



LGBTQ Heritage Initiative



1920s Drag Ball at Webster Hall, New York City.
Photo by unknown; public domain.

What Can You Do to Get Involved with the LGBTQ Heritage Initiative?

www.nps.gov/history/heritageinitiatives/LGBThistory/
#LGBTQhistory : lgbthistory@nps.gov

Thank you for your enthusiasm and desire to get involved in the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer (LGBTQ) Heritage Initiative. The participation of you and other LGBTQ community members and allies is absolutely crucial to the success of the initiative.

It is important that we all see ourselves, now and in the future, in the story of America. Learning about the contributions and lives of others helps us appreciate and value American diversity and each other as people. Whether you have one hour, one day, or lots of time, we invite you to get involved with the LGBTQ Heritage Initiative. Below (in no particular order) are some suggestions for ways you can engage with the Initiative.

Identify Places. What places in your community are important to LGBTQ history and culture? Check out the online map to see what places in your area people have told us about. To send information about an LGBTQ place in your community, or to provide additional information or corrections, contact us via the links on the LGBTQ Initiative webpage.

- Online map: <http://tinyurl.com/NPSLGBTQInitiativeMap>
- LGBTQ Initiative:
<http://www.nps.gov/history/heritageinitiatives/LGBThistory/>

Add Information. Lots of places already recognized as historic by being listed on the National Register of Historic Places (or as National Historic Landmarks, National Monuments, or National Parks) have important LGBTQ history associated with them, but it's not always officially included in the paperwork. Information on writing a nomination amendment can be found on the National Park Service website.

- How to write an amendment: <http://www.nps.gov/nr/publications/bulletins/nrb16a/>

Design a Tour. Identify places of LGBTQ interest in your community and create a walking, driving, or virtual tour. Looking for inspiration? Check out the work done in by Baltimore Heritage in Baltimore, MD and the Rainbow History Project in Washington, DC.

- Baltimore, MD: <http://baltimoreheritage.org/project/lgbt-heritage/>
- Washington, DC: http://rainbowhistory.org/?page_id=28



The Stonewall Inn, New York City; a National Historic Landmark. Photo by Johannes Jordan 2008, used under license.

Nominate a Place. Many places of local, state, and national significance to LGBTQ history are not yet listed in the National Register of Historic Places, the nation's list of places considered worthy of preservation. Find out how to get started with the National Register Fundamentals. You can find out about available grants and other assistance from your State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) or Tribal Historic Preservation Office (THPO).

- National Register Fundamentals: http://www.nps.gov/nr/national_register_fundamentals.htm
- List of SHPOs: <http://www.nps.gov/nr/shpolist.htm>
- List of THPOs: <http://nathpo.org/wp/thpos/find-a-thpo/>

In addition to the national programs described above, many municipalities, including Chicago and San Francisco (whose lists include LGBTQ places), keep their own lists of locally significant historic places. By working with local historic preservationists and planners, you can help get LGBTQ places included; contact your local planning or historic preservation office to find out about local registers.

- Chicago City Landmarks: <http://webapps1.cityofchicago.org/landmarksweb/web/home.htm>
- San Francisco City Landmarks: <http://www.sf-planning.org/index.aspx?page=1825>

Spread the Word. Tell people about the LGBTQ Heritage Initiative, share information about LGBTQ history and places, and invite them to get involved. Person-to-person or via social media (#LGBTQhistory), get the word out!

Share Your Preservation Efforts. Lots of people care about preserving and learning from our heritage, and want to know what's going on around the country. You can use these networks to ask questions, get support, and get in touch with others interested in LGBTQ history and preservation. The National Trust for Historic Preservation hosts an email listserv for LGBTQ preservation (to subscribe, email subscribe-lgbtpreservation-1@lists.nationaltrust.org) and the Rainbow Heritage Network is working to connect those across the country interested in LGBTQ history and historic preservation. You can also find out what other under-represented groups are doing to preserve their places: check out the Trust's other affinity listservs as well as organizations like Asian and Pacific Islander Americans in Historic Preservation (APIAHiP).

- National Trust for Historic Preservation: <http://www.preservationnation.org/>
- Rainbow Heritage Network: <http://www.rainbowheritagenetwork.org>
- APIAHiP: <http://www.apiahip.org/>

Get Together. Organize a community event like a salon, book club, or meet-up to talk about LGBTQ history, places, preservation, and plans. You can meet in someone's home, a local restaurant, or reserve a space at your local library. Don't forget to take notes!



165 O'Farrell St. in San Francisco, CA: The office of the Daughters of Bilitis, the first lesbian organization in the United States, was located on the fourth floor of this building in the early 1960s. Photo © Gerard Koskovich, used with permission.

Cast a Wide Net. It is important that all LGBTQ communities be represented in the LGBTQ Heritage Initiative. Think about all the different aspects that affect our LGBTQ experiences: social class, gender, generation, ethnicity, religion, and whether we live in urban or rural areas, to name a few. When you are researching, writing, or sharing LGBTQ history, listen, acknowledge, and include the different histories of those whose experiences may not be your own.



C-Scape shack, within the Dune Shacks of the Peaked Hill Bars Historic District (on the National Register of Historic Places), Cape Cod National Seashore, MA. See the Cape Cod National Seashore website for information on the Residency program for these dune shacks. NPS photo.

Advocate for Endangered Places. There are many ways to advocate for endangered LGBTQ places, including many described in this document. In addition, the National Trust for Historic Preservation works to preserve and protect historic places across the country. Check out their website for ways to help fight for places significant to LGBTQ history.

- National Trust Saving Places: <http://tinyurl.com/nur2bj6>

Teach. Incorporate LGBTQ history and heritage into lesson plans. The National Park Service has tools available for all grade levels through the Teaching with Historic Places program. More information, examples, and inspiration are available via the Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education Network (GLSEN) and Quist. Information on teaching and thinking about diverse history is also available via the National Park Service’s Heritage Initiatives “Teaching Cultural Heritage Preservation.”

- Teaching with Historic Places: <http://www.nps.gov/NR/twhp/>
- Gay, Lesbian & Straight Education Network: <http://www.glsen.org/>
- Teaching LGBTQ History with Quist: <http://www.quistapp.com/for-schools/>
- Teaching Cultural Heritage Preservation: <http://www.nps.gov/history/heritageinitiatives/teach.html>

Visit and Share. There is nothing quite like visiting an historic place in person. Take the time to seek out LGBTQ historic places in your own communities and while traveling (but don’t intrude on private property). You can find a lot of places on the map of LGBTQ historic sites, and by asking around when you are traveling. Other sources include history apps like Quist (which brings LGBTQ history directly to your smartphone) and websites like KnowHomo and OutHistory. Share your adventures via social media, tagged #LGBTQhistory, and let us know about places we’ve not heard about yet!

- Online map: <http://tinyurl.com/NPSLGBTQInitiativeMap>
- Quist: <http://quistapp.com>
- KnowHomo: <http://knowhomo.tumblr.com/>
- OutHistory: <http://outhistory.org/>

Listen to Your Elders. Are you an oral historian? Capture the stories, memories, and associations with place of people in your community who have been around a while. They might be elders, activists, business owners, community leaders, or long-time residents. Not an oral historian, but want to help? Ask one of the ongoing LGBTQ Oral History projects how you can assist. You can find them by searching the internet for LGBTQ Oral History; communities and institutions across the United States have ongoing Oral History projects. Check out the Oral History Association's best practices for a sense of the kind of volunteer opportunities might be available.

- Oral History Association Best Practices:
<http://www.oralhistory.org/about/principles-and-practices/>
- National Park Service Oral History Information:
http://www.nps.gov/parkhistory/oralhistory_NEW.htm

Share Your Knowledge and Ideas. Write an article or opinion piece for your local newspaper, blog, social media, and other outlets. Please share them with us!



Carrington House, Cherry Grove, Fire Island, NY. On the National Register of Historic Places. NPS photo.

Exhibit Local History. Talk to your local historical society or public library about putting together an exhibit or display focusing on or incorporating local LGBTQ history. You can also prepare a virtual exhibit on the internet.

Advocate for LGBTQ Inclusion at Historic Sites. Tour guides and staff at historic places often know about any LGBTQ history associated with their sites, and while they may not always include it in their presentation scripts, they are often happy to answer questions. Advocate in person, by mail, or email for inclusion of LGBTQ history and heritage in presentations, research, and interpretation at museums, parks, and libraries. If you are able, volunteer to help prepare and implement programs.

Preserve Objects and Documents. Do you have collections of LGBTQ objects or documents that should be cared for? Learn how to care for them so that they last for future generations, and/or consider donating them to an appropriate archive or museum. Local archivists and museum curators may be willing to share information on how to appropriately care for these items; there is also information available online. To find an appropriate archive or museum to contact about donating your items, search online for LGBTQ archives.

- American Library Association, Low-Cost Ways to Preserve Family Archives (video): <http://www.ala.org/alcts/confevents/upcoming/webinar/042914>
- Northeast Document Conservation Center Caring for Private and Family Collections: <http://tinyurl.com/k6k3j7b>
- Lesbian and Gay Archives Roundtable of the Society of American Archivists: <http://www2.archivists.org/groups/lesbian-and-gay-archives-roundtable-lagar>
- LGBTQ Alliance of the American Alliance of Museums: <http://www.aam-us.org/resources/professional-networks/lgbtq>

Share Your Expertise. Are you a librarian, historian, archivist, museum curator, or have other preservation expertise? Share your knowledge with others interested in LGBTQ history and historic preservation. For example: Librarians can develop reading lists on local and/or national LGBTQ history, advocate for the inclusion of LGBTQ history in the stacks, and facilitate a book group. Historians could offer to write or review National Register nominations or amendments, have their classes research an LGBTQ historic place, and incorporate LGBTQ history into their lectures. Archivists can let people know about their repository's LGBTQ holdings, help people conduct primary research, give advice on the proper care and storage of LGBTQ materials in private collections, and if appropriate, collect LGBTQ materials into their archives (or recommend an appropriate alternate repository). Museum curators can incorporate LGBTQ history in to exhibits and interpretation, give advice on the proper care and storage of LGBTQ-related items in private collections, and if appropriate, collect LGBTQ materials into their collections (or recommend an appropriate alternate repository).



Donate. If you are able to make a financial donation to support the LGBTQ Heritage Initiative, contact the National Park Foundation, official charity of America's national parks. Be sure to let them know your donation is to support the LGBTQ Initiative.

- National Park Foundation: <http://www.nationalparks.org/>

Grave of Vietnam War veteran Leonard Matlovich in the "gay corner" of Congressional Cemetery. The cemetery is a National Historic Landmark. Photo © Patsy Lynch, used with permission.



<http://www.nps.gov/history/heritageinitiatives/LGBTHistory/>
#LGBTQhistory



Keep in Touch. We would love to know what you're doing and of other ways you've explored and recorded LGBTQ history and heritage; drop us a line and let us know at lgbthistory@nps.gov. You can keep up to date on the initiative at the NPS initiative webpage and via our partner, the Rainbow Heritage Network.

- LGBTQ Heritage Initiative Website:
<http://www.nps.gov/history/heritageinitiatives/LGBThistory/>
- Rainbow Heritage Network Website: <http://www.rainbowheritagenetwork.org>
- Rainbow Heritage Network Facebook:
<http://www.facebook.com/groups/439557382858786/>

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