

Rainbow Bridges: Ryerson's Community Building with the Canadian Lesbian and Gay Archives

Kevin Manuel, Alan Miller, Al Stanton-Hagan
OLA Super Conference - January 28, 2016



Overview of the Project

- Funding grant received by Ryerson librarian to create online learning resource about LGBTQ+ histories
- Cooperation with CLGA to access holdings
- Students hired to digitize Ryerson and CLGA materials
- Omeka used for online exhibition platform



Ryerson University



Ryerson Library | LGBTQ+ Studies Guide



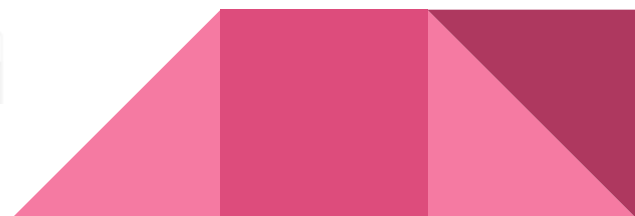
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The LGBTQ movement has changed the face of Toronto and the world at large for over 50 years, and in that time the various minorities, subcultures and countercultures that make up the LGBTQ+ community have gained considerable recognition and made momentous victories in the name of social justice. Yet even today the rich history of that movement—the people, the pamphlets, the posters—is at risk of being forgotten.

Ryerson University has its place in the history of this movement, starting in 1977 with the creation of the Ryerson Homophile Foundation, which would later become RyePRIDE. Ryerson began building a reputation for a socially progressive institution, intent on protecting the rights of minorities in its student body and beyond. These are values that should be continued and honoured.

LIBRARY TWITTER FEED



The Ryerson Connection

- Kevin Manuel – Data/Sociology/LGBTQ+ Studies Librarian (also CLGA Board Liaison) initiated project
- As a scholarly research activity he decided to explore the digitization of LGBTQ+ materials related to Ryerson
- Framed within social praxis to provide online educational resource about LGBTQ+ histories



Funding from Ryerson

- April 2015 – Kevin received Teaching About Diversity Fund for \$5000 from Ryerson University Learning and Teaching Office
- Publicly accessible resource as part of the Ryerson strategic plan for community building and diversity



The Team

- Cooperation with CLGA volunteer Alan Miller to access CLGA holdings
- June 2015 - hired iSchool student Al Stanton-Hagan to start digitization and create Omeka exhibit
- Summer 2015 – Ryerson Work Study student Kexin Zhang digitizes material for Omeka
- September 2015 – Ryerson Work Study student Ewan Matthews was hired to continue uploading new content to Omeka



Preservation and Exhibition



- All materials were digitized and stored on secure server at Ryerson Library and CLGA
- Thematic and visual examples were selected for the Omeka exhibit in various categories

Digitizing Beyond Ryerson



- Created as an educational resource about LGBTQ+ histories at Ryerson
- But other collections/holdings (tabloids, t-shirts, buttons, matchbook covers, posters, CLGA National Portraits, audio files) have been added

CLGA



CGA/CLGA History

1973: The archives was founded by Jearld Moldenhauer using the files of the Body Politic (BP, 1971-1987) newspaper; soon joined by Ron Dayman who moved several boxes of material to the basement of his house. Initially called the Canadian Gay Liberation Movement Archives, announced at the first national gay conference in Quebec City on Oct. 6.

1974: Dayman moves to Ottawa and the boxes get moved to 193 Carlton St., a space shared by the BP and Gay Alliance Toward Equality (Jul 1974 to Apr 1976)

1975: In March the name of the archives was changed to the Canadian Gay Archives (CGA)

The BP collective incorporated as Pink Triangle Press (PTP) and CGA forms its own collective and drafts a statement of purpose

Dec 1975 the Collective turns down an offer from the Archives of Ontario to take some material, keeping CGA's holdings in community hands



CGA/CLGA History

1976: The archives moves with the BP to office space at 24 Duncan Street (May 1976 to Dec 1983; expanded floor space in 1980)

City of Toronto archivist James Fraser joins the archives collective and sets up workable filing systems

1977: The first issue of the Gay Archivist is published in May
Rick Bebout joins the BP collective and takes interest in CGA
The offices of the Pink Triangle Press (PTP) were raided by the Toronto police and several boxes of archives records were confiscated. After this it was decided to sever ties to PTP and become more independent

1978: Alan Miller's three bibliographies on homosexuality and employment are published by the Ontario Ministry of Labour -- most of the entries come from CGA's holdings



CGA/CLGA History

1979: CGA publishes its first bibliography: Alex Spence's Homosexuality in Canada: A Bibliography. Toronto: Canadian Gay Archives, 1979. (CGA publication no.1) 85 pages

Joan Anderson (collective member) attends the Bi-National Lesbian Conference in Toronto, May 1979

1980: March 13 the archives incorporated as a non-profit Ontario organization with a board of collective members, those people who worked on the holdings of CGA

The "Whitman in Ontario Conference" is co-sponsored by the archives and Michael Lynch of University of Toronto, Mississauga. It celebrates the 100th anniversary of Walt Whitman's visit to Canada



CGA/CLGA History

1981: The collective adds the subtitle: "National Archives for Lesbian and Gay Men" to its publication *The Gay Archivist*

Lesbian Periodical Holdings in the Canadian Gay Archives as of June 1981. Compiled by Alan V. Miller. Toronto: Canadian Gay Archives, 1981. (CGA publication no.4) 15 pages

November 1981, the CGA was granted charitable status, but on appeal, after originally being turned down by the Revenue Canada.

1982: "Wilde '82," the world's first lesbian and gay history conference, commemorating the 100th anniversary of Oscar Wilde's visit to Canada, is part of the "Doing It! pride events, Jun 30, 1982.

Lesbian and Gay Heritage of Toronto. By James A. Fraser and Alan V. Miller. Toronto: Canadian Gay Archives, 1982. (CGA publication no.5) 12 pages

Gays and Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS): A Bibliography. Alan V. Miller, Nov 1982 First edition. Toronto: Canadian Gay Archives, 1982. (CGA publication no.7) 21 pages



CGA/CLGA History

1983: The archives receives a grant (approximately \$17,400) from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, one of the first to be awarded to a lesbian/gay organization in Canada. The grant allowed CGA to buy a computer and database software.

The AIDS Committee of Toronto is formed

1984: Homosexuality in Canada: A Bibliography. Compiled by William Crawford. Toronto: Canadian Gay Archives, 1979. (CGA publication no.9) 378 pages

Move to 54 Wolseley Street, 3rd fl (Jan 1984 to Mar 1988)

1985: "Sex and the State: Their Laws, Our Lives," Jul 3 to 7, celebrates the third international lesbian and gay history conference.



CGA/CLGA History

1987: Champagne, Rob. **Jim Egan: Canada's pioneer gay activist** / compiled and introduced by Robert Champagne. Toronto: Canadian Lesbian and Gay History Network, 1987.

1988: Feb move to office space at 464 Yonge St, 2nd floor, next to the AIDS Committee of Toronto and Pink Triangle Press (1988-1992) The CGA names its library the James Fraser Library; James died of AIDS-related complications in 1985.

1989: CLGA and the Canadian Women's Movement Archives produces a set of feminist, lesbian and gay microfiche of Canadian periodicals

1990: Posters in the Collection of the Canadian Gay Archives: An Inventory. Compiled by Morag Carnie. Toronto: Canadian Gay Archives, 1990. 294 pages . Small number printed



CGA/CLGA History

1991: Our Own Voices: A Directory of Lesbian and Gay Periodicals, 1890-1990, Including the Complete Holdings of the Canadian Gay Archives. Compiled by Alan V. Miller. Toronto: Canadian Gay Archives, 1991. (CGA publication no.12) 704 pages

1992: The collective is replaced with a new constitution and nine-member Board of Directors
An Inventory of Photographs Received in the Canadian Gay Archives between 1973 and the end of 1987.
Compiled by Christopher Halonen. Toronto: Canadian Gay Archives, 1992.

In December CGA moves to its first independent space at 56 Temperance Street (1992-2005)

1993: Sep. 13, the CGA Board voted to change its name to the Canadian Lesbian and Gay Archives (CLGA)



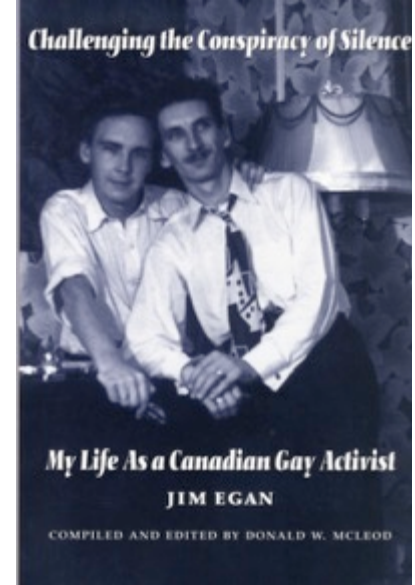
CLGA History

1995: "Pass It On! An Exhibition of Lesbian and Gay Histories." Toronto: Toronto Historical Board, 1995. Exhibit highlighting lesbian/gay histories, 1975 to 1995.

1996: Lesbian and Gay Archivist no. 12 is published in June 1996 and announces its new website www.clga.ca
July prototype of website launched: www.clga.ca

1997: CLGA launches its revamped website on Feb. 21.
Lesbian and Gay Archivist no. 13 is published in Sep 1997. Special interest is paid to our lesbian holdings: see Jane Perry and Robin Brownlie's "Lesbian material in the archives," and Gerry King's "The lesbian component in the James Fraser Library."

1998: CLGA published the last (number 14) of its publications with the Jim Egan/Don McLeod book *Challenging the Conspiracy of Silence: My Life As a Canadian Gay Activist*



CLGA History

2001: Discussions with University College, of the University of Toronto about renting space on campus

2004: Canadian Lesbian and Gay Archive: we want more women! Brochure targeting lesbians and listing several Canadian lesbian events. [2004] The Toronto Children's Aid Society to give their heritage house at 34 Isabella Street to the archives

2005: Primary Source Microfilm begin plans to digitize and produce a microfilm set of Canadian and international LGBT periodicals

2006: After several location moves, the archives was offered a building at 34 Isabella Street (Jared Sessions house) thanks to the work of councillor Kyle Rae and grants from the Ontario Trillium Foundation and Heritage Canada.

2009: CLGA moved into its new home, 34 Isabella Street, which opened to the public on Sep. 26.

2013: CLGA celebrates its 40th anniversary



**KEEPING
OUR STORIES
ALIVE**



Omeka Digital Collections

CLGA CANADIAN LESBIAN+GAY ARCHIVES
KEEPING OUR STORIES ALIVE

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About Omeka

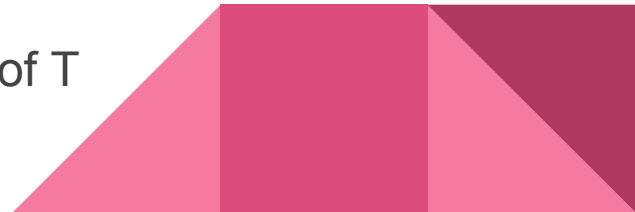
Browse Items (189 total)

Title	Creator	Type	Date Added
Letters to the editor: "very old transsexual" speaks up for males who prefer female attire (Not yet copyright free) (Private)			Jan 19, 2016
Transsexuals steal spotlight from the sparrows, jays and crows (Private)			Jan 19, 2016
Aversion therapy claimed cure for males dressing as females (Private)			Jan 19, 2016
Transsexual is guilty of gross indecency: artists sympathy of court so sentence is suspended; other party is fined \$100 (Private)			Jan 19, 2016
Homosexual concepts (Private)	[J.E.]		Jan 18, 2016
Homosexual concepts (Private)	[J.E.]		Jan 18, 2016
Homosexual concepts (Private)	[J.E.]		Jan 18, 2016
Homosexual concepts (Private)	[J.E.]		Jan 18, 2016
Invent answers critics of homosexual article (Private)	[A.H.]		Jan 18, 2016
Toronto homo-expresses invent's twilight life! Pleads for tolerance for those who are 'different' (Private)	[A.H.]		Jan 18, 2016

- free, open source digital content management
- developed by the Roy Rosenzweig Center for History and New Media at George Mason University
- easy to use – aimed at small historical organizations, non-developers
- extendable via plugins

Our Omeka Installation

- est. Aug 2015
- hosted by volunteers in Ottawa who donate hosting and minor development
- uses a modified Avantgarde theme
- maintained by staff, volunteers, and work-study students
- partnerships:
 - work-study positions from Ryerson
 - LGBTQ Digital Oral History Collaboratory at U of T
 - Nancy Nicol at York



Challenges/Areas for Improvement

The screenshot shows the CLGA (Canadian Lesbian+Gay Archives) website. The header includes the logo and navigation links. Below the header is a menu with categories like 'LGBTQ+ Histories at Ryerson University', 'RyePRIDE', 'Trans Activism at Ryerson', 'WIKIDS', 'Out on Campus', 'Arts & Culture', 'Gay & Lesbian Studies', and 'Education and Outreach'. The 'RYEPRIDE' section is highlighted, featuring a paragraph about its founding in 1977 and a grid of historical documents and posters. The documents include: 'Homophile Association off to a start', 'Early meetings were often met with threats of violence', 'Rye to hold its first gay dance', 'Lesbians and Gays at Ryerson held its first public gay dance in 1988', 'A woman's right held in the 1980s', 'BICCAULITY', and 'BELOW AN INK'.

-not a robust preservation platform

-needs developer tweaks

-copyright/permission

Digital Opportunities

RYE TO HOLD ITS FIRST GAY DANCE

DUBLIN CORE

Title
Rye to hold its first gay dance

Subject
gay men
lesbians
night life
homophobia

Description
A newspaper article on Lesbians and Gays at Ryerson's first public gay dance in 1989.


Creator
Alexandra Rinfret

Publisher
The Eyeopener

Date
1989-11-29

Rights
The Eyeopener holds the rights to this material

Format
Newspaper clipping

Files


[#showright@ryerson.com/102](#)

-meeting the demand for online material

-another way to connect to high school and university classrooms

-create digital versions of exhibits



Priorities for Digitization and Online Display



-fragile/frequently accessed materials

-vulnerable a/v formats

-underrepresented material

-already digitized material

Audiovisual Material

JEANNE, 1985

Lesbians Making History Project
Oral History Interview with "Jeanne"
Interviewed November 15, 1985 by Shirley & Betty
Interviewed by Lesbian History Project
Transcribed by Knowledge Share in July 2014 for the 2014-15 Oral History Project
© 2014
Original and Interview by: Marianne FitzGerald and Heather Goodridge
Length of Interview: 1 hour, 30 minutes

Abstract: Jeanne is an activist and retired bookkeeper and secretary. She was born in 1924, the youngest and only girl of five siblings and grew up and lived for a major part of her life in Toronto. At the time of the interview she was back living with her ex-lover, Lois Stewart and Lois's husband, Tom's husband. The interview covers Jeanne's lesbian relationships from 1948 up to the time of the interview. She discusses the bar scene in Toronto and Detroit as well as house parties and friendships with other lesbians in Toronto. Topics discussed include dealing with homophobia from the 40's to the present as well as thoughts on the intersection of class, gender and sex.

Keywords: The Rideau, Center Island, The Allen, Brantford, Rio Grande, Detroit, Windsor, Sarnia, General Motors, The Continental, Leamington, St John, Chatham, Galiano Island, George Hesp, Moira Armour, Community Homophile Association of Toronto, Canadian National Exhibition, Loring and Wiley, The Clark Institute, Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, Major St., Mimico, New Toronto, 5th St., Lakeshore Rd, Glasgow St., Howard Park, Banting Institute, Bain Ave., St. Joseph's Hospital, Bay and Wellesley, Shaw St., Betty Steiner, Jan Steiner, Pat Murphy, Mary Axton, The Allen, Canadian Women's Army Corps, Daughters of Bilitis, consciousness raising, death, breakdowns, mourning, depression, intimacy, Catholicism, femme, public affection, gay public life.

Jeanne's life and life of
Shirley & Shirley

(Start of recorded material 00:00:00)

1985 Jeanne And I wondered if you maybe could talk a bit more about the group and I know you mentioned the people's names and so...

Shirley Yes.

1985 We were over to see quickly because that's what I remember. But I can't... that also happens to be and I remember.

Shirley Yes of?

1985 Well it was, yeah.

Shirley Well, somebody said, you know, you talk to her with what's possible and I think that's part of it. She's to be careful, but to talk people do and you're... remember, remember and it was not one of the things in the group.

1985 Would you be able to talk a bit more with her it was ideologically for you and that we could sort of talk a bit, you know, the ideologically a bit?

Shirley Yeah. Yeah. [00:05:00] I was still with the first woman I really lived with. I'd had one big one after her we had a really hard together. We went to get places at Center Island.

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Listen to the original audio on SoundCloud:
<https://soundcloud.com/cigarchives/jeanne-part-1-of-2>
<https://soundcloud.com/cigarchives/jeanne-part-2-of-2>

Jeanne, 1985

Betty & Shirley, 1987 -->

-workarounds: linking to Soundcloud and Vimeo
-Lesbians Making History which is a collection of activist oral histories



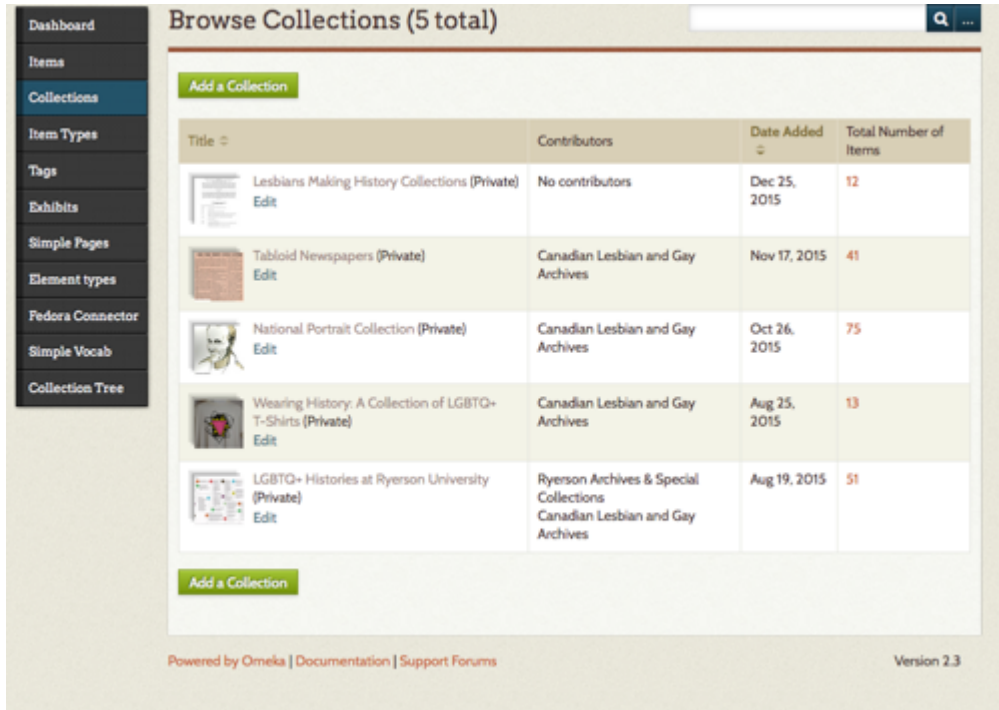
Improving our digitization workflow

- rearranging the CLGA's physical space
- expanding our digital infrastructure
- working towards accepting donations of digital records






Communication is Key!

- use the "Digital Collections" group on basecamp
- let Rebecka and Jade know what you're doing
- ask for help with background research
- ask AI for help with any Omeka problems
- name and save your files clearly so it is easy for others to see what you've done

Official Launch of CLGA Digital Collections



The screenshot displays the 'Browse Collections (5 total)' page of the CLGA Digital Collections. On the left is a navigation menu with options: Dashboard, Items, Collections (highlighted), Item Types, Tags, Exhibits, Simple Pages, Element types, Fedora Connector, Simple Vocab, and Collection Tree. The main content area features a search bar and an 'Add a Collection' button. Below is a table listing five collections with their titles, contributors, dates added, and total number of items.

Title	Contributors	Date Added	Total Number of Items
 Lesbians Making History Collections (Private) Edit	No contributors	Dec 25, 2015	12
 Tabloid Newspapers (Private) Edit	Canadian Lesbian and Gay Archives	Nov 17, 2015	41
 National Portrait Collection (Private) Edit	Canadian Lesbian and Gay Archives	Oct 26, 2015	75
 Wearing History. A Collection of LGBTQ+ T-Shirts (Private) Edit	Canadian Lesbian and Gay Archives	Aug 25, 2015	13
 LGBTQ+ Histories at Ryerson University (Private) Edit	Ryerson Archives & Special Collections Canadian Lesbian and Gay Archives	Aug 19, 2015	51

At the bottom of the page, it says 'Powered by Omeka | Documentation | Support Forums' and 'Version 2.3'.

-September 2016 after more content is added

-media and listserv announcements

-reception at CLGA for the official launch

Any questions?

Ryerson Library LGBTQ+ Studies

<http://library.ryerson.ca/lgbtq/>

CLGA

<http://www.clga.ca/>

