10
At the Dance
A New Leg

July 14, Bastille Day, 1970. For a Seattle summer, the day had been perfect, eighty-four degrees while the sun was up and sixty-two in the waning dusk. It was just right for the dinner party and parade that Julia and Francois Kissel had planned to celebrate France's national holiday. It would also be a fine evening to mark the rebirth of Pioneer Square with a bit of public street theater.

A few miles away, at a house she was temporarily calling home, an unemployed twenty-three-year-old drifter from Florida named Shelly Bauman had just run out of cigarettes. She decided to drive to the mudflat to buy more. There she spotted the Kissels' parade.

It was another time of change below the Deadline, a name that by now was being forgotten. During the late 1960s, when gays and lesbians had become more publicly visible in Pioneer Square, the city's urban planners had begun debating whether the century-old buildings in the district deserved any future. Some developers wanted the land to be turned into parking lots to serve the government offices on Arthur Denny's knoll to the north. Preservationists countered that a historic district similar to the French Quarter in New Orleans would promote new businesses and draw tourists. Either outcome portended trouble for the ragged set of gay bars and steam baths. Paved or boutiqued, the new mudflat that everyone in power was discussing did not include the continuation of places like the Casino, the Mocambo, or the Atlas Baths.[1]

By 1969, both schools of thought had won a toehold. One side had started tearing buildings down, and the other had begun renovating them. The Kissels were among the renovators. Next door to what had been MacIver Wells's old 614 Tavern, they leased a basement-level workman's bar and grill called the Pittsburgh Lunch. Although the windows were below sidewalk level, customers could look up past sidewalk railings onto a small concrete park built around a totem pole. It was one of the busiest spots on the mudflat, a natural crossroads that had steadily attracted the loggers and sailors who passed it. During the 1940s that had included gay men like Vilma, who frequented the Casino. He remembered the spot during an interview for Don Paulson and Roger Simpson's book, *An Evening at the Garden of Allah.* "The park around the totem pole was the hot cruising place in Seattle," Vilma said. "No matter who you were, it was the place to people watch. Across from the rest-

room, we used to sit on the railing about the Pittsburgh cafeteria in the basement of the Pioneer Building. They'd ask us not to sit there; I guess they didn't think their customers wanted to look up at a bunch of queens' asses hanging over the edge. Eventually they put spikes on the railings but we sat there anyway."

Under the Kissels, the grill became a grille, a French restaurant by the name of Brasserie Pittsbourg. A new kind of gold rush to the mudflat was about to begin, one quarried from tourists and shoppers, but at the same time, the conversion of the mudflat into parking lots was also moving ahead. Next to the Kissels' restaurant, the city allowed an old triangular-shaped hotel to be destroyed, and in its place came a prow-like multilevel parking lot usually referred to as the "Sinking Ship." Developers also flattened the building half a block away, on Occidental Avenue, where Jake Heimbigner had been operating the Atlas, as well as an adjacent building that had held his Stage Door Tavern. A bit farther south, across Washington Street, they removed another building next to the gay Columbus Tavern and behind the Golden Horseshoe.

By Bastille Day 1970, then, much of what had been the gay landscape of the 1960s had become parking lots, and the heart of the mudflat had been turned into an Occidental Street pedestrian mall.

It was there that Shelly Bauman saw the Kissels' parade.

Dinner had been held earlier atop the Sinking Ship, which had been made festive for the occasion with tables full of French delicacies from the Brasserie Pittsbourg and, for lack of a French band, a Dixieland ensemble. About 11 P.M., the parade swung out from the Sinking Ship southward along the mall, then doubled back on itself for the return. It wasn't much of a parade—a pickup truck carrying the Dixieland band and two French cars. Julia Kissel had also asked Morris Hart, who ran an antique shop in Pioneer Square, to bring along an old fire engine. Hart had long been interested in collecting old fire-fighting equipment and had even named his store, located on First Avenue, the Old Fire House.

Hart had happily agreed to Kissel's request, but, apparently without her knowledge, he had also brought something else. He attached to the rear of his truck an old cannon that had once been used to fire lifelines. He had owned the cannon for about thirteen years, sometimes loading it with black powder and paper confetti to fire during family gatherings on the Fourth of July and New Year's Eve. His own children sometimes dashed in front of the confetti. Later, he would tell a court that the cannon had always fired a harmless shower of paper.

Just before the parade, Hart and his teenage son used a broom handle to pack two ounces of black powder and a wad of shredded paper into the three-foot-long barrel. For safety, Hart kept the lanyard needed to shoot the cannon separate. He did not know whether the Kissels would actually want him to fire the cannon, but he figured that if it seemed appropriate, he would be ready. When he joined the parade, a city policeman waved him into the crowd, either not noticing or simply not choosing to pay attention to the weapon riding behind the truck.

Even in the short distance the parade traveled, Hart's fire truck and cannon quickly became the major attraction. Once the parade turned back, Hart stopped at least once. People lining the mall quickly clambered onto the cannon's barrel. Among them was Shelly Bauman. It was about 11:30 P.M. by then and dark. She would later remember in a court deposition that "there were people all over." Many were speaking French, which Shelly did not understand. Others, she remembered, "were all laughing and saying, 'Come on, get on, get on,'" and so she at first climbed onto the cannon with four or five others, and then, when Hart started driving again, she trailed in the crowd behind, walking ten feet or so away from Julia Kissel.

As the antique truck creaked slowly northward, dozens of people again began climbing onto the cannon, drinking and lighting fireworks as they did. Carol Hart, Morris's wife, and her son noticed the cannon barrel start to wave up and down, as if it were coming loose. It began to point straight into the crowd rather than up into the air. Carol Hart and her son started screaming at people to move away. In the confusion, Bauman believed she saw a man dressed in a blue or gray jacket drop something bright into the cannon barrel. She was staring directly into the bore. She remembered telling a friend she was with that they should move away.

At that moment the cannon fired.

No one has ever been able to adequately explain what happened next. Without its lanyard, the cannon should not have fired at all. More importantly, the confetti inside should not have been hurled outward as a compact paper cannonball. Some speculated that a firecracker had dropped inside and that a spilled beer had wet the confetti so that it compacted under the force of the exploding gunpowder.

Whatever the cause, the result was clear.

Julia Kissel first heard the boom. Then she saw Bauman drop. Kissel ran to her side, grabbed her wrist to check for a pulse, and screamed for an ambulance.

What had begun as a public relations gimmick for the new Pioneer Square would inadvertently launch the next chapter in the history of the mudflat's gay theater.[2]

"Theater," of course, means not only the world of the legitimate stage, but also countless popular forms of communication—vaudeville, movies, singing, even just weekend dancing. At first, during the days of the Casino, the Madison, and the Horseshoe, the gay dance in Seattle was mostly a kind of "internal" communication, performed in refuges and used to seek or solidify friendships. Heterosexuals stayed away or, if they stumbled in by accident or design, were forced out. At the time, there was no public-accommodations clause in the city's civil rights laws that prevented a bar owner from discriminating against patrons on the basis of their sexual orientation—so heterosexuals could be turned away from gay bars just as gays could be excluded from heterosexual ones. But when Seattle's police chief Frank Ramon rolled back from his 1966 proposal to de-license all the gay bars, part of the compromise he and Jake Heimbigner reached included a promise that gay bar

owners would stop excluding heterosexuals as long as the straights did not cause trouble. No discrimination, in other words.

The agreement does not seem to have affected many people very quickly. Heterosexuals in Seattle were not demanding to be let into gay dance bars in any great numbers—at least not so long as the gay bars, with their jukeboxes and occasional live drag shows, were simply imitations of straight spaces.

But then came disco.

Shelly Bauman lay on Occidental Street, groping through blood, trying to pull the burning wad out of the left side of her abdomen. A doctor in the crowd, Michael Buckley, quickly came forward. Buckley moved Bauman's hand away, ordering her to leave the smoldering paper in so it could block the blood flow from the ragged wound. Then he jammed his own hand inside her now-gaping intestines and with his fingers clasped shut an artery until an ambulance could speed them to the emergency room at Harborview Medical Center. Buckley's fast maneuvers saved Bauman's life.

Bauman did not know many people in Seattle that night when she was blasted by the cannon. She had been preparing to return to Florida where her parents lived. The only person she knew well was a friend she had met a few weeks before, Joe McGonagle. By then, the co-owner of the Golden Horseshoe was almost thirty. He and several other gay men had rented a house together south of Capitol Hill, and that was where Shelly Bauman had been staying.

McGonagle recalled many years later that Bauman had simply appeared one night at a party. "I don't know how she got there," he told me. "Somebody brought her. Sunday morning she was still there, and she was still there Tuesday morning, and she just stayed."[3]

When McGonagle arrived at the emergency room, Bauman was near death. McGonagle remembered, "She said later that after she had been shot, she reached down and her hand went right through her clothes and she scraped her nails on the sidewalk. She got shot right through." The doctors wanted a release form to operate. McGonagle was not a family member, and Bauman, only partly conscious, was too weak to sign anything. McGonagle said he grabbed a pen, stuck it in her limp hand, and signed her name for her.

With that, doctors rushed her to surgery for the damage to her abdomen. They amputated her left leg and sliced into her pelvic bone. Bauman would be in the hospital undergoing operations and recovery for nine months. When she left, she took up life in a wheelchair.

She also sued—the Kissels for sponsoring the celebration, Morris Hart for bringing the cannon, and the city of Seattle for having police officers who ignored a loaded weapon in a public event. In 1973, she won $330,000 in an out-of-court settlement.

With that, it was time to turn a fantasy into reality.

Before Bastille Day, when Bauman and McGonagle and their other housemates had sat around their living room smoking and talking, one of their rituals had been to fantasize about how much better gay bars in Seattle could be. McGonagle recalled, "We'd be talking, you know, 'God I hate this bar, God I hate that bar. If I had a bar like this, we'd do this or we'd do that.'" The urban renewal of Pioneer Square was eliminating the old ones anyway.

With Shelly's cash, the fantasies suddenly seemed in reach.

McGonagle himself had been out of the gay bar business for several years, and for good reason: the police. Shortly after the scandal about the payoffs broke in 1967, Jake Heimbigner had sold his share of the Golden Horseshoe, turning the bar over to McGonagle and to a new co-owner named Don Jeffers. Like other gay tavern operators who had wearied of the hassles, McGonagle eventually sold his share and moved on before the indictments of police officers started, but in 1971, the year after Shelly was wounded, the county finally appointed a young prosecutor named Doug Jewett to handle the case against certain police officers and their superiors.

McGonagle and others at first conveniently forgot they had made any payoffs; after all, that was a crime itself. As far as they were concerned, continuing the fight with the police to the point of securing prosecutions did not seem worthwhile, particularly since the extortion had ended four years earlier. When Jeffers started talking to the prosecutor, though, McGonagle found himself called to a restaurant next to the county courthouse by the police officers who had once collected from the Horseshoe. McGonagle walked out of one meeting with Jewett and into the other with the cops.

"They bought me a drink," McGonagle said, "and wanted to know what I had said." They seemed pleased he hadn't told Jewett anything. "We have a proposition for you," McGonagle remembers one of the officers saying. "If we give you ten hundred-dollar bills and a non-traceable gun, will you shoot Don Jeffers?"

Stunned, McGonagle stalled. It seemed like such an irony. Here he was taking care of Shelly, who had just gotten out of the hospital, and the police officers wanted him to kill an old bar partner. "I said, 'Well, I'll have to think about that.'"

Once he made it home, he phoned his lawyer. "I thought, holy shit, if they're getting ready to pop people off, this has gone too far." No one needed to end the police payoff system in the same way it had earlier begun—with the shooting in 1901 when John Considine and his brother Tom had been assaulted by police chief William Meredith, and then had shot Meredith dead. McGonagle's lawyer put him in touch with Jewett, and with a guarantee that he would not be prosecuted for paying off the police, McGonagle agreed to join MacIver Wells and Jeffers in testifying against the cops.[4]

Unfortunately, Jewett's case had become hopelessly old. He indicted several

officers, but by the time of the trials in 1973—the same year Shelly would win her lawsuit—Jewett would win little. Even those who were sentenced often got off with a light term or probation.

So McGonagle had decided to avoid the gay dance business.

One of his housemates eventually changed his mind. Pat Nesser, whose favorite word for all of his friends—"Mae"—had given McGonagle's household the campy nickname of the "Villa Mae," had once worked as a bartender at the Golden Horseshoe. Now, he had an idea for a new kind of bar—new in Seattle anyway, and certainly new on the mudflat.

"Pat had gone down to California," McGonagle said, "and checked out a couple of their discotheques. And he said to me, 'Mae, there's no discotheque in Seattle. That's the way we should go. But make it splashy.'" McGonagle was skeptical. "Splashy" California-style really did not seem the fashion for low-key, morally schizophrenic Seattle. Fox-trots and even calypsos in the underground and piano bar dancing at the Madison were one thing; Nesser's "splashy" dance was something else. Still, Nesser persisted. He talked to other gay bar owners. McGonagle said they pooh-poohed the idea. Discos had succeeded in New York and Los Angeles with their live music and barely clad go-go dancers in cages, but in Seattle, the closest attempt had been a club called the Trolley that had quickly evaporated.

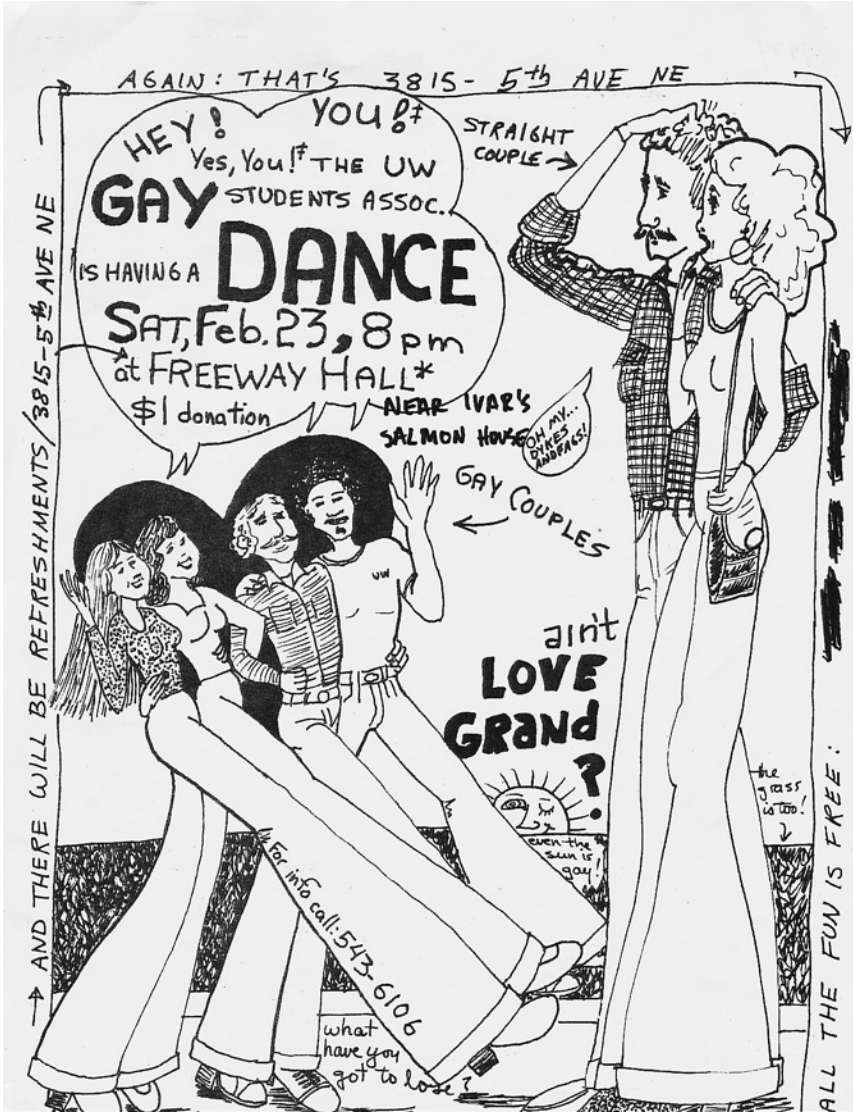
Nesser would not give up. By 1973, disco itself had entered a second and ultimately more successful phase, eliminating the live bands and relying instead on almost imperceptible fades from one pounding song to another. With Shelly Bauman's money available, Nesser started looking for a location.

Along South Main Street, a few blocks from Madame Peabody's, the Our Home Hotel had long lodged men set on dreams. Built after the Great Seattle Fire leveled Pioneer Square in 1889, the Our Home had first bedded those aimed for the Yukon gold fields and then, during the world wars, those from military ships. Its first floor seems to have always been occupied by a saloon.

In 1973, for eighteen thousand dollars down and seven hundred a month, Shelly Bauman and Pat Nesser bought Our Home and brought to it their new set of dreams. McGonagle found himself joining the venture as a non-owning business manager. With another eight thousand dollars, they and the crew of men from the Villa Mae set about remodeling. Art deco dominated, a style hearkening to a previous time of sexual liberation. Glittering under a chandelier salvaged from an old theater, ersatz palm trees arched over the then-largest dance floor in the city's gay space.

"It was a flashy, flashy place," McGonagle recalled. "Unbelievable."

Bauman, Nesser, and McGonagle named the disco "Shelly's Leg" as a reference to the amputated anatomy that provided their grubstake. For extra effect, the bar's location was always advertised as being "at the foot of Main." In truth, the sexual punster in Nesser preferred other names. "Pat first wanted to call it 'The Great



Dance has long played a significant communication role in the lesbian and gay community. In the 1970s, gay liberationists sought areas away from the usual bars to hold their dances, for example making use of the Freedom Socialist Party's Freeway Hall. This 1974 flier from the University of Washington Gay Students Alliance also rhetorically reclaims the anti-gay epithets "dyke" and "fag," words that earlier homosexual activists sometimes sought to avoid. *(Northwest Lesbian and Gay History Museum Project)*

Weekend dances at the Double Header, such as this one in the late 1970s, brought lesbians and gay men together to the tune of a live "oompah" band. *(Geoff Manasse)*

White Swallow,'" Joe McGonagle said. The initial ads for the disco, published in October 1973 before its grand opening, referred to it as "The Organ Grinder." McGonagle said humorless state licensers rejected both names as too sexually suggestive. Of the fifteen names Nesser suggested, the licensers okayed only four he could finally choose from, including "Shelly's Leg."

In a small but important change, Nesser also turned the lighting up. "You could see across the room," McGonagle said, a help to cruising and spotting friends and, perhaps more important, to creating the sense that the gay dance was no longer basement-bound or hidden in dark places. Whether a curse or a blessing, disco was to be the style of music timed to the next step in gay public emergence in Seattle. A new generation would find a new place and a new way to dance in public.

Part of what was new at Shelly's Leg emitted from little boxes with distinctly non-deco names: two Russco Cuemaster turntables, four JBL studio monitor speakers, three phase-linear four-hundred-watt amplifiers (one for reserve as protection against a blowout), a Soundcraftsmen audio-frequency equalizer, and a Lafayette SQ-L 4 channel decoder. All together they added up to a sound system the likes of which no jukebox at the Golden Horseshoe and no piano at the Madison Tavern could hope to imitate. At Shelly's Leg, disc jockeys constantly spinning a hypnotic beat replaced the jukes—and by doing so, also replaced the customers' erratic choices of music. DJ's could segue one song into the beginning of another until the whole dance floor roiled in a communal, undulating, sensual sweat.

Splashy.

As a type of communication and theater, the ballroom dancing of previous decades had epitomized the romance of heterosexual coupling, a concept of romance from which gays and lesbians were excluded. Jukebox rock had moved the couple apart, allowing each individual a new independence of movement, yet the lyrics of rock usually reinforced the same heterosexual romantic ideals. Disco altered the script. Although *Saturday Night Fever* pairing was possible, most who joined the dance simply bumped and ground as they wished. Even partnered, neither person needed to mimic or mirror the other, except by choice and only so long as they wanted. Disco established a different style of theatrical weekend recreation that was particularly appropriate for the time because on floors such as the one at Shelly's Leg, anyone who danced ultimately did so as a member of a group. This was not couple dancing; this was a village celebration. The surrounding sound and disorientations of light drove a common rhythm, banishing the possibility of small talk at surrounding tables. As a ritual enactment that both allowed for individual variations and encouraged group physicality, disco was ideal—a chautauqua of body movements that paralleled the political discourses going on in the University District and the healing work occurring on Renton Hill.

In 1974, The *University of Washington Daily* confirmed that something new was happening at Shelly's. The first paragraph noted, "'Everyone welcome,' say the matchboxes from Shelly's Leg, the gay discotheque that is Seattle's hipper-than-

hip place to let the good times roll. And when they say 'everyone welcome,' they mean everybody. Homosexuals, bisexuals, trisexuals, transvestites, transsexuals, pansexuals, and even heterosexuals." The dancers, the *Daily* said, had become a "sexual alphabet soup."

"What draws straights into the gay world of Shelly's is anybody's guess. Some come because of the relaxed atmosphere, others because straights are less uptight these days, some are voyeurs who come to 'look at the queers,' and some just like the good music and the lack of a cover charge. Maybe some who are unsure of their sex identity come to 'check out the other side.'"[5]

It may have been the first time heterosexuals in Seattle acknowledged that there was something they actually enjoyed about the culture being created by the city's newly decloaked gays and lesbians.

A year later, the city's mainstream press also noticed. *Seattle Times* columnist Eric Lacitis described the Leg this way:

> On this Wednesday night at Shelly's Leg in Pioneer Square, Seattle's hottest discotheque, Spider is hustling the ladies and doing quite well. He knows the other guys watch him with jealousy as he talks cheek-to-cheek with a woman he met only a few minutes ago.
>
> Spider shrugs. Can he help it if he is so . . . smooth? Spider approaches a young secretary who has come to the disco with a girl friend. "Would you like to . . . dance?" he asks in a low voice.
>
> Of course, the lady answers yes. Four songs later, they are still dancing. By this time, she has nestled in his arms. Watching this scene from a booth at one side of the dance floor is Mike Higgins, the disc jockey whose job is to make sure the recorded music at Shelly's never stops. . . . Unlike many taverns which are full only on weekend nights, this 163-person-capacity disco has a line waiting to get in every night of the week. . . .
>
> Why the success?
>
> "This is a gay disco and those are the ones that are successful," explains Ken Decker, acting manager. "Straight discos don't have the capability or sensibility to put together something like this. We've been crowded the past nine months. Every night about 9:30 P.M. it's like three Greyhound buses full of people descending upon us. The word is just out. This is the place to come and dance."[6]

Two aspects of the Lacitis column are revealing—first, the emphasis on heterosexuals who are now enthusiastically willing to be seen in a gay setting, and second, the focus on dancing as a medium of communication that was uniting two groups previously defined as separate.

For a while the Leg was the favorite gathering spot in Seattle for anyone aged twenty-one to thirty. Every night the bar filled and often passed its legal capacity of 163. "After midnight, it could hold maybe 250," McGonagle said. "Not reasonably

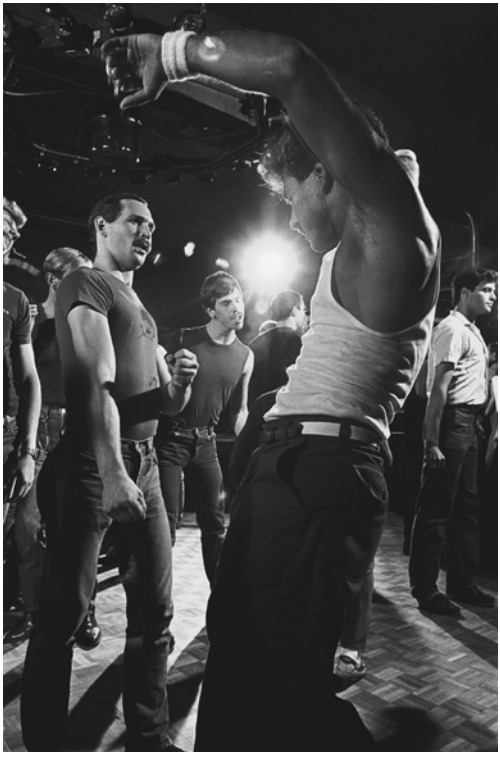
Shelly's Leg in Pioneer Square run by Joe McGonagle, Pat Nesser, and Shelly Bauman became Seattle's first gay disco, so popular with heterosexuals that by 1974 its owners posted a sign to ensure homosexuals would still feel welcome. *(Northwest Lesbian and Gay History Museum Project)*

Disco, like vaudeville and drag before it, became a communication ritual that allowed the city's homosexuals and heterosexuals to mingle. This 1977 flier from the new Union of Sexual Minorities emphasizes the celebration of the new equality. The USM sought to address not only concerns of gays and lesbians, but also the needs of the city's transgendered and bisexual population. *(Northwest Lesbian and Gay History Museum Project)*

comfortable, but you could squeeze in there. And once you got on the dance floor, you might as well forget it. You were on the dance floor for the duration. No way you were going to back off."

Creating the first gay space in the city that also openly welcomed straights was tricky. It was not just a matter of heterosexuals broadening their acceptance of gays. It was also a question of whether homosexuals would patronize bars where their own secrecy was no longer as tightly held, where they might run into a straight coworker who did not know they were gay. Would Seattle's gays really want heterosexuals inside their previously more secluded leisure world?

At the Leg, McGonagle and Nesser approached the issue at least partly by posting a large sign above the bar saying, "Shelly's Leg is a GAY BAR provided for Seattle's gay community and their guests." Nesser did not want to get rid of the straights, "but," McGonagle says, "we wanted to let everybody know that it was a gay bar." The sign became as famous as the disco, appearing in photographs in *Billboard* magazine. It was a noteworthy change from the days when heterosexu-



Ken Decker began the disco migration to Capitol Hill, opening his Brass Door at the corner of Pike Street and Harvard Avenue in 1978. Disco weekends, such as this one at the Door, encouraged a new muscular image for gay men. *(Geoff Manasse)*

als were more likely to flee the gay bars. An accidental cannon shot had turned the gay dance into a common theater. The old hotel really had become Our Home.

The Leg quickly became a legend in Seattle, but it was only two years old when fortune turned on Nesser and McGonagle. Born in an accidental explosion, the Leg began its decline the same way. The two had been preparing for a second anniversary celebration in mid-December 1975, planning to host a benefit for a much-decorated air force sergeant named Leonard Matlovich, who had been discharged because he was gay.

In front of the Leg's doors, the elevated Alaskan Way viaduct straddled a set of Burlington Northern railroad tracks separating Our Home from Puget Sound. Every night, the Leg's patrons lined up and entered the bar directly below the raised freeway.

About 1 A.M. on the rainy Thursday morning of December 4, while more than 150 customers danced inside the Leg, a truck driver was headed south along the

freeway with a tanker-trailer he had just filled at the Union Oil Company reservoir along the waterfront. The tanker carried 3,700 gallons of gasoline, and the attached trailer another 4,800 gallons. As the driver accelerated along the freeway, he noticed his truck pulling to the left. He tried to turn, but the truck still pulled. He tried more. The truck instead crashed into the guardrail and careened, unhitching the trailer that then bounced out of control. Helpless to stop the now free-rolling trailer, the driver sped away as quickly as he could to get the rest of the tanker's explosive payload out of range.

It all took only a few seconds. When the trailer reached the crossing above South Main Street, it upended and exploded into a sheet of flame 150 feet long and 60 feet high. The 4,800 gallons of fiery gasoline rained onto a passing freight train and more than 30 automobiles parked in front of the Leg's doors, setting off car fires and a series of additional explosions. Several downtown buildings plunged into darkness as six electrical cables sheered, but the mudflat itself lit up like daylight from the brilliance of the fire.

A man two blocks away, near the corner where Shelly's original leg had been fierily mangled, looked down the street toward the new Leg and later told the *Seattle Times,* "It looked like somebody threw an H-bomb at the place."[7]

Nesser and McGonagle were at the Villa Mae when the phone rang. "I swear we broke every speed limit, and [ran] every red light we went through just to get down there," McGonagle recalled. "We got as far as First Avenue, and by that time, the lights had gone out . . . just completely black." The miracle of the night was that no one was injured, even though the city fire chief would later say that the blaze "had the potential of being as disastrous as any in the city's history."

The Leg's large front windows were blown in, and the DJ's booth and turntables singed. Fortunately, the Burlington Northern boxcars that happened to be beneath the freeway absorbed the brunt of the explosion, soaking up most of the flaming gasoline before it reached the Leg. The boxcars, as it turned out, carried potash and paper products. Created by one flaming wad of paper, Shelly's Leg was ironically saved by another. Everyone inside the disco escaped through a side door.

Still, the damage had been done. After the catastrophic fire, neither the gay nor the straight crowds ever returned to the Leg in quite the same numbers. Instead, they moved on, and so the Leg closed for good in 1977.[8]

For the moment, the legend had ended as quickly as it had begun. But the impact would last. The gay dance was now fully out of the closet in Seattle and not only open to all, but attractive to sizeable numbers of customers who were not homosexual. Where the Leg left off, other imitators would pick up, including the Leg's manager, Ken Decker. Soon enough, he would be opening his own new and splashy disco, the Brass Door. But it would be on Capitol Hill, not on the mudflat.