphlets (flyers, pamphlets, party cards, and/or religious service/interfaith service leaflets)
- Series IV:** Images (photographs, photocopies from newspapers)
- Series V:** Pride Week Committee Papers (None of the folders will say actually say "Pride Week Committee Papers." Depending upon the year, these folders will be labeled according to the name/s of the committees which were working or co-working on planning and supervising the Pride Week festivities for a given time: Eastern Regional Conference of Homophiles Organization (1970), Gay Pride Committee (1974, 1975,), Lavender Rhino, Inc. (1974, 1975, 1990), Lesbian & Gay Pride Committee (1980), Pride Celebrations, Inc. (1982, 1988), Pride, Inc. (1994, 1995), or The Boston Pride Committee, Inc. (1998, 2000, 2001).
- Series VI:** The History Project (1999: Gay Bar History Tour), (2000: Notes from meetings regarding education/outreach, routes of pride parade, exhibits, board member expectations), (2005: Certificate of Recognition to The History Project, one of this year's Grand Marshals for Pride).

Series VII: Speeches (1971 only)

Series VIII: Maps (mainly photocopies of parade routes)

Series IX: Boston Dyke March

Series X: Miscellaneous (1980: Stickers, 1999: Gay bar history Tour, 2001: Gay Pride CD); Buttons (We have Pride buttons for the following years: 1974, 1979, 1980, 1982, 1984, 1985, 1986, 1987, 1988 (2), 1989, 1990, 1991, 1994, 1995, 1997, 1998, 1999, and 2004. We do NOT have the button for 1996. We have a button that was used in 1971, but not necessarily produced for Pride). The slogans "Out of the closet and into the street," "Come Out" and "Gay and Proud" originated in the early 1970s and were often worn at Pride. We also have these buttons.

SERIES AND FOLDER LIST

Series I: Pride Week Guides
1970 Pride Week Guide
1971 Pride Week Guide
1972 Pride Week Guide
1973 Pride Week Guide
1974 Pride Week Guide
1975 Pride Week Guide
1976 Pride Week Guide
1977 Pride Week Guide
1978 Pride Week Guide
1979 Pride Week Guide
1980 Pride Week Guide
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2004 Pride Week Guide
2005 Pride Week Guide
2006 Pride Week Guide
2007 Pride Week Guide
2008 Pride Week Guide

Series II: News Articles

1970 News Articles
1971 News Articles
1972 News Articles
1973 News Articles
1974 News Articles
1975 News Articles
1976 News Articles
1977 News Articles
1978 News Articles
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1980 News Articles
1981 News Articles
1982 News Articles
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2001 News Articles (2 of 3)
2001 News Articles (3 of 3)
2002 News Articles
2003 News Articles
2004 News Articles
2005 News Articles
2006 News Articles

Series III: Flyers/Pamphlets

1971 Flyers/Pamphlets
1975 Flyers/Pamphlets
1981 Flyers/Pamphlets
1982 Flyers/Pamphlets
1983 Flyers/Pamphlets

1985 Flyers/Pamphlets
1986 Flyers/Pamphlets
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2006 Flyers/Pamphlets

Series IV: Images

Images – n.d.
1971 Images
1977 Images
1978 Images
1979 Images
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1981 Images
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1984 Images
1985 Images
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1988 Images
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1998 Images

Series V: Pride Week Committee Papers

1970 News Articles
1970 Eastern Regional Conference of Homophile Organizations
1974 Gay Pride Committee
1974 Lavender Rhino, Inc.
1975 Gay Pride Committee
1975 Lavender Rhino, Inc.
1980 Lesbian and Gay Pride Committee

1982 Pride Celebrations, Inc.
1988 Pride Celebrations, Inc.
1990 Lavender Rhino, Inc.
1993 Pride Celebrations, Inc.
1994 Pride, Inc.
1995 Pride, Inc.
1998 Boston Pride Committee, Inc.
2000 Boston Pride Committee, Inc.
2001 Boston Pride Committee, Inc.

Series VI: The History Project

2000 The History Project
2001 The History Project – “Routes of Pride” map and notes
2005 The History Project – Certificate of Recognition

Series VII: Speeches

1970 Speeches

Series VIII: Maps

1971 Maps
1972 Maps
1973 Maps
1975 Maps
1991 Maps
1992 Maps
1993 Maps
1995 Maps

Series IX: Boston Dyke March

2001 Boston Dyke March

Series X: Miscellaneous (Ephemera)

1980 Ephemera – Stickers
2001 Ephemera – “Gay Pride 2001 Sampler” CD
Pride Buttons (Images/Scans)

Related Publications

“Routes of Pride,” by The History Project

Relevant Websites:

<http://bostonpride.org>

Homepage for The Boston Pride Committee, INC. According to the website, this committee “serves the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender (LGBT) and ally community, works to enhance the visibility of Boston's LGBT community through a week of events each June, in conjunction with year long activities, to promote LGBT awareness, dignity, and understanding.”