



YEAR THREE

In 2003, we expanded the ways we promote DC's LGBT history. We continued our research and processing of collected materials, and launched two new long-term projects. Our income has also risen, while our expenses remain manageable. In 2004, we will receive our first grant funds, conduct our first walking tours, present an exhibition of historic photographs of gay DC and host Jack Nichols, one of the founders of Washington's Mattachine Society and native Washingtonian.

Diversifying the promotion of our history

In 2003, Rainbow History added presentations of local history through walking tour brochures and training sessions. We strengthened our working relationship with the Committee on Lesbian and Gay History of the American Historical Association, with the City Museum, and on the planning committee of the annual Washington DC Historical Studies conference. At the end of the year, we began work on two long-term projects: preservation and copying of the *Friends* tapes and creation of a reference index for the *Washington Blade*.

Tour Brochures - The walking tour brochures represent outreach not only to the visiting and local members of the LGBT community but also to tourist promotion sites at the Washington Convention Center, the City Museum, and DC Cultural Tourism. The first brochure, Dupont Circle, has proven very popular and has had a warm reception. Brochures on Capitol Hill, South Capitol St., African-American, and women's sites follow in 2004. Patsy Lynch has generously donated her time and skill to provide photographs for the brochures. Gina Farthing has contributed the outstanding design of the brochures.

As the brochures are completed they are added to the website.

Training Sessions - In addition, RHP was invited to present in-service training sessions at the Fire Academy and to the Gay and Lesbian Liaison Unit of the Metropolitan Police on the GLBT history of Washington DC. For this we developed a presentation, now on the website, surveying local LGBT history since 1950.

Historic Preservation - In the summer of 2003, we launched a project to achieve historic landmark status for the home of Dr. Franklin E. Kameny, de facto office of the Mattachine Society of Washington and a center for counseling and support of local and national gay civil rights campaigns. Buddy Sutson (Advisory Board), Bob Summersgill (RHP member), Jeff Donahoe (RHP Board), John Olinger (RHP Board), Tom Mayes (Advisory Board), Stephen Morris (Advisory Board), Dr. Kameny, and Mark Meinke (Chair) prepared the submission documents. The project now awaits only the requisite pictures, following which the submission can go forward to DC's Historic Preservation Office. RHP is also looking at a similar project for Nob Hill.

Late in 2003, we launched an appeal to save the Furies' collective building on Capitol Hill that garnered very positive media coverage and laid the grounds for a good relationship with the Capitol Hill Restoration Society.

Programs

In 2003, we presented programs on

- Sodomy law reform from 1963 to 2003,
- The fight against police harassment and the creation of a more positive relationship with the Metropolitan Police Department,
- The founding and history of Lammas Books and Lambda Rising nearly 30 years ago,

- The campaign to ensure inclusion of gay and lesbian victims of the holocaust in the scope of the US Holocaust Memorial and Museum, and
- Support for gay youth and the founding of SMYAL in the 1980s.

Several planned panel discussions did not materialize because the chair ran out of steam and could not get them organized. On the advice of the Advisory Board and the executive board, he is learning to delegate.

Rainbow History actively participated in the annual Youth Pride, Black Pride, and Capitol Pride celebrations. We submitted five nominations for the annual Hero of Pride award and were very pleased that Bruce Pennington was honored in 2003. RHP has compiled online event histories of Black Pride and Capitol Pride.

Research and Archives

Website - In the past year, we have added extensively to the virtual archives on our website with materials donated by Tom Chorlton, Wayson Jones and others. The website now includes the Survey of Recent GLBT History, in addition to the Timeline and the Places and Spaces data.

Our website, admittedly local and a purely volunteer effort, draws more and more interest. New documents in our collections are scanned and uploaded to the website to make as widely available as possible. As a result, we receive a growing number of inquiries from students and researchers about DC's LGBT history as well as requests for referrals to living sources on LGBT history.

Currently the website (www.rainbowhistory.org) has 275 MB of data on it. We average about 600 hits a day with Monday and Wednesday being the busiest days. The average number of visits is 200 a day. The monthly average of hits is 20,750. In 2003, we had 251,395 hits on the site. The most popular pages are the home page (of course), the archives page, the social clubs page, the Black Pride page, and a number of the Drag Rag pages. In January 2004, we exceeded all the averages.

Collections - A fire next door to our storage area on Ridge St. and water seepage damaged some of the *Friends* radio tape storage boxes, causing us to move all of the items stored there. We moved our collections to more secure storage space on South Capitol Street. As a result, we are now accepting more donations. Stonewall Archives and Library (Ft. Lauderdale, FL) and Phillip Kadis have donated many issues of the *Washington Blade* which will be useful as we build the new *Blade* index.

In the past year we added collections of materials donated by Marty Crowetz, Tom Chorlton, Wayson Jones, and others.

Research - We have added a number of new topical pages in 2003, including background on the Furies collective, Dr Franklin E. Kameny's historic speech to New York Mattachine in 1964 defining the new gay activism of the time, documentation on the campaign to insure coverage of gay victims of the holocaust, and documents concerning the Lost and Found club.

We have created founding aids (on which Advisory Board member Gail Redmann advised us) for the Pennington and the Aiken papers.

In addition, Jack Nichols and Patsy Lynch have generously loaned extensive collection of photographs of the history of our community in Washington, DC. These are all on the website.

The new projects to preserve the *Friends* radio tapes and to create an index for the *Washington Blade* are long term projects lasting at least three years which will greatly benefit researchers and the community.

Organizational Events

The Chair is indeed learning to delegate. Member Bob Summersgill has taken charge of two groups organizing the indexing of the *Washington Blade* and the preservation of the *Friends* radio tapes. Board member John Olinger has taken over press and media work. Board Secretary Jeff Donahoe has taken

over most of the correspondence, and Board Treasurer James Crutchfield continues his much appreciated work keeping the books and managing the annual audit.

In August 2003 we lost Bruce Pennington, one of DC's gay pioneers and Rainbow History's first vice president. Bruce's death was a personal and professional loss, because he had been so involved in the organization and because he was also a dependable source for much of our history since 1968. In Bruce's honor, \$8717 has been donated in memory him. These funds are restricted and will be used exclusively to support the project to preserve and copy the *Friends* radio tapes which he had stored for nearly 30 years.

The Advisory Board met twice in 2003 and was of tremendous help in defining ways to use funds, prioritizing projects, assisting us with professional contacts. Members of the Board are an important resource for RHP and give unstintingly of their time and energy to support our projects. The next Advisory Board meeting will be in March 2004.

Following the annual March meeting, the RHP Board became

Mark Meinke, chair
Cheryl Spector, vice chair
James Crutchfield, treasurer
Jeff Donahoe, secretary
Ric Mendoza, member
John Olinger, member
Peter Share, member

Financials. (unaudited figures)

At year end, Rainbow History had \$5328.44 in its bank account. For the year, we had total income of \$4,993.00 and total expenses of \$1,960.53.

The Washington Academy arranged a benefit (our first!) for Rainbow History on October 12th that brought in \$2,041. The benefit show was spectacular, as was the unanticipated income! A good number of our advisors and members attended the show at Club 55, the former home of Waaay Off Broadway.

- *Major expenses* in 2003
 - Pride events \$375.00
 - Website hosting \$179.40
 - Storage costs \$695.00

In 2004, we anticipate our largest expenses as being

- Storage costs (\$1600 to \$2400)
- Printing of walking tour brochures (\$3500) of which 50% should be covered by sponsors
- Archival supplies (\$500)
- Purchase of tape duplicating machines (\$800)
- Second tape transcription machine (\$200)
- Preservation and copying of *Friends* tapes (\$140-\$170 per tape hour)

We will receive \$3200 in generous grants from Brother, Help Thyself to cover storage costs and the purchase of tape duplicating machines. Donations in memory of Bruce Pennington have reached \$8,717 and will be used to begin preserving the *Friends* radio tapes.

Mark Meinke,
Chair