



NEWSLETTER NO. 27, FEB. 2006

Happy New Year, LAGAR-ites!

From Our Co-Chairs

The Society of American Archivists convention in New Orleans this past August was its usual mixture of learning and socializing, with the backdrop of one of the most fascinating – and not coincidentally gayest – cities in the world. Those of us who attended had no idea we would be among the last to sample its pleasures and charms before the disaster of Katrina struck. To our colleagues in New Orleans and along the Gulf Coast we send our best wishes for a quick return to their homes and jobs.

The annual LAGAR meeting was well attended and approved several new initiatives:

▶ Paula Jabloner, is spearheading the creation of an “archival primer” to be added to the Round Table’s web site. It will explain basic archival principles and practices to the many community archivists who are the keepers of lgbt history. This will be a team effort and we were gratified that so many of you volunteered to help write it.

▶ A committee made up of Jim Cartwright, Steve Novak and Steve Wheeler will once again tackle the issue of how to use our \$1000 to aid a student or novice archivist to attend the SAA annual meeting.

▶ After hearing Michael Rose and Wesley Chenault of the Atlanta History Center report on the Center’s recent highly successful exhibit on the history of lgbt life in Atlanta, our program speaker, Roberts Batson, gave a fascinating account of queer life in New Orleans.

▶ There were several changes among LAGAR officers. We welcome Maggi Gonsalves as our newsletter editor and Steven Mandeville-Gamble as the new webmaster. Mary Caldera has been elected Female Co-Chair and will serve 2005-2007. We thank our departing co-chair, Deborah Richards, for her dedicated leadership of LAGAR during her two terms.

We’ll next meet during the 2006 SAA Annual Meeting held July 31-Aug. 6 in Washington, D.C. Any ideas for a program speaker for the LAGAR meeting will be gratefully accepted!

Best wishes for the New Year,
Mary Caldera and Stephen Novak

!!SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT!!

Brenda Marston, former LAGAR co-chair, sent Steve Novak this sweet shot of her with her latest acquisition.



Hi Steve! Yes, we are blessed with another son, **Matthew Mendal Simpkins Marston**, born at 1:06 a.m. on October 21st, 2005. He arrived 4 ½ weeks early, but was healthy and a respectable 7 lbs., 11 oz. We’re extremely grateful for this remarkable “acquisition”! He and Grady are my best work to date!

Someone said, “A baby is the most complicated object made by unskilled labor.”

Here’s a picture of me and the little jellybean. :-)

Feel free to share with LAGAR friends.

Thanks for your good thoughts,
Brenda

From Your LAGAR Editor

Hello, LAGAR-ites! Happy New Year to all and I hope your holiday season was filled with tons of good times and the things from which great memories are made. As I began writing this brief introduction there was snow on the ground in Central MA and my house was in an absolute uproar as I packed to move to Chicago, leaving my permanent but not necessarily secure job behind at the Archdiocese of Boston for a Project Archivist position at Columbia College Chicago's Center for Black Music Research. Also since composing this piece I have married the woman of my dreams and 12-year partner, Heidi. We were married on the 28th of December before leaving MA; I can assure you it was a very historic and momentous occasion. It was a dream I never thought I would fulfill in my lifetime; I'm glad I was wrong.

Now as I finally unpack and boot up my computer in the Chicago suburb of Oak Park, there is still snow on the ground and now my new home is also a chaotic mess, but I'm getting back to business. I do apologize for the delay in the preparation and sending of the newsletter; future editions will [hopefully] be on time.

This New Year is filled with many new beginnings for me: a new position, a new residence, a new relationship with my partner, and a new post as editor of LAGAR newsletter. I accepted this post because I've been stifling myself personally and politically over the past decade and I want to do more for my communities -- the archivist community and the LGBT community. I've simply not been living up to my promise to stay involved. I know I will learn an awful lot, not only about the numerous LGBT archives around the country and beyond, but also about my LGBT archive colleagues.

As I do my best to be a responsible and responsive editor for this roundtable's newsletter I hope to hear from many, if not all, of you. I will experiment with different layouts and I welcome all suggestions. I also encourage you to send in articles about your archive, other LGBT archives, or news pertaining to the archival profession and/or LGBT issues. Please don't think you're not important to this newsletter – I am relying on all of you to help me serve the LAGAR roundtable membership by representing your news in this letter. Your comments and contributions are necessary for this newsletter's well being.

Thanks to those who sent articles for this, my maiden issue of LAGAR and for all your invaluable assistance. I look forward to everyone's future submissions sent to: Maggi Gonsalves at meg62356@yahoo.com.

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...News and Notes... Bits and Bites ... Announcements from Around the Roundtable ...
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GLBT Historical Society acquires poem by Charles Warren Stoddard

The Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender Historical Society recently acquired a manuscript poem written by the gay writer Charles Warren Stoddard. Stoddard, who was a contemporary of Bret Harte, Joaquin Miller, Yone Noguchi, and Samuel Clemens, is best known for his writings about his travels to Hawaii and Tahiti such as *South Sea Idylls* (1874, 1892) and *The Island of Tranquil Delights* (1904). Selections from these works have been collected in *Cruising the South Seas*, a Gay Sunshine Press publication released in 1987. Gay Sunshine Press also reprinted Stoddard's novel, *For the Pleasure of His Company: An Affair of the Misty City* (1903), which tells the story of "Paul Clitheroe's" adventures as a writer and actor in turn-of-the-century San Francisco. The story ends with Clitheroe escaping the "misty city" for the sun-drenched pleasures of the South Seas in the company of three naked South Sea Islanders. The recently acquired manuscript poem, which was found in an album belonging to the poet and translator Thomas Walsh, is most likely from the early years of the 20th century. Stoddard presented the poem to Walsh "in memory of a happy day." The poem was the gift of an anonymous donor. The acquisition has special relevance as the GLBT Historical Society also houses papers of Roger Austen, which include an early manuscript of Austen's, *Genteel Pagan: The Double Life of Charles Warren Stoddard*, the first scholarly monograph that dealt explicitly with Stoddard's sexuality. For more information visit www.glbthistory.org.

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New Resource...

Select Bibliography of Sources on GLBT Archiving and Related Subjects

The purpose of the bibliography is to promote information exchange and study of GLBT archiving issues and collections. LAGAR Co-Chair Mary Caldera compiled the bibliography and welcomes additional citations.

This impressive compilation of works and sites will soon be available for your viewing and user pleasure on the LAGAR website, so keep checking back.

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Volunteers needed for the Community Archives Manual

Many LAGAR members are actively involved in creating a *Community Archives Manual* focusing on basic archival principals with references to additional sources of information and archival suppliers for posting on our webpage. The goal is to provide basic archival information in an easy to read and understand format, encouraging non-archivists who are actively collecting to properly preserve and make accessible these materials. The Manual will compliment our *Lavender Legacies* Guide, to GLBT repositories, already on the webpage.

We are looking for people to write short overviews, three pages or less on archival principals for the Manual. If you have experience and would like to write about film/video/audio, exhibits, and user services we are still in need of volunteers. The directory will also include sections on basic arrangement, description and appraisal; electronic records; photographs; blogs and digital collections; privacy and confidentiality; and preservation.

If you're willing to volunteer or have any questions about the project please contact Paula Jabloner (jabloner@computerhistory.org). We're hoping to have the resource directory completed and online by June. So volunteers are needed now!

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NEW PROJECT: ARCHIVES OF THE NEW DOMINION

Virginia Commonwealth University Libraries in Richmond, Virginia, has launched its Archives of the New Dominion project to locate, secure and make accessible the paper history and archives of Central Virginia's under-documented populations including the gay and lesbian community. Funded by a grant from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission, this initiative takes a proactive approach to archives and history by working with the communities to identify organizations and individuals, both renowned and nearly unknown, who are agents of change on behalf of their communities.

Before this project started, archival collections pertaining to the gay and lesbian community in Virginia numbered in the low single digits. In the seven months since this effort began sixteen collections related to the Richmond-area GLBT community have been acquired. Some of these collections include the Virginia Partisans Gay and Lesbian Democratic Club, Parents and Families of Lesbians and Gays (Richmond chapter), and the papers of the Sexual Minorities Commission of the Catholic Diocese of Richmond, a now-defunct Catholic ministry. There are also materials by and about individual gay and lesbian leaders and materials concerning the GLBT community's connectedness with the arts. Arts groups include the records of the gay theater troupe *The Richmond Triangle Players* and *The Other Voices* chorus.

Among the non-paper historical documents unearthed by this project are a group of oral histories recorded in the mid-1980s; these records were located in the Richmond resident's basement. Another oral history is of Stephan Lenton, now deceased, where he provides the details of a lawsuit generated by the Gay Alliance of Students against the Board of Visitors at VCU. Organized in 1974 by Lenton, then University Assistant Dean of Student Life, and several VCU students, the G.A.S. was denied registration and funding as a campus organization by VCU's Board of Visitors. The Board argued that the existence of the group would "increase the opportunity for homosexual contacts" and negatively affect the student population. Lenton explains in the oral history how, with the financial assistance from the Richmond chapter of the ACLU and the legal support of a local attorney, the student group was able to challenge and reverse VCU's pronouncement of non-support. In November 1976 a Federal Appeals Court ordered VCU to grant the group full recognition and financial support as a student organization. The Federal Appeals Court ruling ultimately established a precedent for such groups in 10 southern US states.

Other organizations and individuals have expressed vocal interest to participate in this project and donate their papers to VCU Libraries. We hope to work with them in addition to other gay and lesbian 'change agents' in 2006.

For additional information about the project, please contact Alex Lorch, Community Outreach Archivist, Virginia Commonwealth University, by phone (804-828-1108) or email (ahlorch@vcu.edu).

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Reminders:

Hello fellow LAGAR members:

I am in the midst of revamping our website, and I desperately need some images to spruce up the pages. If you or your repository have any LGBTQ images that would be appropriate for the website, please let me know. Being a conscientious, archivally-minded webmaster, I can only use images on the site that:

- are either in the public domain, or for which we get explicit written permission to use
- have citation information re: the providing institution
- have caption or title information, complete with date.

Any questions, or especially if you have images, please feel free to contact me at: stevenmg@bellsouth.net

Thanks! Steven Mandeville-Gamble LAGAR webmaster

The Pacific Northwest Lesbian Archives

In the tradition of the Lesbian Herstory Archives in Brooklyn, the June Mazer Archives in Los Angeles, and the Ohio Lesbian Archives in Cincinnati, the Pacific Northwest Lesbian Archives will exist in and be run by the community it serves.

Proposed Mission & Goals:

The Pacific Northwest Lesbian Archives (PNLA) will focus regionally and exist as a repository (i.e., a physical 'safe space') and a research facility of materials that document our lives. PNLA will actively seek out lesbian-related primary sources and preserve and conserve them while making materials accessible for education and research.

Our lives are important and deserve recognition and celebration as a surviving and thriving sexual minority community group. Currently there are no collecting repositories in the Pacific Northwest specifically dedicated to preserving our herstory. We have the right to know where we came from and where we are going within the context of the lesbian experience.

Please visit our website at: www.pnwlesbianarchives.org

Voice Mail: (206) 654-4477

**Help save Pacific Northwest Lesbian Herstory!
Spread the word far and wide!**

Send this letter to listservs, friends, family, or anyone you think can help with this project. We are soon to become a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt non-profit organization and are gladly accepting monetary donations and volunteers to help document our herstory!

What we are looking for:

- **Business records:** Meeting minutes, agendas, financial/budget info, reports, correspondence, project files, and other documentary materials from lesbian organizations, groups, and businesses—past and present.
- **Personal papers/manuscripts:** Diaries, journals, and unpublished or preliminary notes, drafts, and papers that document lesbian lives.
- **Audio and visual materials:** Photographs, negatives, films, videos, DVDs, records, audiotapes, CDs.
- **Printed materials:** Periodicals, newsletters, pamphlets, brochures, graphics, posters, flyers advertising events, etc.
- **Ephemera:** Clothing, art, religious or spiritual objects, protest signs, banners, bumper stickers, buttons/pins, etc., that relate to specific events or time periods.

Materials must be related to the Pacific Northwest (Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Alaska and south-western BC). We will accept materials relating to national/international groups if directly applicable to lesbians in the Pacific Northwest.

The Black Gay & Lesbian Archives: A History of a People By Jasmyne Cannick

[Excerpt from *Gaywired* <http://www.gaywired.com/>.]

It's a little known fact that New York's Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, a part of the New York Public Library system, under the direction of Steven G. Fullwood, houses the Black Gay and Lesbian Archive (BGLA), the largest collection of Black gay, lesbian, bisexual transgender, same-gender loving, queer, questioning and in the life cultural archives and has done so since 2000.

Fullwood, who holds a Bachelor of Arts in English and Broadcasting degree from the University of Toledo, and a Master of Library and Information Science degree from Clark Atlanta University, currently lives in Harlem and is attempting to chronicle the history of a people dating back to the 1920's with the explosion of the Harlem Renaissance.

Since 2000, Fullwood has been able to gather 30 linear feet of materials including issues of MOJA, a newspaper that published in 1978 and 1979, and works from **Barbara Smith**, a founder of the Kitchen Table Press, **Assotto Saint**, the late poet, and the late filmmaker **Marlon Riggs**, best known for his 1989 documentary *Tongues Untied*.

Among the first to make a donation was writer **Jewelle Gomez**, who sent copies of all of her books, essays, articles and photographs. **Alan Bell**, editor of *KujiSource* and pioneering community writer and activist, donated an entire run of BLK, along with copies of *Blackfire*, *Black Lace*, and *Kuumba*. **Cornelius Moore**, director of African Cinema at California Newsreel, contributed copies of *MOJA*, the first black gay and lesbian-oriented newspaper and Marlon Riggs' last film *Black Is. . .Black Ain't*.

Writers **Donna Allegra** and **Thomas Glave** provided copies of their writings and other items. **Lisa C. Moore**, founder of Red Bone Press, sent copies of *Does Your Mama Know: An Anthology of Black Lesbian Coming Out Stories*, and *The Bull Jean Stories*, by **Sharon Bridgforth**, in book and CD format. **Charlene Cothran**, editor-in-chief and publisher of *Venus Magazine* and **Gregory Victorianne**, creator of *Buti Voxx*, contributed books, broadsides, flyers, journals, magazines and programs. Author and editor **Stanley Bennett Clay** gave copies of *SBC Magazine* and a rare copy of a chapbook by west coast based poet **Sage**. Firebrand Books donated several publications by **Cheryl Clarke**, **Pat Parker**, **Kate Rushin** and **Shay Youngblood**. Other donors include activist **Anthony Hardaway**, filmmaker **Rodney Evans**, hip-hop artist **Tori Fixx**, and playwright **Sterling Houston**.

To date, the BGLA boasts artifacts and material dating back over thirty years.

A prized possession of the archive includes a facsimile copy of *FIRE!!*, a 1926 journal published by **Zora Neale Hurston** and **Langston Hughes**, that includes "Smoke, Lilies and Jade" a short story by **Richard Bruce Nugent** that may be the first short story published about same-sex desire between two black men and was recently featured in the acclaimed film *Brother to Brother*.

Chronicling a history of a people dating back to the 1920's with the explosion of the Harlem Renaissance where Richard Bruce Nugent, Zora Neale Hurston, **Claude McKay**, Langston Hughes, and **Alain Locke** first made their names known though their legacy of art and literature, the BGLA also features works from the 1980's where America first witnessed a deluge of AIDS service organizations dedicated to serving African American gay men who were often overlooked by existing AIDS organizations.

Like with any culture, the documenting of ones history is of critical importance. The Blacklist, an extensive listing of well known and not so well known Black gays and lesbians compiled by **Chuck Tarver**, was first developed out of a need to find Black gays and lesbians to recognize during Black History Month in 1994.

In an era, where gay people of African descent are still scrambling to find any resemblance of themselves in mainstream pop and Black culture, the Blacklist and BGLA are especially important for future generations of Black gays who will need to learn about the trailblazers of this period who not only excelled and broke new ground as African Americans, but as African American gays and lesbians in the areas of film, art, music, literature, politics, civil rights and so much more.

While current generations study the contributions of civil rights leader **Bayard Rustin**, filmmaker **Marlon Riggs**, authors Langston Hughes, **James Baldwin** and Zora Neal Hurston to name a few, we can expect future generations to study pioneers such as AIDS activist Phill Wilson, Palm Springs Mayor Ron Oden, Redbone Press founder Lisa C. Moore, activist and author Keith Boykin, activist Wanda Alston, filmmaker's Patrik Ian Polk, Rodney Evans, Maurice Jamal and Debra Wilson, musician Meshell Ndegeocello and the list goes on. For them, it will be as simple as logging online or visiting New York's Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture Black Gay and Lesbian Archives located at 515 Malcolm X Boulevard.

The BLGA collects the following materials: books, magazines, newsletters, journals, pamphlets, flyers, hand cards, prints, photographs, moving images, recorded sound materials (film/video, music, and conference proceedings) and organizational records (agendas, minutes, reports, etc.). Materials can be sent to: Steven G. Fullwood c/o The Black Gay and Lesbian Archives, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, 515 Malcolm X Boulevard, New York, NY 10037-1801.

Steven G. Fullwood, can be reached at (212) 491-2226 and online at steven@stevengfullwood.org or www.stevengfullwood.org.

Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture can be reached online at www.schomburgcenter.org.

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Notes from the LAGAR Annual Meeting held Thursday, August 18, 2005 in New Orleans, LA at SAA

The meeting was called to order about 4 pm by co-chairs Stephen Novak and Deborah Richards.

SAA Diversity Committee: Michael Doyle, committee member, spoke about the committee activities and requested input from LAGAR members of making SAA a more inclusive organization.

SAA Program Committee: a member of the program committee for the 2006 annual meeting in Washington asked for session proposals. Deadline for proposals was Oct. 7, 2005.

Memorial for Deceased Members: Jim Cartwright, Brenda Marston, Paula Jabloner and others spoke about the late founding LAGAR member Willie Walker [see *January 2005 newsletter for memorial*]. Noted was Walker's role in founding the Gay and Lesbian Historical Society of Northern California and his general encouragement of LGBT archives and archivists in general.

Election of Female Co-Chair: Deborah Richards having declined to run for re-election, the floor was opened to nominations. Mary Caldera was nominated and seconded and then elected by acclamation. Novak thanked Richards for her terrific work as a two-term Co-Chair. An appreciative round of applause was given to Richards by the meeting attendees in honor of her work with and for LAGAR.

SAA Council Liaison: The SAA Council Liaison to LAGAR, Pen Primer of Princeton University, introduced himself. Primer asked that if LAGAR members have suggestions, questions, criticisms that they would like Council to consider, they should contact him at: Ben Primer, Associate University Librarian for Rare Books and Special Collections Harvey S. Firestone Library 1 Washington Road, Princeton, NJ 08544; or via email at primer@princeton.edu.

Old Business:

Steering Committee: Novak mentioned that last year the LAGAR Steering committee was revived to organize and expedite the roundtable's business. The Committee consists of the two co-chairs, the newsletter editor, the webmaster, and 2 to 4 members-at-large. This year there have been some changes to this line-up:

Maggi Gonsalves has replaced Sarah Demb as newsletter editor.

Steven Mandeville-Gamble has replaced Susan Edwards as webmaster.

Mary Caldera has replaced Deborah Richards as female co-chair.

Deborah Richards, as past co-chair, has joined as a member-at-large.

Novak voiced his appreciation and thanked Demb and Edwards for their hard work in the past and welcomed Gonsalves and Mandeville-Gamble.

LAGAR Web Page: Paula Jabloner has been working on creating an "Archival Primer" for the web page; it would assist community archives in doing basic archival tasks. She has already written the section on provenance and arrangement, but more needs to be done. The idea is not to reinvent the wheel, but to give a basic overview of the main archival functions and to point people in the right direction.

The following members volunteered to help:

Tom Brown electronic records

Jim Cartwright photographs

John Paul Deley documenting a "virtual community" and what to consider donating LGBT records to a mainstream repository

Brenda Marston privacy and confidentiality

Michael Palmer appraisal

Paula Jabloner and Steve Novak will serve as editors.

LAGAR Listserv: Novak reminded everyone that the LAGAR listserv had been moved from the Cornell to the SAA server. In the process, many members forgot to re-subscribe. To subscribe you should follow the instructions found on the LAGAR website at <http://www.archivists.org/saagroups/lagar/home.htm>.

\$1000 Check: This money, which LAGAR earned for its members' work on the *Encyclopedia of LGBT History of America* has not yet been spent. At last year's meeting, the consensus of the members was that it should be used to endow a scholarship. We have since realized that this is not enough to endow an ongoing scholarship. After some discussion, the members indicated that they wanted this money to be used to defray the costs of attendance at the annual SAA meeting for an LGBT community archivist or for an LGBT archives student. The details of awarding the money will be left to a committee consisting of Jim Cartwright, Stephen Novak and Steven Wheeler.

New Business:

SAA 2006 Program Suggestions: There was some discussion of possible ideas, especially how we might dovetail with the theme of government records, since the 2006 meeting will be a joint meeting with NAGARA and COSHRC. Nothing was decided.

Atlanta History Center: Michael Rose and Wesley Chenault of the Atlanta History Center reported on the AHC's LGBT oral history project and its recent exhibit on the history of LGBT life in Atlanta. The exhibit was well attended and both projects had the enthusiastic support of the Center's Board.

Program: Roberts Batson, New Orleans historian, presented a shorter version of his walking tour using slides to show us the haunts of Tennessee Williams and other LGBT New Orleanians.

The meeting adjourned at 5:30 p.m.

