

1984 CURATOR'S REPORT

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GROWTH OF THE COLLECTION

We had 9,583 books in our collection at the start of 1980, while we were moving into this location. That number had almost doubled, to 18,370 by the end of 1983, and during 1984 increased by another 2,686 volumes to 21,056, with allowance for 20 volumes donated to the Long Beach Unified Center Library, roughly 100 volumes which Roy Frost added to the shelves and later removed, and two videotapes loaned to now ailing Jasper Douthett. We created a separate women's section of 600 volumes in March 1980. With some books from other sections added later, that part of the library increased to 3,381 volumes by the end of 1984, a growth of 550%. In five years, the percent of women's books in our collection grew from 6% to 16%.

Our foreign language section has increased the fastest (bursting from its allotted space), poetry and plays slightly less than average. The number of photocopied books, theses, scripts, manuscripts, etc which we've had velo-bound has grown notably, shelved in the crowded oversized section.

Other Archival sections grow at a faster rate. Periodicals are in better order than ever before, and bursting out of the space we have for them. Periodicals are shelved in four groups determined by format and size. Quarterlies or square-back magazines occupy 48 feet of shelf space, a moderate growth for the year. Small magazines (half-letter-size) have grown 30% this year to 132 shelf feet.

Letter sized magazines fill the metal shelves along the row back to the restroom, 180 feet of shelf space, almost as much downstairs, and some 22% of our three garages. Newspapers fill 240 shelf feet of metal shelves upstairs, 20 feet downstairs and over 50% of our garage space.

Audio tapes now occupy 34 shelf feet, about a 15% gain. We ended 1984 with 171 video tapes, a 12% gain despite about 20 tapes lost to Roy, two borrowed by now ailing Jasper Doucett and several 3/4 inch tapes given to Bob Craig for copying.

Clippings and loose papers grow at an incredible pace - we are literally being buried in them, and now, only a tiny percent are getting filed. The increase in posters and photographs are

also accelerating and are being ordered somewhat.

We received outstanding donations of materials from Ted Wickham, Mary Kline, Grant Lloyd and Jim Clatfelter, Morris Kight as always, Tom Stevens, Dave Thompson, Frank Zerilli, Tony Shea, In Touch, Walker and Meyers photographers, Wayne Palcek, Bob Manners, Frank Wasman and many others.

VISITORS AND ARCHIVES USERS

The Archives had just over 1,000 visitors this year (not counting repeats or persons attending meetings here), from 42 U.S. states and from the Netherlands, Mexico, Singapore, Japan, Sweden, England, Germany, France, Israel, Hong Kong, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa. Notable were the visits of former staffer Jim Foshee from Yuma, Senator Brongersma of the Netherlands, two of the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence, 25 members of Project Rainbow in mid-May, 25 members of the Gay Press Association from around the country on May 27, 6 students from Stanford in March, and several members of Black & White Men Together during a national board meeting late in the year.

Among those visitors, the number doing serious research increased over the previous year, with several occasions when four or more students were here at the same time working on diverse projects. During the AB1 campaign, the West Hollywood cityhood campaign and at other times during the year, we received many calls and visits and interviews from the media, and were quoted several times.

We received some 2,132 local and 336 long distance phone calls during 1984, made 1,118 outgoing calls, 158 of them long distance. Some 600 of these calls were to or from women.

FOIA

After long discussions with Dan Siminoski regarding his suit against the FBI, we joined the case without having gotten it very clear what our status was regarding participation. We opened a special bank account in February to receive contributions to cover Dan's travel expenses in building support for the case, though the amount contributed was far from adequate for a year in which he made trips to San Diego, San Francisco, Phoenix, Memphis, Miami, Texas and New York.

A committee, averaging five people, met here weekly to sort through some 8,000 pages of materials released by the FBI detailing their surveillance, since 1953, of the gay movement, and to code the papers.

Near the end of the year, Dan began accusing several leading people in the gay movement of being FBI agents, and to claim that he was being frequently beaten by the police. He was hospitalized or jailed several times, and made many long distance calls, reversing the charges. He claimed his efforts to publicize the case were being thwarted. It became obvious that we had to sever our relations with the case.

PUBLICITY

Before this, the Archives was the beneficiary of an article in the Los Angeles Times (jointly about the case and the Archives), briefer mentions in several other papers, gay and non-gay, and TV interviews. We were mentioned prominently in several of the press accounts regarding the West Hollywood cityhood campaign.

Frontiers did a feature on the Archives in its April 4th issue, and other articles appeared in publications in France, South America and Australia, and in the Lesbian News locally.

VOLUNTEERS

Bill Conrad spent several hours daily until January 18th, typing a shelf list onto file cards, making both authors and title cards up to the letter J by authors. Jasper Douthit, paid by a Senior's Program stipend, worked almost daily in the ARchives until March 30th, doing clipping and other tasks. Sidney Plotnik produced a notebook of Advocate table of contents pages. Greg and Bill de Herrera, employed by JPTA, were helpful for several weeks after Feb 1st. Peter Galbreath and especially Jim North put in a great many hours doing a wide variety of useful jobs. Peter Nicholas worked fulltime for seveal months, especially useful at filing. Over 20 volunteers were sent by the Services Center in the first three months of the year on a one-time 3-hour basis. Mike Sereg, last survivor of the Library Committee, continued to come in an occasional evening to type or work on computer hangups. And Shep Wickham continued to drop in occasionally to run errands or to do bits of handiwork. Roy Frost, former Advocate distributor, moved in on April 6th, and spent full time on the premises until late in the year, doing a wide variety of work, often with no regard for what had already been done. Hank Norden came in often enough to insert our match book collection into an especially designed looseleaf binder which he contributed. Photographer Kent Garvey did a similar job on our slide collection, and Pat Allen and Jim Segura spent many Saturday mornings classifying our collection of films. Chuck Spero produced for us a great many audio tapes, chiefly of gay radio shows.

FURNISHING AND EQUIPMENT CHANGES

We added a phone answering device this year, lost two couches, added several file cabinets and briefly had the use of an extra VCR. Our latest addition was a video camera. Treasurer Donna Smith's car was stolen during an Archvies reception, with the temporary loss of our financial records. Car and records were recovered soon after. Curator Kepner was promised a car in July, at the same time that we were offered a handsome and historic house in the hills a few blocks North of here. But the house had a bit less floor space than we now have, and a move to a space not at least double this size would be a disaster. At any rate both house and car became unavailable a few days later.

FINANCES

It had been clear from our first year here that at least one third of prime staff time had to be spent on fundraising activities, unless we could get professional help at this job. For the first half on 1984, we forgot that, and let ourself spend full time on regular Archival work, and let fundraising activities slide. By mid-year, we were facing disaster, relieved only when Board Member June Mazer began her brilliant membership campaign, and that delayed for some time as the curator struggled desperately to catch up on mailing list backlog, something that wasn't helped by a two-months breakdown on the computer, and the fact that two mailing list diskettes became half unusable.

Our largest donors included Christopher Street West, an anonymous Southern California woman, Clement Brace, Southern California Women for Understanding and the Valley Business Alliance.

TRAVELS & TALKS

The curator during 1984 travelled to San Francisco three times, and once to San Diego, once to New York with a side trip to Hartford, and once to Chicago. Board member Ernie Potvin also travelled to New York, Springfield and Hartford. Bunny and June. Donna. Some of those trips were made possible by renting a car for three separate weeks, but the lack of a car or truck still hampers the Archives' work. Both Ernie and Kepner were able to visit with Boad Member Foster Gunnison in Hartford. Board Member Levin was in San Francisco at the time Kepner was visiting New York.

The Archives was represented in the gay pride parades in San Diego (for the second time) and Long Beach, but not in the

Los Angeles parade or festival, due to a misunderstanding with the CYEP. We were well represented at Sunset Junction Street Fair and slightly at Pioneer Days.

The curator spoke at Occidental College, USC (twice), CYEP, the NAMBLA national conference in San Francisco, before a hearing of the Los Angeles Human Relations Committee, at a BAPA meeting, at the Gay Press Association Conference, and other occasions.

LEASE

At the end of September, 1984, our first five year lease expired, and we had full expectations that the landlord would hand us a drastic rent rise. Efforts to arrange funding for a move to another location failed, and when the rent rise came, it was moderate, a raise this year of \$25 a month, to 1,000, with a \$100 a month rise for each of the next two years of the new three year lease we signed. We took a relatively short lease this time, partly because we felt that, with our current growth rate, this location would become oppressively cramped by September 1988, and partly because we have some hopes of a move to West Hollywood becoming feasible within about three years.

CONDITION AND USE OF OUR QUARTERS

During 1984, we had the last large meeting held at the Archives, a crisis meeting we called to deal with the move of Dan White to Los Angeles, attended by 72 people. The addition of 42 feet of new metal shelving cut severely into the space that had made such community meetings possible, and awhile later, the addition of 12 metal file cabinets placed in the middle of the room required us to end hosting the Community Youth Education Program, whose meetings had grown to an attendance of over 40 persons weekly, and a bit later, the smaller monthly meetings of the North American Man-Boy Love Association. Since then we have had to refuse several requests by groups wishing to meet here, losing that degree of community support and involvement.

Our carpet is showing its age, with a few stains and snags and a lot more cigarette burns (despite efforts to keep smoking outside.) Smoking also was blamed partly for problems computer, as they are fairly allergic to smoke - and to dust, a bigger problem here. The front drapes are worse for wear, and the plexiglass front door shows several scrapes, as volunteers have tried to scratch marks off, as if they were dealing with glass.

Roy brightened (or cluttered up) the place awhile, depending on one's point for view, with a quantity of hanging plants, few of which survived the Archives atmosphere, but the

holes he drilled to hang these led to new roof leaks.

We need plumbing work both downstairs and in back.

BOARD CHANGES

Frontiers publisher Bob Craig, ex-owner of the Valley's popular Hayloft bar, left our Board after June's Gay Pride festival in which he played a leading part, and while assuming a lead role in the West Hollywood cityhood drive. Ernie Potvin resigned for a second time near year's end, feeling a need to devote far more time to earning a living. No additions were made to the Board, despite considerable discussion.

--- JIM KEPNER