GREENWICH VILLAGE AND PRE-STONEWALL LGBT LIFE

As early as the 1850s, gay men congregated in Greenwich Village. Pfaff's, 647 Broadway at Bleecker Street, was a hangout for "bohemians" such as Walt Whitman and for men seeking men. Bleecker Street in the 1890s had a number of "fairy" bars, often subject to raids, where cross-dressing young men solicited male customers.

The picturesque Village prior to World War I became popular for the artistic and socially and politically progressive. Middle-class gay men and lesbians appropriated their own spaces despite some opposition from fellow Villagers.

The Village emerged as the first neighborhood with a significant LGBT population in New York City and one of the first nationally. Through the 1960s, the area south of Washington Square was the location of many bars and clubs that welcomed or merely tolerated LGBT patrons. Gay bars were crucial to creating a sense of community and cultivating political action in an era of discrimination.

Washington Square Arch c. 1900. Photo Credit: Milstein Division, New York Public Library



STONEWALL UPRISING

Stonewall is regarded by many as the single most important event that led to the modern LGBT civil rights movement. While a number of groups in cities like New York, Philadelphia, Washington, San Francisco, and Los Angeles had been organizing and demonstrating for equal rights in the 1950s and 60s, Stonewall inspired LGBT people throughout the country to assertively organize on a broader scale. As historian Lillian Faderman wrote, "Stonewall was the shot heard round the world...crucial because it sounded the rally for the movement."

In the early hours of Saturday, June 28, 1969, police raided the "private" Mafia-run Stonewall Inn.

The bar, one of the few that allowed dancing, was popular with a younger, diverse crowd. Instead of dispersing, the expected result of a routine raid, a crowd consisting of bar patrons, street youth, and neighborhood residents became increasingly angry and began chanting, throwing objects as the police made arrests. Police called in reinforcements but were barricaded inside the bar. For hours the police tried to clear the neighboring streets while the crowd fought back. The uprising lasted over the course of six days — to July 3.

In the immediate aftermath of Stonewall, the Gay Liberation Front and the Gay Activists Alliance were formed in NYC in 1969. Marsha P. Johnson and Sylvia Rivera founded STAR (Street Transvestite Action Revolutionaries), an early transgender group, in 1970. Within two years, LGBT rights groups had been started in nearly every major city in the U.S.

Participants of the Stonewall Uprising in front of the bar, June 29, 1969. Photo credit: Fred W. McDarrah, Premium Archive



LGBT DISCRIMINATION AND ACTIVISM

The LGBT community suffered harassment, discrimination, and oppression from their families, organized religion, psychiatric professionals, and government. After Prohibition the New York State Liquor Authority (SLA) in 1934 was granted the power to revoke the license of bar owners who "permit [their] premises to become disorderly" and the mere presence of gay people was considered disorderly. LGBT people could not touch, dance together, make direct eye contact, or wear clothes of the opposite gender without fearing arrest. For women, people of color.

youth, and those who were gender nonconforming it was even more challenging. The Mafia opened bars as members-only "bottle clubs." No license was needed and a vicious cycle began of Mafia-police payoffs. Police harassment of gay bars and entrapment were top concerns of the LGBT community in the 1960s. The Mattachine Society and Daughters of Bilitis were two of the nation's first gay rights groups whose early political activism help lead to the Stonewall Uprising and changes immediately after.

STONEWALL

CRUCIAL BECAUSE IT SOUNDED THE RALLY FOR THE MOVEMENT.

-Lillian Faderman, historian, The Gay Revolution

DIVERSITY OF THE LGBT COMMUNITY

The LGBT community broadly encompasses all ages, races, ethnicities, nationalities, class levels, and gender identifications in the five boroughs of New York City. The events leading to Stonewall, the uprising itself, and the political organizing afterward were due to a diverse range of participants and activists. This tour represents a selection of sites associated with LGBT history that are located within a very small geographic area surrounding the Stonewall Inn. As such, it does not represent the entire long LGBT history of Greenwich Village, nor does it entirely reflect the diversity of today's LGBT community.

RELEVANCE OF STONEWALL TODAY

Stonewall has taken on shifting meanings. When it was in operation in 1967-69, it was a Mafia-run bar, and representative of the societal harassment against the LGBT community. It has evolved into a National Historic Landmark and National Monument with worldwide symbolic resonance. It is a shrine, symbol, rallying place for civil rights and solidarity. It is a place for mourning and remembrance. It was the site for the rally after the Snake Pit arrests and the first Pride March in 1970, the Anita Bryant protests in 1977, and demonstrations for LGBT civil rights in the 1980s. More recently, people celebrated here for the legalization of same-sex marriage in New York State in 2011, the overturning of the federal Defense of Marriage Act by the U.S. Supreme

Court in 2013, and after the Supreme Court legalized same-sex marriage nationally in 2015. People commemorated here the victims of the 2016 mass shooting at Pulse, a gay nightclub in Orlando, Florida,

Pulse nightclub shooting memorial in front of the Stonewall Inn, a day after Stonewall's National Monument designati Photo credit: Wikimedia Foundation



THREE LGBT HISTORIC AREAS OF INTEREST



1. WASHINGTON SQUARE PARK AND **ENVIRONS, 1890s TO 1960s**

By the 1890s, Bleecker Street was known for its various "dives" attracting men. The block of MacDougal Street just south of Washington Square emerged as the cultural and social center of Greenwich Village's bohemian set, with an openly gay and lesbian presence in the 1910s. Through the 1960s, the South Village was the location of many LGBT bars and commercial establishments. Numerous LGBT writers and artists made the Village their home. Meetings at several area churches in the 1960s fostered LGBT rights activism.

129 MacDougal Street, c. 1939. Photo credit: NYC Dept. of Taxes,



2. HUDSON RIVER WATERFRONT AND PIERS, 1890s TO PRESENT

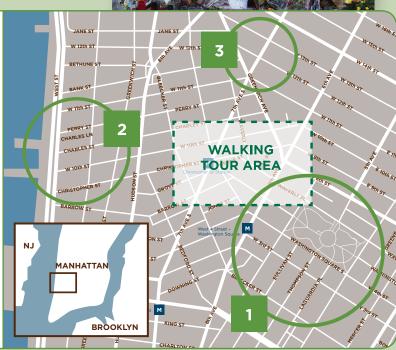
For over a century, the Greenwich Village waterfront along the Hudson River, including the Christopher Street Pier at West 10th and West Streets, has been a destination for the LGBT community. It evolved from a place of maritime commerce and waterfront saloons, to a popular locale for cruising and sex for gay men by the 1960s, to an important refuge for marginalized queer youth of color today.

The Grace Line pier located at Christopher Street in an undated photo. Photo credit: Milstein Division, New York Public Library.

3. ST. VINCENT'S TRIANGLE AND ENVIRONS, **1920s TO PRESENT**

Since the early 20th century, this neighborhood has been the home of many LGBT people, establishments, and organizations. By the 1980s, Greenwich Village was the epicenter of the AIDS epidemic. Since 1983, New York's LGBT Community Center (208 West 13th Street) has served hundreds of thousands of people - this is where ACT UP (AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power) and other groups were organized and met. The former St. Vincent's Hospital had the first and largest AIDS ward on the East Coast. In 2017, this history and loss was recognized in the New York City AIDS Memorial at St. Vincent's Triangle.

The NYC AIDS Memorial. Photo credit: Erik McGregor/Pacific Press/Alamy Live

















www.nyclgbtsites.org
led in 2015, the NYC LGBT Historic Sites Project is an invisible history visible by documenting historic ultural sites associated with the LGBT community throughout New York City.

www.npca.org

Since its founding in 1919, the National Parks servation Association has been the independent, partisan voice working to strengthen and protect America's favorite places.

45 MINUTE WALKING TOUR

1. CHRISTOPHER PARK

The park remains an important gathering place for LGBT people since the Stonewall Uprising. George Segal's sculpture "Gay Liberation" (1980) was not placed here until 1992, due to opposition from Village residents and lack of official city support. In the 1980s. landscape architect Philip Winslow, who later died of AIDS, created the current park design. The Stonewall National Monument was designated in 2016 by President Obama.

2. CHRISTOPHER STREET

For decades, gay men had gone to the west end of Christopher Street at the Hudson River. Christopher Street became one of the best-identified LGBT streets in the world after 1969. Its popularity was sustained into the 1980s by many LGBT-owned and -friendly bars and businesses. Today, the Christopher Street pier and waterfront has become an important area for LGBT and queer youth of color.

3. STONEWALL

(51-53 Christopher Street, currently a nail salon at No. 51, and Stonewall Inn at No. 53)

The Stonewall Inn, at the time of the 1969 uprising, consisted of two former horse stable buildings that were combined in 1930 with one façade, now mostly intact from its 1969 appearance. The bar closed immediately after the Stonewall Uprising and was replaced

by a number of eating establishments. In 1987-89, a bar named Stonewall operated out of No. 51. The current Stonewall bar opened in 1993 and has operated under the current management since 2006. It is open to the public.

Stonewall Inn, 1969. Photo credit: Diana Davies, 1969. Manuscript and Archives Division, New

4. MATTACHINE SOCIETY

(59 Christopher Street, currently Kettle of Fish)

Founded in Los Angeles in 1950, with a New York chapter in 1955, the Mattachine Society was a leading American "homophile" (gay and lesbian) group. At the time it was considered radical. Mattachine challenged the State Liquor Authority's ban on serving gay people at the famous "Sip-In" at Julius' Bar in 1966, and worked to stop police entrapment of gay men. This was Mattachine's last offices, from 1972 until it dissolved in 1976. This location is poignant, as Mattachine was replaced in influence by younger and more radical activist LGBT groups after Stonewall. Mattachine Society button, c. 1960s.

5. THE DUCHESS

(1017th Avenue South, corner building to the right of Starbucks)

The Duchess was a popular late 1970s/early 80s lesbian bar, closed when the city revoked its liquor license under Mayor Edward Koch.

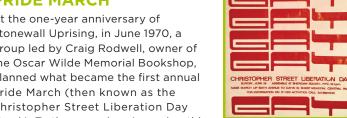
6. RIDICULOUS THEATRICAL CO.

(1 Sheridan Square, currently the Axis Theatre Company)

The basement Café Society (1938-48) was New York City's first racially integrated club, with bookings by legendary jazz producer John Hammond. It opened with a relatively unknown Billie Holiday, who debuted the song Strange Fruit here. Charles Ludlam's Ridiculous Theatrical Co., founded in 1967 and moved here in 1978, was one of New York's most innovative and influential Off-Off-Broadway theater troupes. Ludlam died of AIDS in 1987. ${\it Charles Ludlum, founder of the Ridiculous Theatrical Company, with the cast of his play ``Theatrical Company, with the ca$ Ventriloquist's Wife" in 1977. Photo credit: Jack Mitchell, Archive Photos Collection

7. SITE OF THE START **OF NEW YORK'S FIRST PRIDE MARCH**

At the one-year anniversary of Stonewall Uprising, in June 1970, a group led by Craig Rodwell, owner of the Oscar Wilde Memorial Bookshop, planned what became the first annual Pride March (then known as the Christopher Street Liberation Day March). To the organizers' surprise, this



incredibly brave public march attracted thousands of participants. According to surviving film footage, the marchers first gathered on Washington Place west of Sixth Avenue. From Greenwich Village they followed a route up Sixth Avenue to Central Park.

Official poster from New York's first Pride March, June 28, 1970. Photo credit: Craig Rodwell Papers, Manuscripts and Archives Division, New York Public Library.





(211 West 10th Street) In March 1970, less than a year after Stonewall, police raided the afterhours basement bar the Snake Pit. Fearing another crowd confrontation, they detained over 160 people at the local police station at 135 Charles Street, west of the bar. Immigrant Diego Vinales, apparently fearing deportation, attempted to escape by jumping out of a window. He was impaled on an iron fence below.

Appalled at his possible death

11. SNAKE PIT

Any way you look at it - that boy was PUSHED! ARE ALL beiNG pushed NE ARE ALL YEING POSTIES
CALL YEING BEINGS WITH GUTS
TO STAND UP to this house on
Contine at Sheadaw Square tonicht
Mach 8 at 9:00 to much on the Sinth Medicat
Stop the Raide! Defend Your Rights! There will be A DEATH WATCH VIGIL
At St. Vincent's immediately after protest! There is only the Truth to Guide us:

(he actually survived), the recently formed Gay Liberation Front and Gay Activists Alliance quickly assembled a protest march from Christopher Park to the police station, as well as a candlelight vigil at St. Vincent's Hospital where he was taken. Flyers read "Any way you look at it - that boy was PUSHED. We are ALL being pushed." This protest, which received positive media coverage, demonstrated the strength of the two organizations. It inspired many more people to become politically active. Photo: Gay Activists Alliance Flyer for the Snake Pit raid protest, March 1970. Private collection

13

WAVERLYPL

W 10TH ST

CHARLES ST

CHRISTOPHER ST

12. JULIUS' BAR

(159 West 10th Street)

CHARLES ST

CHRISTOPHER ST

CHARLES ST MATTACHINE

W 10TH ST

GROVE ST

First opened in the 1920s as a speakeasy, and as café Marie's Crisis

in 1935, it became a piano bar with a primarily gay clientele in 1972.

this busy intersection at the Christopher Street subway stop. In 1935

the manager was convicted of "openly outraging public decency"

here. Stewart's was raucously depicted by famous gay artist Paul

CHRISTOPHER ST

8. MARIE'S CRISIS

currently Bank of America)

The lesbian novelist Patricia Highsmith was a

regular here. It is open to the public

9. STEWART'S CAFETERIA

(7th Avenue South & Christopher Street,

a popular bohemian and gay and lesbian

Opened in 1933, Stewart's Cafeteria became

haunt. The large windows put gay life on full

display to the late-night crowds who frequented

(59 Grove Street)

A bar has continuously operated here since the mid-19th century, known as Julius' by around 1930. It started to attract a gay clientele by the 1960s. On April 21, 1966, an event later known as the "Sip-In" was organized by members of the Mattachine Society. Inspired by civil rights sit-ins in the South, they set out to challenge the State Liquor Authority's discriminatory policy of revoking the licenses of bars that served gay men and lesbians. The refusal of service to those who intentionally revealed they were "homosexuals" was publicized and photographed. It was one of the earliest pre-Stonewall public actions for LGBT rights, and a big step forward in legitimizing LGBT bars in New York.

Mattachine Society members (left to right) John Timmons, Dick Leitsch, Craig Rodwell, and Randy Wicker being refused service by the bartender at Julius', April 21, 1966.Photo credit: Fred W.McDarrah, Premium Archive Collection, Getty Images

13. ELMER EPHRAIM **ELLSWORTH FLAGPOLE**

At the eastern tip of Christopher Park is a flagpole dedicated in 1936 to Union Army Col. Elmer Ephraim Ellsworth (1837-1861). Born in New York State, he was the leader of the first American Zouave unit when he met and went to work for Abraham Lincoln

in 1860. C.A. Tripp, in *The Intimate World of Abraham Lincoln* (2005), posited that Lincoln became personally attached to the voung man. Ellsworth accompanied him to Washington and was the first officer killed in the Civil War, while removing a Confederate flag from atop a Virginia hotel that Lincoln could see from the White House. The plaque on the flagpole base has the incorrect order of his name.

Col. Elmer Ephraim Ellsworth, c. 1861. Photo credit: Mathew B. Brady & Studio, Harvard Art Museums/Fogg Museum, Imaging Department, Fellows of Harvard College

14. OSCAR WILDE BOOKSHOP (15 Christopher Street, currently the **Greenwich Letterpress)**

W 10TH ST

16

PATH

Warmst

Gay rights activist Craig Rodwell established America's first gay and lesbian bookstore in a storefront of an apartment building at 8th and Mercer Streets in 1967. He named it after the most prominent gay person he could think of, Oscar Wilde, the playwright. Rodwell

had been a participant in the Julius' "Sip-In" in 1966. In 1973, Rodwell moved the shop to this location. He sold it in 1993, just before his death, and the store remained in business until 2009.

Craig Rodwell, n.d. Photo credit: Kay Tobin Lahusen Manuscripts and Archives Division, New

WAVERLY

York Public Library

15. GREENWICH AVENUE

In the 1960s, pre-dating the Stonewall Rebellion, the stretch of Greenwich Avenue from Christopher Street to Seventh Avenue, was called "the cruisiest street in the Village." Anything farther west of here was what novelist Felice Picano called "homosexual no-man's-land."

16. WOMEN'S HOUSE OF **DETENTION**

(Sixth and Greenwich Avenues)

From 1931 to 1974, the large prison on this site housed countless poor, working-class, and lesbian women. It became infamous in the Village for shouted exchanges between women inside and on the street, many of

them lovers. This was one factor that resulted in a campaign to demolish the building and replace it with the scenic garden that is there now.

Women's House of Detention, 1945, Photo credit; Museum of the City of New York

17. MURRAY HALL APARTMENT (457 Sixth Avenue)

This was the last residence of Murray Hall (died 1901), a Tammany Hall politician who lived as a man for decades, but was revealed after death to have been a woman, creating an international press furor. Married several times, Hall remained close to the nearby Jefferson Market Courthouse as a bail bondsman



The sites on this map are located within and outside the Stonewall National Monument boundary. The numbering of the sites follows a suggested route that roughly follows a loop. After visiting site 17 you can circle back to your starting point at Christopher Park. Many of the sites featured in this brochure are privately owned and not open to the public. Please respect people's privacy and do not trespass.

DIRECTIONS TO CHRISTOPHER PARK

Christopher Park is located in Greenwich Village at 7th Avenue South and Christopher Street. By subway: 1 train to Christopher Street - Sheridan Square or the A B C D E G or M train to West 4th Street - Washington Square. By bus, take the M8 or M20 via 7th Avenue South to Christopher Street.

LANGUAGE AND TERMINOLOGY

Language and terminology for sexual orientation and gender identification have continually evolved since the late 19th century. For example, "lesbian" and "gav" became more commonly used in the post-World War II era, whereas "bisexual" and "transgender" were not as frequent until the 1980s. The text uses "LGBT" although that usage did not exist in earlier time periods.

MORE INFORMATION

Please visit the National Parks Conservation Association's website at www.npca.org and the NYC LGBT Historic Sites Project's website at www.nyclgbtsites.org.

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