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celebrating lesbian and
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513.256.7695

Ohio Lesbian Archives

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Dear Archives Supporters,

One Sunday recently I drove to Ft. Thomas to pick up a large donation of books for the Archives. The woman handed me a check for \$110.00 in memory of her partner who had recently died. The amount was for two months rent—to finish **2017**. Yes, we do pay rent for our little library in the basement of Clifton United Methodist Church. Won't you remember us? We are 501(c)(3) so you can count any amount as a charitable deduction on your IRS taxes. Please remember us! I went through my calendar and discovered we'd had an interesting year! Mostly it was all about Vibrant Kin, Nancy Yerian's project sharing 50 years of LGBT History in Greater Cincinnati. [See elsewhere in this issue for her report.] It was exciting to show the exhibit at the annual Pride Celebration at Sawyer Park, the SAGE dinner at Mt. Auburn Presbyterian Church, and the annual GLSEN Youth Summit at NKU. Congratulations, Nancy! We are officially a part of the Library of Congress with our debut on Story Corps. Annabelle interviewed me about the Archives and *Dinah* newsletter and what those younger activist times were like. And there was more. Besides these events I was glad to open the Archives to curious visitors and witness their pleasure (and in one case, memories) in the precious items we've saved for decades now. Two current Miami University students who live in Cincinnati did some volunteering and, thank you, Madison! We'll use your enthusiasm and helpfulness some more. Happy New Year! -- Phebe

Please join us for an OPEN HOUSE at OLA in the basement (turn left at the bottom of the stairs – 2nd door on left) of Clifton United Methodist Church on the corner of Senator Place and Clifton Avenue. We will be organizing and sorting through recent donations as well as beginning our process of culling though duplicate copies of our extensive book collection. We will list and offer these extra copies to other archives so come check us out 4:30 – 7:30 pm Monday, January 22, 2018.

**Co-Directors: Karen Phebe Beiser & Victoria Ramstetter
PO Box 20075
Cincinnati, OH 45220**

Vibrant Kin: Intergenerational History Inspired by OLA

This year, I was lucky enough to receive a People's Liberty grant to create an exhibit based on the Archives' fantastic collection of local LGBTQ history. People's Liberty is a "philanthropic experiment" founded by the Haile/U.S. Bank Foundation which provides grants and mentorship to individuals to complete civic projects. (You can learn more at www.peoplesliberty.org.) My project was Vibrant Kin: 50 Years of LGBTQ Cincinnati, an exhibit of LGBTQ activist history paired with programming designed to spark intergenerational connections. The project aimed to spread awareness of the rich vibrant history of LGBTQ community and activism in Greater Cincinnati and use that history as a way to create and strengthen intergenerational connections in the local LGBTQ community. The exhibit was inspired by my time volunteering at the Ohio Lesbian Archives. Volunteering here has taught me so much more about Cincinnati's LGBTQ history than I ever expected to learn, and I wanted to be able to share that history. In particular, in the Herstory issue of *Dinah*, a write-up of a 1983 oral history interview Phebe did talked about a Lesbian and Gay activist organizations in Cincinnati as early as 1967. Since many (especially younger) people's knowledge of LGBTQ history starts with Stonewall, I thought that the 50 year anniversary of this pre-Stonewall activism was the perfect opportunity to bring this history to the public. To create and write the exhibit, I spent many hours in the Archives doing research and got to know the collection even better than I had in my previous two years of volunteering here. I knew when I started the process that we had an incredibly rich local history of activism in Cincinnati, but the research process really brought home how much history we had and how well documented it is in the Archives' holdings. There was so much I couldn't include

in the exhibit! I owe a huge thank-you to my friend Jesse Kramer, the exhibit designer who took my research and images from the OLA collection and made them into a beautiful exhibit that could travel around the city all summer. The Archives were essential partners in the programming we were able to host to go along with the exhibit. In May, in partnership with OLA and Senior Action Group, we coordinated a SAGE table event. SAGE table was a national effort to bring together intergenerational groups of LGBTQ people to share a meal and conversation. This was a great way to kick off the public programming, and connected our local efforts to a national movement. The exhibit premiered at Pride in June. We shared the story with a huge number of people who would not have heard about the project otherwise and got many to contribute their own piece of history to the exhibit. The exhibit then was set up at Mt Auburn Presbyterian Church for a part of July and August, where we also held a discussion with New Spirit Oasis MCC about the relationship of religion and the LGBTQ community in Cincinnati. The third stop for the exhibit was GLSEN Youth Summit, September 23. Phebe and I hosted a writing workshop with prompts based on historical themes and sources. GLSEN youth got to write and hear each others' writing as well as get exposure to some of our history. The exhibit showed at Ladyfest in Northside October 13-14 at Anytime Dept. Gallery in the Hoffner Building (formerly the Maitri Center rehabbed by Maureen Wood). The workshop for Ladyfest combined a discussion of *Dinah* with a hands-on component where everyone created their own "zine." Phebe talked about her experience in *Dinah* and attendees got to ask questions of her as well as see original *Dinah* newsletters. Then Breanne Trammel and Stephanie Cuyubamba Kong from UC taught attendees about zines, showed a wide variety



Phebe, 1969?

of zines, and then everyone created their own zine. Every participant left with five copies of their own little booklet. Finally, we showed the exhibit at NKU as part of their LGBTQ History Month programming. The exhibit was on view October 25-27 in an open, high-traffic area of the NKU Student Union to maximize visibility. We hosted a discussion event on the importance of local LGBTQ history at NKU. Attendees were mostly students but a couple of staff and community members, including Carl Fox and Terry Bond, prominent older community members in Northern Kentucky. After a short introduction, the audience was invited to share their personal stories and feelings about local LGBTQ history. Many students shared as well as Terry and Carl. This was the first history focused event that NKU LGBTQ Programs had had in several years of doing LGBTQ History Month programming, and Director Bonnie Meyers has stated it has inspired them to do more history-focused programming. The exhibit will live at OLA now, but we are working on putting it online and asking for more contributions to an online exhibit in the future. Keep an eye on www.vibrantkin.org

for updates on the online exhibit. Creating and sharing this exhibit has been a fantastic experience, and I'm so grateful to the Archives for making it possible! I'm excited to continue sharing the amazing history collected here over the years.

-- Nancy Yerian



STUDENT INTERNS



Earn college credit working in one of only four lesbian archives in the US. Contact us if you are interested in designing your own independent study program at OLA. Students from UC, Miami U, XU and UK have all taken advantage of this unique learning experience. We are willing to work with your schedule! 513-256-7695

Third Annual OLA + SAG Film Viewing

The Ohio Lesbian Archives will cohost a film viewing with Cincinnati's LGBTQ+ Senior Action Group (SAG) at Clifton United Methodist Church in February 2018. Additional details will be posted on the Archives Facebook page later this month. If you would like to stay connected with SAG, email cincysag@gmail.com or follow us on Facebook @SAGCincy.



Cincinnati's LGBTQ+ History on Tour: Vibrant Kin at Miami University

As a graduate instructor at Miami University, I recently taught a course on sexualities and took the opportunity to share some of Cincinnati's LGBTQ+ history with my students. During a unit on "Sexual Revolutions," the students learned about the Ohio Lesbian Archives and explored the exhibit Vibrant Kin, created by Nancy Yerian. Vibrant Kin is an intergenerational public history project and an exhibit of 50 years of local LGBTQ+ activism, featuring material from the Archives' impressive collection.

Here is a sample of what the students had to say:

- "I think it is fantastic that so much history on this subject, especially one that was initially so controversial, has been maintained and preserved for future generations to see and appreciate how much those that came before them fought for the rights they have today."
- "History doesn't always make itself visible, but it is important that we make it visible in order to grow."
- "It is truly heartwarming that after so long the stories and the struggles of the women who are a part of this community are finally being shared. Especially because of recent political events, it is inspirational how a

community is sharing its local long history to inspire change."

- "I always thought of the Cincy community as relatively closed-minded and conservative, especially in the past, but learning about the vibrant and thriving spaces that were prevalent throughout history has given me much more appreciation for my hometown and the people who worked to make it a more inclusive place."
- "Vibrant Kin is important for the fact that it documents the LGBT history and journey, showing the struggles faced and strides made. It is valuable to understand the historical context of LGBT activism and important events to show the ever changing political landscape and drive future change."

To explore the history of LGBTQ+ activism in Cincinnati for yourself, email olarchives@gmail.com and schedule an appointment to visit the Archives! For more information about Vibrant Kin, visit <https://vibrantkin.org/>. Thanks to Nancy for allowing me to share the exhibit with my students, and to the students who gave me permission to share their reflections. -- Annabelle Arbogast

FYI -- Expect the Unexpected: Gender in Opera

- Sunday, January 14, 2018
- 7:00 PM 10:00 PM
- Northside Tavern
- 4163 Hamilton Avenue
- Cincinnati, OH, 45223

Cincinnati Opera's young professionals group, Center Stage, returns to Classical Revolution Cincinnati for an exploration of gender-defying roles in opera. Enjoy excerpts from two of Cincinnati Opera's 2018 operas: *As One*, the uplifting coming-of-age story about a transgender woman, and *The Coronation of Poppea*, a Baroque opera featuring countertenor roles.

The event is free and open to the public.
Doors open at 7PM, music begins at 8PM.

THE CORONATION OF POPPEA

Claudio Monteverdi
June 21, 23, 26, 28 & July 1
Monteverdi's 1642 Baroque masterpiece tells a dramatic story of passion and intrigue with some of the most transcendently beautiful music in all of opera.

(Individual tickets go on sale Spring 2018)

The Cincinnati Opera (513) 241-2742



Bust of Poppea, at Palazzo Massimo alle Terme (National Roman Museum)

AS ONE

Laura Kaminsky

July 25, 27, 28 & 30

With two singers and a string quartet, *As One* is an uplifting coming-of-age story about a transgender woman. Libretto by Mark Campbell and Kimberly Reed.

