



Recorded Events

There Goes the Gayborhood: Panel Discussion with Historic Seattle

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[00:00:36] Good morning. Hi, my name is Misha. I use she her pronouns and I'm a librarian and the Reader Services Department. Before we begin this event, I would like to acknowledge that we are gathered together on the ancestral land of the Coast Salish people. So together let us honor their elders past and present. We thank them for their stewardship of this land. We are pleased to co-host. There Goes the Neighborhood with Historic Seattle and Vanishing Seattle. Thinking about inclusion and preservation is an important topic. I want to thank the Seattle Channel for filming today. This is an important conversation that I'm glad is going to be recorded for posterity. And I want to thank the Seattle Public Library Foundation from that make so many of our free library programs possible. And now I want to hand this over to Cynthia Brothers from Vanishing Seattle.

[00:01:32] Good morning, everyone. Good to see you. My name's Cynthia Brothers. She her pronouns and I'm the founder of Vanishing Seattle, which is a project that documents the displaced and disappearing local institutions of Seattle and also celebrates the places that give the city its soul. And I'm really excited to be a co-sponsor of this event today. So although Vanishing Seattle on that account, I post a lot of pictures of buildings and places. It's really about people and the diverse cultures and communities that these places provide a home to and help to thrive. And we're seeing how LGBT and queer and creative spaces and people on

Capitol Hill and throughout the city are being threatened and pushed out. The property home to the Eagle is for sale. Fred, Wildlife Refuge and Neighbors is for sale. Love City Love just moved again for redevelopment. Rebar, Timbre Room, Kremwerk is surrounded literally on all sides by luxury development and hotels and Amazon towers. And we see how the Gayborhood has become more expensive, more homogenized, more hetero normative. And with an increase in transphobia and gay bashing and shout out to We Bash Back and Q-Patrol. And I feel that the health of queer Seattle is reflective of and vital to the health of us all as a city.

[00:03:06] And the city needs places where queer and trans and non binary and gender nonconforming people of color and queer and trans immigrants and workers and drag kings and queens and bears and leather daddies can feel safe and can resist and build community resilience. I believe that there's power in taking up space and holding ground and then preserving queer spaces. And that requires more than facadism. That requires more than rainbow flags and crosswalks. So I want to thank Historic Seattle for organizing this conversation and for working to expand the thinking around what preservation means and what that looks like. And thanks to the Seattle Public Library for hosting and for also putting on some great LGBTQ programming like Legendary Children and Drag Queen Storytime and shout out especially to the panelists for holding it down every day for the culture and for the city. And so that we know our histories. And thanks, all of you, especially for coming out this morning. And let's work together to make sure that we preserve these spaces in these communities that really matter. Oh, thank you.

[00:04:24] Thank you, Cynthia. Your passion makes our work so much easier. And in spite of that, I hate following you because I'm going to go through some historic information and maybe it's important in terms of understanding the built environment that we're gonna talk about later on during our panel, but nowhere near as fun as the passion you bring to us. So I'd like to thank you all for coming today. My name is Jeff Murdock. I'm the advocacy and education manager for Historic Seattle. Want to welcome you to today's panel discussion about historic Seattle. We're an organization working to save meaningful places that foster lively communities. Since 1974, we've been dedicated to preserving Seattle and King County architectural legacy. We do this through education, advocacy and preservation. Our education programs raise aware awareness of Seattle's architectural history. We advocate for preservation to policymakers and citizens alike. We also acquire and rehabilitate historic properties through our status as a preservation development authority. Finally, we're a donor supported nonprofit. I would like to thank Vanishing Seattle and the Seattle Public Library for partnering with us to make this event a reality. The task of making preservation more inclusive cannot be done alone. And we thank them for their support. I'd also like to thank our incredible group of panelists, Rich Freitas, Kevin McKenna, Aleksa Manila, Steve Bennett. And Jeff

Hennes and Jeff stepped out. So we'll be looking for him before our panel starts up. Jeff, you're here. Sorry. Got it. Got it. Thank you. Thank you all for being here. And thanks for taking the time to talk today to share your stories, your perspectives, and especially of your dedication to our community. We wanted to start by sharing some.

[00:06:15] Images of significant places. Some significant, significant cultural places relevant to our discussion to provide some visual context to accompany the panelists' comments. This very brief presentation is not meant to be comprehensive. There are many more places in the city that contribute to the culture of our community. Second Avenue, south in South Washington Street was the center of Seattle's original queer neighborhood. Early on, Pioneer Square was known as the Tenderloin, referring to a gritty area south of Yesler and concentrated between First and Third Avenues. It's worth noting the Pioneer Square is both a national register listed historic district and a local historic district in which contributing buildings enjoy protections from demolition or non-sensitive alterations. In 1930, Joseph Bellotti opened the casino pool hall in the downstairs space of this building. Which allowed same sex dancing and a place for the queer community to gather. When Prohibition ended in 1933, he opened a Double Header above the casino pool hall. It was believed to be the oldest continuously operating gay bar until it closed on New Year's Eve 2015. This amazing photo from 1937 shows that there was originally a very handsome building on this block, but the casino pool hall and Double Header are visible in the photo. The casino pool hall is the on the left side where the canopy is projecting out and the Double Header is sort of up the block on second by 1946. The upper stories were moved, were removed from the building, but both businesses and the casino dancing canopy remain. And you can see it a little easier here under the Black Bear brand sign. And this is basically how the building works today.

[00:07:53] Clint Lanier, the author of Bucket List Bars: Historic Saloons, Pubs, and Dives in America, visited Seattle and the Double Header in 2015 and learned of its planned closure. He commented that the Double Header had a great story to tell history to share and that the bar didn't celebrate itself, didn't say it was the oldest gay bar in America. He further commented commented that these social spaces are not museums. The history can't be roped off, and once closed, the voices won't be back.

[00:08:22] On the left hand side is the photograph from around the eighties and.

[00:08:27] On the right is actually a tour that we gave in April, and you can see the Double Header is actually on the right hand side to the right of the the arch in the building. Another significant plays in Pioneer Square was Shelly's leg. Located at the corner of South Main Street, an Alaskan Way. The building was constructed in 1889 as the Alaska Hotel and catered to the Gold Rush prospectors on their way to Alaska. In 1973 Shelly Bauman purchased the building, which by then was a weekly rate. Residents called Our Home Hotel and with friends who owned other gay nightspots in Pioneer Square, created a new club. In 1973, in December 1973, Seattle's first disco openly gay was open. It was a spectacle and a hit from the first night. The bar set high on a corner with huge windows. A far cry from the underground casino pool hall. The deejay setup was elaborate. The concept of no live music, only people spinning records, was a new idea for a dance club. The sign announcing this is a gay bar. It's significant and is currently housed in MOHAI's collections. Openly announced anyone to anyone who entered Shelly's with the purpose of the place was similar.

[00:09:37] signs can now be found in bars throughout the country. An accident on the viaduct in which a tanker truck jackknifed and exploded right in front of the club, closed Shelly's Leg for an extended time for repairs. The business never really recovered and closed a couple of years later. The end of Shelly's Leg marked the end of the Pioneer Square as Seattle's gayborhood. The Double Header remained as a mainstay, but there was no longer a cohesive network of queer places. This reinforced the movement of queer businesses up to Capitol Hill and into other parts of the city. When the Double Header closed in 2015, the Seattle Eagle on East Pike gain the distinction of oldest gay bar in the city. Although the claim of oldest is always debatable and up for conversation, it first opened in 1981 in this location on East Pike, a building constructed in 1909 to house to house Colman's Used Cars. Like many of the nightspots on Capitol Hill, the club is located in one of the historic buildings that make up the former Auto Road neighborhood in the Pike Pine Corridor and along Broadway, in which buildings were constructed to serve as a burgeoning automotive industry in the early 20th century.

[00:10:42] Seattle's auto row thrived until the 1930s after World War Two. Most of the automotive related businesses began moving to the growing suburbs, leaving many vacant commercial buildings in the neighborhood. From these current images, one can sense the encroaching gentrification in which the businesses adjacent to the Eagle have been spruced up. While the bar maintains its gritty authenticity. The Wildrose has been located in a 1905 building originally known as the Lorraine Court Apartments since 1984. The building is noted in the city's Historic Sites database as being eligible for listing on the national register and as significant as an early example of a mixed use building in one of Seattle's oldest

neighborhoods. You can see in this 1937 photograph that there were there have been very few changes.

[00:11:25] To the building, however, one can argue that the most significant aspect of this place is its longtime tenant, The Wildrose. The Wildrose is one of the oldest lesbian bars in the country and survives today. Our Place has been located in a commercial building originally called the Page Building since 1996. Constructed in 1917, it stands apart from its neighbors with soaring floor to ceiling heights and large windows. And also being on a very small site before Our Place, the Page Building, held him Henmos, Bothell Motors. And for a long time, Jonas Brothers Taxidermy. The Singerman House was purchased by Steve Bennett and his partner in 1983. They restored it and opened it two years later as the Gaslight Inn. Well, a beautiful and well cared, for example, of the once ubiquitous Seattle box architectural style. The house is arguably more significant for its cultural associations. It assumed an iconic role in the gay community as a refuge for families coming to Seattle to come to terms with and reconnect with their kids dying from AIDS, as well as a location of political activism.

[00:12:29] Steve will further explain the history of the Gaslight Inn in a few minutes during our discussion, and the building was designated a Seattle landmark in 2015. The Cuff at 13th and East Pine was established in 1993 as a leather uniform fetish tavern. Later expanding to include a restaurant, dance floor and patio. Jeff Hennes was the head of security for The Cuff for many years until he started his own business Doghouse Leathers around the corner. He recently moved his shop to another historic building on East Pike and he'll tell us more about that in a few minutes. Rebar is a unique institution in Seattle. It's always attracted a diverse audience and has a rich history of music, art, theater and burlesque. Kurt Cobain and the rest of Nirvana were thrown out of rebar during their own release party for the Nevermind album in 1991 following a drunken food fight. During my heyday in the late 90s, Rebar felt like it was on the fringe of the city in a nondescript neighborhood of low rise, low rise buildings. It doesn't feel that way anymore.

[00:13:29] As I mentioned, this is by no means a comprehensive list of significant queer places in Seattle. There are many other spots, but taken together, they represent a diverse group of cultural places that helped to form the unique character of a community. None of these examples is less than 26 old. They are mainstays of their neighborhoods, all serve specific purposes in our community, and all are locally born and grown businesses.

[00:13:49] Authentic cultural landmarks that remain vibrant and vital. In spite of that, the neighborhood is changing. But citywide zoning changes. Property owners feel compelled to sell or redevelop properties that were originally affordable places rich with character and opportunity. Now, I'd like to ask our panel to come up and take a seat, and I will pass the baton to Rich, who will act as our moderator, and we'll start with each of us. Each of our panelists introducing themselves and telling us their story in this neighborhood.

[00:14:21] Great. Thanks, Jeff. My name is Rich Freitas, and I'll be moderating today. Maybe you could just introduce ourselves to start with.

[00:14:29] Hi, I'm Kevin McKenna. I received my PHD from the University of Washington History Department two years ago now, and I currently teach social studies at The Overlake School in Redmond. And I'm here to talk about more of the macro level history of these neighborhoods today.

[00:14:48] My name is Jeff Hennes. I moved to Seattle, 1980. A native of Yakima when St. Helens blew. I moved. Also, I turned 21 and wanted to get the hell out of Yakima. Lived on Capitol Hill since 1982. Worked in a number of the bars down in what we called Howls Gulch, Sparks which is now Rebar, Daddy's which is now the federal courthouse, the marshals office, which is one of the Twin Toaster Towers, worked at The Eagle. When it became The Eagle and fun fact on The Eagle, when it they first Jimmy and Lance bought the bill, bought the property, bought the business. It was a le chateau with green shag carpeting and a fire pit and they turned it into a leather bar. And for 20 years some of the original employees of The Cuff and was security manager there. My partner was the general manager and that is we opened up the Doghouse Leather inside a bathroom there, and now have expanded into a business with 20 employees.

[00:15:52] And longtime historian and member of Pike/Pine Neighborhood Planning Council writing the guidelines for development in Pike/Pine.

[00:16:00] Good afternoon. Glad you're all here. My name is Steve Bennett. I came to Seattle after grad school in 1976. I opened a little tavern down on the corner of 1st and Bell in what's now Belltown. It wasn't at that time and I bought the Gaslight Inn in 1980. We opened as a predominantly gay guest house in 83. And then with the what happened in the least late 80s, in

the early 90s, I was connected with a priest from. From the Archdiocese of St. James here in town named David Jaeger and he worked with of schools and children to talk about what was happening with this epidemic that we had no name for. And then Swedish hospital established a quarantine floor, the fifth floor for this disease that had no name or the virus it had no name and which became AIDS. And he started helping, having me help him bring parents who were from all over the United States, who had children that were very sick and dying to come and try to make some kind of healing. And so I was able to offer the Gaslight for that purpose.

[00:17:38] I think that's that's it. I'm just glad you're all here.

[00:17:42] That's a good thing that we're talking about at this preservation of our gay neighborhood.

[00:17:49] Good morning, everyone. My name is Aleksa Manila. I use she her pronouns. First, I want to share gratitude in sharing safe space with all of you. Stereotypically, I'm a drag queen. I hold the titles of Miss Gay Filipino in 2001 from the Filipino Community of Seattle. Also Miss Gay Seattle 2004. I prefer that year versus the X L that that embodies self-shaming. But it happens, and I share this because it's the oldest drag title west of the Mississippi. I've also held other titles for the Imperial Court of Seattle. I have performed at just about every darn gay queer bar nightclub and hotels and town halls in the city, which I hold very dearly as some of my memorable personal experiences sharing these activities with folks and on the boring side. I hold a master of social work, Integrated Health & Mental Health from the University of Washington and I have been with Seattle Counselling Service as a counsellor for 16 years SCS is an LGBTQ behavioral health agency that was founded in 1969 predating Stonewall the Stonewall riots. Yet for 50 golden years and I'm a longtime resident of the International Chinatown district adjacent to Pioneer Square, the old hub of the gayborhood, so to speak. So seeing those photographs and actually walking along the sidewalk and seeing those things is very near and dear to my heart. And I look forward to a very interactive conversation with all of you. Thank you.

[00:19:28] Great. Thanks, everyone. And I'll just say I think I'm moderating because I am on the Landmarks Preservation Board for the city of Seattle and work the National Park Service. And I've done research into Pioneer Square and queer overlay that's existed there historically. So following up on Jeff's presentation, Kevin, I thought that maybe you could start and talk to

us about how that transition happened from Pioneer Square to Capitol Hill. What were the forces that were in play? Sure.

[00:19:59] Yeah. So the first gay spaces, as as we saw in the presentation, were in Pioneer Square. This was, of course, a time period where discrimination against gay, lesbian, trans, queer folks was legal. And Pioneer Square was a very marginal community. It was not a place that white middle class Seattleites would go to. And that afforded some freedom for for gay folks to go to those spaces without fear of being found out and losing their jobs or their families finding out or etc.. That's a neighborhood that was home to a lot of Native Americans and African-Americans adjacent to the International District, a large transient population just living there in between jobs. And, you know, of course, as gay liberation comes to happen, that that degree of. Protection, I guess you could say, or having those spaces and a place where white middle class folks wouldn't find you became less and less necessary. In the late 1960s, there were a few forces at play beyond just that. That dynamic first Pioneer Square was slated to be completely demolished to create a freeway ring around downtown Seattle, as was Pike Place Market.

[00:21:37] And citizens of Seattle fought for a historic preservation district in Pioneer Square that did raise tourism in the area, which then made it a more visible neighborhood than it had been. And the rents in the area were going up. Additionally, the 520 bridge across Lake Washington was completed in 1966 or 1967, which facilitated a very large movement, especially of large Catholic and Jewish families that had been living on Capitol Hill, leaving behind a lot of these very large box houses on the Hill that that came to be inhabited by gay folks, hippies, artists, either as communal houses or they were subdivided into smaller units. And then, of course, there was the Boeing bust, which completely devastated the economy of Seattle. So there was a massive movement out of the Seattle area more broadly. Rents were very, very cheap. So gay folks were moving to Capitol Hill before any of the bars were there in these communal houses. And and the Dorian House was one of those established by the Dorian Society, the Homophile organization that existed in Seattle prior to the gay liberation movement.

[00:23:00] But pretty soon before in 1967, Seattle Counselling Service was was founded out of that house. The oldest mental health service specifically for queer folks in the United States. And then I think as Shelly's Leg goes, so goes Pioneer Square. As as Shelly's Leg closed down, there was a recognition that most gay folks were living on Capitol Hill. Pioneer square was was never really the residential home for this community, by and large. And so business started to open up on Capitol Hill as a result.

[00:23:45] Great. So I think the questions are up here, right. Okay. You can see what's going to happen. It's not a surprise. So. So maybe we could talk about what the early, your guys' earlier experiences in Capital Hill look like. What were the the sort of the boundaries or the anchors of the community? And what did community look like in Capital Hill in your early experience? Well, then we'll go backwards in time, kind of with a lot of respect, of course.

[00:24:21] So I came out at age 21, 22, so that would have been around the late 90s, about 97. And so I'm Filipino. I am an immigrant from the Philippines and growing up Catholic in a very conservative but slightly liberal family. I never knew what even gay meant right until I moved to the United States and primarily here in Seattle. And that's when I discovered, you know, my my self-identity about being gay, being queer. And my first introduction to it was Neighbors Nightclub. It was you know, everybody was talking about it. And and then in the 90s, you know, this was just that they're sort of the birth of AOL, you know, instant messaging and all of that. And so there was still a rich sort of interaction within communities around actually talking face to face. Right. instead of just texting and online chatter and actually meeting people in person. Right. So Neighbors Nightclub was my sort of first safe space. And then and that's when I discovered also friends that were like minded, other, you know, immigrant gay Filipinos. And that's where I discovered my family, my chosen family, so to speak. And that was before drag. And then the itch got to me into. Right. And I scratch it real hard. Yeah. Calamine lotion investment. Really good. I landed.

[00:25:55] I was introduced to the Filipino community of Seattle again. Leverage of community and was asked to run for this title called Miss Gay Filipino. Sorry, long winded story. That was in 2001. I won every category except Miss Congeniality.

[00:26:09] Why? I'm over it, though.

[00:26:14] And why I share this is because this was one of the first sort of reminders of how intersectionalities are critical. Because we are not one thing. We are so many things. Right. And I found myself myself at the cusp of that. And that's when I started sort of being inspired to do activism through drag. So. Dragtivism. And that's when I started introducing queer stuff into the Filipino community and vice versa. And. That was really sort of this rich history that I have with Seattle's LGBT community. And then I started performing and then Neighbors happened and then Blue happened. Manray happened Rebar through Sylvia O'Stayformore. You know,

Bacon Strip. You know, my finale show Geisha Star. So I started getting introduced to these historical and legendary queens and kings of Seattle. So that was my first introduction to it. And then it started getting, you know, sort of branching out. But I do want to say that despite or in spite of all these sort of being busy with the social scene of Seattle, I never lived on Capitol Hill. And that was a personal choice because I didn't want to live where I also sort of partied. Like I wanted to wake up and not feel like I'm at still at the bar, you know? And so I chose to live in the International District. And also, again, this is another sort of symbolism of my identities. You know, one being Asian-American, I wanted to also see people that looked like me, you know, and I and I think that's so it's mirrored also within the LGBT community how we want to see faces that are like ours. And so I had that, you know, sense of intersectionality when it came to these sort of first being introduced to the queer scene. And I in a way, when I went away, when I say queer scene, I recognize that it's also generational. Yes. I don't mean that in a derogatory way, but just sort of, you know, acknowledging our younger generation, wanting to take it back and empowering ourselves.

[00:28:16] And as you pass it, I just want to acknowledge as well that when we talk about Pioneer Square in the history of Pioneer Square, we're talking and potentially of early Capitol earlier. Well, Capitol Hill, we're talking about the dominant LGBTQ narrative that's happening there, which isn't to say that there aren't spaces outside or that aren't documented or that aren't important to communities of color or Asian Asian-American communities. So. So we're we're looking at really a particular today, at least a particular lens at this time. It is that there are these other layers that may not be part of the issue with documenting and recognizing cultural communities. And these cultural overlays on the built environment is that they're not well preserved. And we need to look at different methods for uncovering them, such as oral histories, those sorts of things that aren't that aren't in property records and the things that you can get from from the archive. So thanks for touching on that. And yeah, let's continue talking about.

[00:29:21] Okay. A couple of the original gay bars up on Capitol Hill. We actually had one in 78 in the Central District. A leather bar, about twenty seventh in Yesler. I found one old photograph and the poster in the leather archives. I had always heard about it, but it was before my time. The first out bars that opened up on Capitol Hill was The Elite up on Broadway.

[00:29:49] Now and then you had Hombres up on 14th, which is now Diesel. And then we had the Brass Connection. Then it was the Brass Door. They brought in a door from Shelly's Leg.

Brass Door on the corner and later transformed into the Brass Connection and survived many years.

[00:30:14] Then in eighty three, Neighbors opened up. And it was quite an experience because there was a parking garage for the college that sat between the two places. So there was this pathway from the Brass over to the neighbors. A Neighbor stayed open to 4:00 a.m.. So if you want to go dancing, that's where you went. Also keeping in mind the liquor laws at that time. Beer wine was taverns, and unless you had a restaurant, you could not have liquor. So you had the plan out. What I want to drink tonight.

[00:30:48] What a lot of party.

[00:30:50] Or you mix up, start here with beer and then go to liquor for the late night. We used to joke about the food at Neighbors being. Not that good. The afterhours buffet that they used the afterhours buffet to qualify for their liquor license. Originally Liquor Board. Did you see 70 percent food? 30 percent liquor? Then know 60 40 and finally they did away with that ratio, which made it much easier to get liquor, get a good cocktail. So those are the two dance palaces right there. Encores/Hombres were huge sports meccas. You had places like. Mike's on Madison form, which took over the old cottage, which is owned by a stripper by the town history. But what's interesting is that the Upper Hill, there was a cluster of bars. All those bars had been black bars. And as the black community moved out.

[00:31:58] And a lot of them moved, the black community moved to the south end to Kent and Renton, allow those spaces became open. So they had Thumpers, which is the old Eddie Cotton's off at 15th. You had never what the name of Hombres was prior. The Cuff was a black restaurant called Oscar's, which later moved to the 16th and 22nd, and Madison until it got shut down by the liquor board. A lot of the bars have changed hands and stayed in the same location, but changed hands and names.

[00:32:37] Tugs Belltown moved up the hill became Tugs Boylston.

[00:32:45] The Eagle, Le Chatel, J & L or Jimmy and Lance or Judy's Lounge, as we called it, and that's nothing a lot of the bars had old nicknames.

[00:32:55] Stags Tavern at 9th and Pike was called Sylvia's. Because the liquor board worked with the military police and there was a list of banned bars, but the military officially couldn't go into but did. And you could say at the office all I'm going to Sylvia's, I'll meet you at Sylvia's and your straight coworker wouldn't know where you where you're talking about. So a lot of bars had nicknames. J & L, how was Judy's Lounge, The Cuff known as the Puff. The Eagle was also known as The Albatross.

[00:33:32] The dead bird, the dirty bird.

[00:33:37] Then you started having bars showing up in the mid Capitol Hill. They said he had Brass, the Neighbors you had Sappho's the infamous lesbian bar at Pike and Boylston, that I was never brave enough to even try to go into because you had to be escorted in. Prior to that, it was a prostitute bar.

[00:33:59] There were prostitutes, prostitutes and drug dealers hanging out the 80s on Pike Street. The police patrolling that area for that it was a no man's land between The Eagle and the Brass. And slowly, people start coming in after Sappho's, it became a bar called Our Place. Which later moved over onto Pine Street into a new location.

[00:34:27] I was of. Let's see.

[00:34:31] There was a Western bar briefly. There's a couple other things, but you didn't have that many bars. If you want to drink on on Pike Street, you had beer down at the Eagle. Cocktails at Neighbors and Brass, then nothing after you got to 14th and 15th. Broadway had one queer bar. During the early 80s. Prior to the 80s, there was the Two O Six, which was lesbian owned by Rose by Hand. And you had. I would say the Casablanca or Cloud Room at the Old Monkey Shines at Broadway and Olive. But you didn't have. And you had one gay bookstore on Broadway. A Different Drummer. He didn't have that much. Gay businesses, you had a few here and there and then the Broadway Market happened and that became a gay shopping mall, so to speak. Now it's QFC. Used to be a theater there. There was a lot of used to come there. Go there and cruise from the balconies.

[00:35:42] So I wonder, what was the community like, like so if it's not bars in the early days there, were there other spaces? Was it just the difference between Pioneer Square and Capitol Hill? Was this residential component and it was this proximity or proximity to each other that formed a community like what makes I guess what makes a gayborhood? What what in Capitol Hill? For you sort of made this a place that you felt connected to and a member of the community.

[00:36:10] Broadway was the place to Cruise was the place to hang out. You go into the restaurants there. If your family came to town, you took them to Etcetera. On Broadway, you took him to the Broadway. It's now been close for six years. But you could take your family there. You could also, as you hang out with your friends, go shopping there. Broadway used to be a lot of furniture stores. You also had your thrift stores. It's always been a feature of Capitol Hill. But it's a place to hang out with, you also had your organizations that mostly were headquartered there. You know, you'll also had your religious organizations. I was part of dignity of at St. Joseph's. You had M.C. C in the old church behind a Group Health. Those were centers of faith for our community that a lot of us went to. We also had the chorus, the chorus for years is for it. Then their rehearsals downtown, but their home was the Hill.

[00:37:15] You also had pride. Pride took place on the Hill.

[00:37:22] But we didn't always march to Volunteer Park. Eighty three, we marched from Lowell School down to Freeway Park. Eight thousand people. Keynote speaker was. Perry Watkins, whose fight fought the army and won the first major victors against the US Army. He did drag in the USO shows and they knew it for 19 years. They kept reenlisting him. Then all of a sudden, just before retirement, they wanted to kick him out. He fought and he won and was retired with that sergeant first class, but he beat the military. He was a black native of Tacoma. So there was a cultural hope in 84 we had two pride parades. Because we had one group, the agays, that wanted nothing to do with the word AIDS. They just wanted a celebration of being gay. So that was at Saturday's parade. And Sunday was a huge parade. I think we broke 10000 that year starting at camp on 18th as the first year we went to Volunteer Park. As a result of that Saturday group gathering, the Pride Festival was born, and Pride Festival, I'm happy to say, is back on Capitol Hill at Volunteer Park. Later today. But in 84, we had a small group that wanted nothing to do with the word AIDS. Well, the rest of the community said no. We must take care of our brothers and sisters.

[00:38:55] So your question is what makes a gayborhood? For me personally.

[00:39:00] People make a gayborhood with people comes culture and you create norms out of those complimented with symbolisms and what I mean by that is.

[00:39:11] And I can only go as far back for my personal sort of narrative and, you know, into a 90s, mid 90s. So that's about two decade's worth. But I remembered, as Jeff described Broadway that we used to look like and feel like, you know, I remember the Broadway Market with, you know, with the movie theater in there. The Rite Aid on the other side.

[00:39:31] You know, all of the stores that were owned by locals, they were locally owned businesses, gay businesses. Right. I remembered Bulldog News in there. The Fred Meyer, you know, was there. And then there was the QFC across the street, the one level QFC, not the Broadway market QFC we see now. You know, I think the only structure that's still there from that era is The Cobbler. And I still go there. You know, I remember Bailey/Coy Books. I remembered The Pink Zone. That's where I got my first bellybutton ring. Not that I had many more. That sounded wrong.

[00:40:06] But I say that because that's personal. It's these personal stories that we attach our lives with. Right. The physicality of that space, seeing rainbow flags up and down Broadway. Right. The school being their churches that were all inclusive. Dilettante's coffee the cafe. Right. This was at a time when it before social media, when I had to produce shows, I would go to each of those businesses in person with an 11 by 17 poster asking them and sometimes begging them to see if they could be put up. Rather it meant just in the back as long as somebody did. And I remembered that that the manager at the Dilettantes would. Oh, yeah. Aleksa, I got you. I got you.

[00:40:49] The Kinko's, you know, that was on the corner, which is now. I don't know what it is now.

[00:40:55] Annapurna or something. And I say these be these sort of memorable, melancholic sort of memories because I used to hang out and walk up and down. Now fast forward to today. I don't it doesn't have the same feel or sentiment I see as I still see some people. Some

of those buildings and structures have been torn down to become residential buildings and structures with hopefully enough ample parking, but still a problem, you know. I remembered when Volunteer Park wasn't that when there was a reservoir right there. Right. And I remembered Volunteer Park at the Volunteer Park that we see and know now isn't the same Volunteer Park that we know we knew back then at least that I knew back then it wasn't. What I'm saying is this was a hub. And it's important to not just feel and be with each other, but seeing symbolism, because even though we're at an age where we can scream marriage equality or that we can fight for, you know, employment non-discrimination in the workplace, we know that violence and hate still exists. Right. It's important for young people, even though they did not live through the AIDS crisis or perhaps did not see their fellow brothers and sisters being butchered. We know that hate and violence and oppression still exists and that continues to exist when we have marginalized communities. And sadly, we are one of those. So it's important to have that physical hub. Now, I did say I have never lived on Capitol Hill, but I've socialized and lived my life on Capitol Hill with my brothers and sisters, you know, because living is so. Literal. Right. But would queer community living. That's what we do, we live.

[00:42:55] Thank you.

[00:42:58] So just asking Steve as as the steward and the creator of this cultural space that was so important and continues to be important in and in the built environment, like as a, you know, a business in a physical space. I'm wondering if you can talk about the intersection of those two things and how you how much they're connected or not. And sort of being an anchor in the community.

[00:43:23] Well, as you said, it used to be important. I came here as a very young man in the 70s. And of course, I gravitated right away to Capitol Hill to be around people that were like me and that I was like coming from a very small rural farming community in Wisconsin. And I think we talked a bit earlier. I. I started the Gaslight. It started it mostly because I love architecture and I love that house. And it was available and I had no money. But the owner was willing to sell it to me with a handshake and a very little bit of money down. And I really didn't have a reason or a purpose for it. I can't say that I was thinking of anything grand, but. Almost immediately that I became friends with so many people in Seattle and they all had family coming to visit. And so that's how the bed and breakfasts developed. And soon, as I said earlier, I met from Dignity at the Catholic dioceses. His father Jaeger that I had mentioned. And my heart was just broken at that time. There was so many people getting very sick. There was no name for the virus. And all these opportunistic diseases were happening and I was negative. And so I had this guilt. And Father Jaeger sort of took me under his wings and said

the way that I could help that is that I could offer my home, since it was set up that way to help people that were angry that their children, first of all, were gay and second of all, had contacted this disease.

[00:45:19] And and I had a good knack for it. I have provided a safety and shelter. And so that was became my purpose with the Gaslight. That all changed. The last ten years with the way people travel, people no longer travel by putting in bed and breakfast. Seattle gay owned. That's how my business happened. So I was by clientele were gay travelers that wanted to be near, in or in the gay community. And since there's no hotels at that time, there wasn't. On Capitol Hill, it became the Gaslight. But with this change of the way people travel in the Airbnb, they're really there. I have lost that community touch with my clientele. They're great people, but they're Mr. and Mrs. Johnson from Omaha. So. And I've enjoyed that part of this journey, too. But that is the reason. That I don't know really what I am trying to say to you but it's it's become sort of flat and.

[00:46:41] You know, that's a great I think you're you're touching on what we want to talk about, which is what are the folks trying to get there? I just needed your help. You're doing great. What? So what are the pressures? What pressures are we seeing now? What is driving this change that we're seeing in the demographics? I mean, we know what the other development pressures, but like how is that taking shape on the ground or which I could easily say it's the city of Seattle.

[00:47:07] Property taxes I paid twenty thousand dollars a year in property taxes. I could say it's the city chart making accommodations. Besides the 10 percent sales tax charge, another 6 percent to for the new convention center. So but I think it's really the way that people travel and that's just the way that we were talking about, the way that people meet each other. They they don't meet each other by going and actually talking. They're online. And that's the same thing with my business. So I could I could blame the city and the taxation or I could blame the developers for making everything of square footage so expensive that a small person can't open a business and for his community like I did in the 80s.

[00:48:02] But I just think it's the way the world is gone and Seattle's part of that.

[00:48:10] So, Jeff, you just moved your business, just moved down the street, so maybe you can speak to that, the pressures that that.

[00:48:17] Well, like I said as part of PPunk the Pike/Pine Coalition, the development of older buildings is happening at a rapid pace. A lot of them are landlords that really don't care about the culture or preservation. One thing that PPunk was able to get from the city was being able to preserve facades of buildings, parts of buildings, at least preserve some of the character. I my original, my old shop was in a 1908 building with a house perched up on top of it. One story building that. The slatwall covers a multitude of sins in that building. Yeah, there's no insulation. I had no heat. The building I moved into was built in 1911. The apartments above it were built in nineteen hundred and raised in 1911. It was opened as a silent movie theater. Very quickly became auto related. Rumors of a burlesque space at one point. We have not been able to find any evidence of that yet. Still looking. However, I got the space, I was the original stage, four foot deep stage, beautiful 16 foot ceiling, beautiful old windows had been covered up for years. And for I tell people, I'm getting the space on Pike Street like there's nothing there. So that's right. I'm fighting U.P.S. It tells me my building doesn't exist because it hasn't been on their maps.

[00:49:51] Did you move down there voluntarily? No.

[00:49:57] My original landlord. Had it had the central vacuum cleaner for 50 some years, he bought the property in 62. When Upper Pike Street was rundown and drug dealers. There was a I remember Jerry's adult books being one of the frozen custard shop was in the back in the late 80s. And the building that housed Fran's chocolates, which is now under reconstruction, was a porn distribution center.

[00:50:26] So.

[00:50:28] I fit right in. Yeah. But my landlord, original landlord passed away from cancer at 86 and a developer who sits mid block had an option to buy the property, exercised it. He told me, oh, you got five years before I would redevelop the property. Two months later, I was at it early design guidance notice on the telephone pole in front of my shop. So I started looking. And for a long time, I didn't think I was going able to stay on Capitol Hill. I looked out in the industrial area. I looked at First Hill. I looked at a building. I said, oh, no, you can't be a tenant. There's a

conflict. First I thought it was because it was a gay business. No, the building would've been shared with Catholic Youth Services.

[00:51:16] That's all you've got to tell me.

[00:51:18] Two months later, that building was listed as a being redeveloped. So I'm happy I've got a long term lease. Bit of a slumlord. But I've got a long term lease options to renew and offers to buy. If it ever comes for sale, I have first. Does it have to notify me first. I have. Three months to match that offer. So I'm happy that I'm able to secure.

[00:51:45] Well, you're one of the lucky ones, I think, right? Like, this is very fortunate. Kevin, do you what you want to talk about sort of the.

[00:51:51] Sure. So Jeff and I actually had the same landlord. But yeah, so I'm a millennial. I only had the opportunity to live on the Hill for a year and a half. I was in grad school and did not have a lot of money. And the hill became prohibitively expensive. So I was there from 2011 to 2012, living in a little blue house. Our back porch was on The Cuff parking lot. Maybe remember the house? If you'd been around the neighborhood. And it was knocked down in early twenty thirteen. It is now a seven story condo with an REO Speedwagon mural on the side right across from well, right next to the old Dog House Leathers across from Madison Pub and as a twenty two twenty three 24 year old. You know, even back then, Capitol Hill still had a lot of the same feeling that I'm hearing described here, minus the like drug dealers on the street and whatnot. But it still felt very gay. And now it really doesn't have that feel. And we know a lot, you know, a lot of the people moving in, of course. Amazon is a huge player in that. In terms of who can afford these new units being built on the Hill. And these are, by and large, not queer people.

[00:53:19] And then, of course, you know, the sidewalk or the crosswalks getting painted rainbow as violence against trans folks and other queer folks on the Hill is is rising. Seems like almost a slap in the face as opposed to a real response from the city.

[00:53:37] So.

[00:53:39] Yeah. I mean, the force is a player, very large, systemic ones.

[00:53:45] So I wonder, what are we rhetorically? Does it matter like it as we're connected in different ways now? Right. We don't need to go to the bars necessarily in order to connect socially. Does it matter that there's not a physical neighborhood like do we need to save save the gayborhood? Is that. Is that something? Is it. Is it nostalgia or is it something that has queer people? We is important to us. Is it as important for us to be in proximity to one another as it used to be? Yes.

[00:54:15] And I think we need to recognize that even though we have a sort of this unit of a LGBTQ community, we are also individuals with different individual needs. So I think erasing that. Would kill the spirit of some people. Maybe not all, but some, and I think that's still very important when you ask the question, what makes a gayborhood? But in the end, with the forthcoming that with the discussions really sparked, the question for me is of is a gayborhood important? And absolutely it is. You know, we've been highlighting queer owned or gay centered businesses, but on Broadway there were more than just businesses, right? There were social service agencies that catered to the needs of the LGBTQ community.

[00:55:08] I think of Stonewall Recovery Services, you know, Seattle Counseling Service used to be on Broadway. It's these spaces Lifelong. Before it was Lifelong, it was Northwest AIDS Foundation with Chicken Soup Brigade. I remember meeting on the second floor of what is now Hollywood Apartments. The marquee is there because there used to be a Hollywood video, VHS video store on theOn the first floor, the ground floor next to Dick's and we're SCS was we were on top of the crypt.

[00:55:44] It was in the dungeon. I'm sorry. In the basement of that building next to the Jack in the Box.

[00:55:52] Right.

[00:55:53] And I think the change of the physicality of the gayborhood has been very subtle prior to maybe perhaps 10 years ago. And I don't think it's personal. It wasn't impacting me the way it's impacting me now, because I think what had happened was gay owned businesses were moving away. But the physical structures were still there. So if I'm walking by. Oh, I see it. But now they're being torn down.

[00:56:18] There's now signs that say for lease, the Broadway Grill has been for at least for I don't know how long. Well, we can't help but not notice it now. So there's a massive change now that used to be the hub that's where I would announce the Gay Pride Parade on Broadway. That was the hub. Right. So these things are changing. I think the only maybe nationally recognized business was The Gap back then and everything else was locally owned. But even the the local business owners, they're having to trim down Trendy Wendy used to have another boutique called Broadway Boutique. She had to shut it down and stick to the one. Right. Carl Medeiros, the owner of Panache, used to have like three or four businesses all around Broadway. But they again, he had to slim down. So all of these businesses are going away. And yes, absolutely. It's important to have some kind of centralized location. We need a hub because it's not just for partying. It's about communing. Right. And we're recognizing that this macro level of government and high, you know, world wide businesses that are really pushing local owners in the way it's reflected on the community at the micro level is we don't see ourselves in it anymore.

[00:57:33] Yeah. So sit with all that.

[00:57:39] Yeah. So.

[00:57:41] So what do we do? I mean, so this is where you preservation as we know it. You know, modern preservation in the United States comes out of 1966, the passing of the National Historic Preservation Act, the creation of the National Register of Historic Places, and and that's great. But there's as a result as the, as the practice has developed over time, it's placed arguably certainly an inordinate amount of priority on physical significance on the.

[00:58:11] This is what you were getting at, sort of the places look the same, but they don't have the same culture associated with them.

[00:58:19] And so now we're at a time where there is this shift happening and it's trying to change the course of a, you know, of of a giant ship. What do you call them? Tanker.

[00:58:33] And it's difficult. But this is this is the direction that we're going and there's there's a lot of uncertainty and experiments, I think, that are are being tried out in terms of, you know, let me say that there is I think that the only. Counter to these economic forces that are happening are other economic forces in order to preserve businesses and to keep keep cultural sites in place. And so I'm wondering, Jeff, you've mentioned your work with working on preservation language in the Pike/Pine overlay conservation district ordinance. Have you seen that? How effective has that been? Are you guys what do you what do you guys think? What can we do? Preservation as it is. And then I'll turn it over to you. It's just it's not fully equipped. The tools are there, but they're not fine tuned enough. So I think we need some new tools. And I'm curious as as, you know, players in this in this scenario, as it's unfolding, what do you think we need to do? What what would you like to see happen from a preservation perspective? Well, the original rules that we've presented were watered down by the city council.

[00:59:43] The current rules, if you preserve the facade, you get X amount of space to go up an additional floor. Example projects, it's just to go into early design right now is the Knights of Columbus Hall. They first keeping the they're keeping the Knights of Columbus Hall intact, restoring it. They're gonna get an additional floor on the building on the Harvard side parking lot. But it wasn't enough square footage for the building on the union side of Knights of Columbus. But our goal is here for preserving an historic building. Some of the projects have done what I call lip service, a little bit of the facade. And you really don't maintain much of the character. Gives a steel box right above it. Some projects have been much better. Certain companies are much better at working on that and more preservation oriented.

[01:00:44] But it's still OK. We have the facade of the building.

[01:00:48] So what about. San Francisco has a legacy business program where they identify a supervisor or somebody in city government can nominate a business that's been in business for over X amount of years and has made a significant contribution to the culture of a particular community. And as a result, they get the city will give the business and the landlord, if they extend if they give favorable lease extension terms to the business, we'll give grants to them. Right. So it's about keeping businesses in place. Ideally, although the business can move and that's fine. It's not tied to the physical building. Right. So they could move to another have

another landlord kind of thing. Is that something that you think would be effective here? Of course

[01:01:36] There isn't no money for it. We've discussed that before. I think that came up about 10 years ago at P Punk. But they're just you know, Tom Rasmussen said there wasn't the money when the city.

[01:01:47] And the state didn't have the money either that they were willing to. Well, the state legislature doesn't like Seattle, so they like Capitol Hill even less.

[01:01:58] But pie in the sky like is that I mean, if you could, you know, if you could think of a program like what types of assistance or what types of.

[01:02:07] I don't I don't know. What is it? Tax breaks. You know, you get tax breaks from national register and if you're listed as national register property. Right, Steve? So that's something that can help a place stay. There's controls that are put on physical buildings if you're listed as a Seattle lab. So you're not a national register property. You're at local local city of Seattle landmark. So these are these are things that are in place now.

[01:02:37] But I'm wondering what else? Well, the lifespan of a business changes as well. Know who owns it, who's running it, who's staffing it that can get stale just because you're preserving a business. Say, I'll use the Double Header, for example. Stayed in one family for 60 some years. The son was running it at the end and really wasn't interested in the gay side.

[01:03:04] Now that his dad had business, the business his dad had built up, he just maintained it as a bar. That which, when I first moved here, had, um, pop and was cool to go down to. But businesses can drift. What is Gaslight like going to be like after Steve leaves? Yeah, historic business. But the character and soul of that business can change. How do you preserve that right.

[01:03:32] Go ahead. So I'm not a business owner. I'm not a lawyer. I don't know. These legal terms use government jargon. I am, however, a patron and a community member and I get it.

You know, businesses are owned by individual people, may be groups of people. And oftentimes community members feel like they're entitled to that space. Right. And I think but that's what creates culture. There's a unifying sentiment there. So what I want to approach this from sort of a humanistic perspective.

[01:04:01] Your earlier you said, you know, is it nostalgia? I think that's mythologizing what we're hanging onto. You know, it's only been 50 years ago that we've, you know, cradled the modern day LGBTQ civil rights movement. That's not very old. Right. We're still trying to figure out who we are and what else we can do just now. We're now trying to identify services for our LGBTQ elders and seniors just now. 50 years ago, weren't there any LGBTQ elders and seniors there were. But we were hidden and we were invisible. Right. What? And what I'm trying to say is. I think it's a call to action. We need to mobilize each other.

[01:04:49] And I think there's different facets here. There's it's it's different angles. People are getting pushed out of their neighborhoods. They're moving out. The very same businesses are either closing or moving away. There's been a lot of talk with moving to LGBTQ organizations, to the south end to West Seattle. The major organizations for the LGBTQ community are thinking about moving further away from the hub. And it's impacting the community because we're not seeing it closer within hand's reach. I think the tools are there. You ask the question, are there the tools? Do we need to create the tools are there. They're inherently discriminatory. They don't hear and feel the sentiments of the LGBTQ community. Just a couple of days ago, the Showbox deal.

[01:05:43] Pearl Jam put their two cents in it.

[01:05:47] Look it up and I think Vanishing Seattle did a feature on it. There's a quote there from from Pearl Jam. All I did was read that and replace the key words with something that's LGBTQ.

[01:06:00] And it was the same exact phrasing.

[01:06:05] Some of the people in power are choosing not to hear us nor hear the LGBTQ community. The rules are in place. They're just not being honored and respected for a very

specific community, which happens to be the LGBTQ community. I think they're there. We're just they're not. No one is following through with it. And I think LGBTQ some LGBTQ folks are getting tired of this. We're like slowly being erased. And the political climate not right now isn't helping at all. But I think instead of us being continually being divided and being sort of pushed out.

[01:06:42] It's very colonial, it's very traumatizing and a lot of these things are actually, you know, that I think about trauma that can also be very insidious where we're being traumatized. We don't even know it. And what's our coping mechanism? We become silent. We move away. We isolate. And that's not OK.

[01:07:02] Thank you. And I want to be conscious of time. And I want to give our. I want to give our audience an opportunity to ask some questions. This could go on forever, but yeah, I think we have some mic and a good way. We have some mic runners who could. Anybody has questions, raise your hand.

[01:07:20] Hi, I'm Allison. I've been in the community. I lived off Harvard back in the early 80s, but that's not my question. Forget which guy? And she said, well, when Pioneer closed down, most gays are living in Capital Hill. So that's where the bars went. And you were just talking about moving to the West Seattle or the south end. And that's where all the gays have moved to. We're moving out and getting different. Places to live. So, I mean, I like it here. I feel comfortable on the hill up there. So maybe this is part of the natural. Way things go and on Broadway. There was something before Fred Meyer, too. It was like all the stores and stuff and a. I just rumor back into this is not my question. This is just talking.

[01:08:12] But back in 83. There were so many, not 83, a little bit later in the 80s.

[01:08:17] This Broadway was a full life with all the gay men and it's so crowded on the weekends. And I remember these two guys that I saw them all the time and then I didn't. And I know they passed away.

[01:08:29] And it was this. Gone. And I think that was a big change for the whole culture on the Hill. So maybe we're seeing the beginning battles. But my question is about the we're moving

where the people are. So maybe we're seeing the beginning of new gayborhood emerging sort of satellite communities.

[01:08:49] Well, we now have two bars in White Center and this weekend is White Center Pride. Matter of fact, we. Well, I came out, we had bars in Queen Anne, the U-District. I worked at a bar out in Fremont, which is still around. I'm not Fremont, but Wallingford. Will we ever see a gay bar in Bellevue? I doubt it. They like to party over here, but they don't wanna be seen in their neighborhood at something gay. But we had bars in Kent we have to have not everything centers around a bar anymore, because now we've learned to cruise and socialize online before we would go to a bar, a gay café, because it was a safe space. We could be ourselves. We could be out. Nowadays, the kids are doing it online and some of those older people are like, hey. Face time. Go see people and talk to him in person. You need that face time. You can't just spend all your time online. So there's still a need for.

[01:09:56] Physical place.

[01:09:59] And face time, I agree with Jeff for maintaining a physical space. Again, it's a symbol of our community.

[01:10:07] I'm all for conquer and divide. Let's get all over Washington State and create little villages, little hubs. You know, we just had Burien Pride. We know a White Center pride, Snohomish Pride. You know, we have all these like little hubs, but I think for historical purposes, not nostalgia.

[01:10:26] We need to keep and maintain some of these spaces because otherwise we will be forgotten.

[01:10:33] We for so long we've relied on oral history. There's very few people that have documented these things. Roger was just sharing with me this beautiful 500 page document of anything and everything that he did politically for our community. Where is that? It's nowhere else but in his hands. We need people and organizations, perhaps the groups that are, you know, represented here today can support Roger. People like Roger to continue that legacy. And so that that story isn't hidden in a cave in hieroglyphics that I don't understand. It needs to

be in our language. Right. It needs to be symbolized somehow. And I'm not saying, oh, let's huddle together and live in this tiny box along Broadway between Pike and Pine. No, I'm saying let's live. Live. Live. But there needs to be some symbol or token of respect and dignity for the folks that are living today. And most especially the ones that have come and gone that paved the way for us to sit here in this space so that we can go home and continue to live and love.

[01:11:45] Hi, my name is CASSIDY, and I am curious about maybe this is a question for Historic Seattle, but the that I think we we are I don't want to say we, but I feel very aware of how LGBT communities are increasingly affected by homelessness and development in Seattle. However, we also know how important housing density and providing affordable housing is throughout our city. And as that affects the hill, I'm curious how Historic Seattle and other historical preservation communities are approaching preserving culture while promoting housing density and making sure that we do have a place to live. Versus major single family homes with 15 bedrooms where two people live. So I'm curious how you approach that cause I can respond.

[01:12:41] Historic Seattle actually as a property owner provides a lot of affordable housing in our historic buildings. And what's great about that is it also provides a sense of connection to our city's history. There are people who need it. I got to talk talk a little closer. All right. Yeah. So I was just mentioning the Historic Seattle provides affordable housing in our historic properties. We think that's a great opportunity to engage a wider audience in historic preservation. But also, we do believe in a mix of preserving the cultural spaces that means so much to what makes Seattle what it is. It is it's not just one or the other. It's it's all of the above, really.

[01:13:24] Your question about preservation. Sorry, I feel like I keep talking about also a drag queen. So sorry. Not sorry. Preserving the culture piece. So that's outside and an extension of preserving physicality. Right? I think one of the ways that we can do that is through festivals. So I'll insert my sort of my other identity as a Filipino American. Last weekend, I co-hosted the Pagdiriwang, which is at the Tagalog term for festival celebration at the Seattle Center. Why can't we do something like that? Right. And I know there's pride, right. But we can do these things that are interactive, that have human, that allow for human connection. That's how we thrive, not just. Oh, let's designate this as a historical LGBTQ landmark. And nothing happens with that space. No. It needs to it needs to have things happening in it regularly. The AMP, Tony Radovich is here from AMP AIDS Memorial Pathway Project. You know, a core project with the city of Seattle. We're creating an AIDS memorial on Broadway. Well, actually,

technically, Nagle Place right next to Carl Anderson Park in that block. That will be the center. That courtyard will have a physical symbolism of how the HIV AIDS epidemic affected the Northwest region. And there will be housing there. And it's also culturally appropriate because they're thinking about low income housing. Right. As we talk about gentrification, all of that. But in all that, it's not just one physical object.

[01:14:50] They have scheduled many different cultural pieces to it so that that way it speaks not just to the folks that were impacted by AIDS then, but now. So it's very interactive and it uses a, you know, a human connection approach that that's how I think you can maintain culture. And again, a call to action identify where those spaces are at. I was lucky enough that the Double Header was still alive and well in the when I was Miss Gay Seattle. And I knew that that was a gay bar. In fact, I was even part of the underground tour. They would make fun of the photographs of the women with the black and white photos on the walls. Oh, and by the way, they're men, right? Using humor. But you know what? I'll take that because you're telling the story, too. But when I stepped down as Miss Gay Seattle, I wanted my show, the show to be at the Double Header to honor and respect the legacy of the gay Seattle crown. And so that that's, again, a call to action to folks. I know and I know people who have histories and stories that are so beautiful. Let's keep telling those stories and let's take advantage of modern day technology. And a call to action to the organization is. Be inclusive, invite us so that no one's story is ever forgotten or neglected and not heard and not seen.

[01:16:09] Hi, I'm Kara and I'm twenty two. I just came out like a year and a half ago. So I feel like I'm still really new to the community and I don't really know a lot.

[01:16:22] I live in South Issaquah. I don't have the chance to come to Seattle and, you know, hang out or do much.

[01:16:30] So I'm wondering what I can do to learn more about our history in the community.

[01:16:36] And like, what can I do myself, activism wise to be more vocal in everything like that? You warm my heart.

[01:16:46] I was also 22 when I came out. What can you do? To stay active and be an activist, be you? Be the best version of you. And my call to action to you research, especially now we have the Internet at our fingertips. But consider the source. Make sure you know it. But but really, the number one, look around. Talk to people. My first interactions with this when I was part of it, while I still am part of the Imperial Court of Seattle, was sitting at The Elite, never, ever judge someone by the way they look. You'll never know. I sat next to an older gentleman. It was just started just randomly started talking to me. Lo and behold, she was like the fifth Empress of Seattle. I was sitting next to royalty. And from that moment forward I learned about the history of Seattle. Pay respect to the elders, pay respect to the seniors of our community. Do that. Talk with people. That's how you remain active. You don't have to be physically so close to it. Right. We've got technology at our fingertips. Let's use that. You know, talk to people like Roger, you know, and get to know his story so that we never forget what what allows us to be out and proud as 22 year olds. Right. Thank you for coming out.

[01:18:15] By the way, and one one resource you can check out is the Seattle Civil Rights, the Seattle Civil Rights and Labor History Project. I worked on an LGBTQ activism section. I interviewed Roger and Aleksa and their interviews are up there. And so as a launching off point for for learning about some of this history, that's a resource you can check out.

[01:18:38] Hi. It was my turn. Okay. I remember a Capitol Hill from the old days from the late 70s and early 80s. And I feel like you're talking about a process that's happened all over the city where a community who made a community what it was are then displaced from that community. They create value, but they're displaced. When a big economic force comes in and in Seattle, that has to be we have to talk about the big businesses that have really changed the city. I feel like we're all being subject to these economic forces and we really need to fight back in some way. There is the money here for all kinds of things. We could give rent deals to small businesses so that we could still have a locally owned businesses in neighborhoods. We could have more affordable housing. We could do all this. We had the political will. And I wonder if anyone has anything to share about. Organizing on that level across the city. I'm not doing that myself, but I know that people are doing it and it feels like we're just losing so much. We're just becoming such a kind of anonymous. Big box. Automated upper middle class place. You know, our history is just disappearing.

[01:20:06] My name's Glenda West, and one thing I would say about the political is when we first got a commission in the city, it was known as the Sexual Minority Commission, and I chaired that and we brought domestic partnership to Seattle. So we have a lesbian mayor and we still have the commission that's now the LGBTQ commission. But we have a wing right in

the city that has direct access to the council and to the mayor. And it's really underutilized because people don't spend time with them and talk to them because they need to hear from the community because it's their job to bring those issues to the city. So one of the things I just want to say too that, every time I see something like this and there's no L representation, no lesbian on the committee, especially for us that are natives. You know, I'm going to just read into the record here. The bars nobody talked about like Born Street Disco, the Timberline, Crescent City Tavern, the East Lake East Disco, the Queen Bee Disco. And the other thing is that we're not talking about the historical sites for like the Lesbian Resource Center or the Gay Community Center. There's a lot of those organizations. And when you were talking about the big charities like where Chicken Soup Brigade was or Pride or the North West AIDS Foundation, those kind of big charities that got us through the crisis, we're not doing anything about their locations either. Thank you.

[01:21:30] My name is Adrienne Weller and I'm with Radical Women and the Freedom Socialist Party. And obviously what is going on and everybody's refer to it in some way is capitalism. And what got us our rights was a movement. And so we need to get that movement back. Gay pride shouldn't just be a big let's sell. You know, L boxes to each other or let's sell Spas. It should be it was protest. Stonewall was protest. The answer is a movement. There's no other way we're going to be able to get back and build what we had without a movement because the movement was what got us there in the first place. So I say to that young woman, come to a panel on June 30th, I'll give you a leaflet. It's about the history of Stonewall. We had George Bacon, who is the editor of the Gay Seattle Gay News there, and a whole lineup of people who have both new and older activists who are still fighting. And the theme is fight against the right wing. We have Trump. We have the Patriot Prayer. We have to be out on the streets against the Nazis. And this is happening right now. And I've been on the street against the Nazis and I'm over 70. So I'm sure everybody here can do it. It was just two weeks ago we were defending Ilhan Omar because the right wing was trying to tell us she couldn't speak in Bellevue. So that's I've got a leaflet here. I hope you all come to the forum on June 20th. That's get involved in a movement and that's make gay pride about protest again.

[01:23:09] Thank you. Think we have time for one more question. I'm I'm Roger Winters.

[01:23:14] I've been an activist here since the early 70s, and I'm I am writing it up. But one of the questions I have for the the panel is there are a lot of people in prime timers, in mature friends, for example, and other social circles. They have information that they've saved. They don't know where to go. They don't know who to share it with. There's a Northwest Lesbian Gay History Museum project. I just know to call Ruth Pettis. That's all I do. But one person

doesn't carry the history of the community forward by herself, and one project at the university doesn't. So where do people go with their recollections and their reminiscences and the button collections and so on and so forth that tell the story or the speeches and the leaflets and pamphlets on the political side of what was done? Who is keeping that up? Who is updating the map that the Northwest Lesbian Gay History Museum project did of this city to show the growth of our community and its disbursement over time? Sure.

[01:24:29] Yeah. Thank you for that. So there there are a few things that first off, if you have anyone in the audience, if you have historic materials, please get those in an archive. The University of Washington is continuing to develop a pretty robust LGBTQ archive there, especially from local organizations. And, you know, Tim Burak of the AIDS Prevention Project has donated his papers there. Bill Mariano of Act Up has donated his papers there. So if you have materials, please Cass Hartnett is the is the librarian in charge of Gender and Sexuality Studies. Get in touch with her and get those materials archived.

[01:25:18] I know that they've been various projects of including mapping all the bars over the years. Professor Brown from university has been involved with that. I know in the leather community. We started a program a couple of years ago locally of doing history workshops. And they've been very popular every spring as part of the Pride Week, and I'm part of the Leather Archives Museum in Chicago. And we've been preserving the leather community's history. There is a lot of Seattle history there. I also use my shop to display a lot of our old history. And I'm looking forward now. There's me in the new space of putting a lot of that stuff up. But there are some lead more people out there preserving our history. We can get it to an archive. Great. Begin. Get it to museum. Great. But I got to tell the stories for us Old timers. We need to start writing our stories down. Doing it, getting an oral history with somebody. The university has done a number of oral histories over the years, I've had been fortunate I've been interviewed for a couple of the great senior projects for students. But tell your stories. Pass the stories on and we all have those things sitting in the back of our closet. Those old posters, those old pamphlets, flyers, buttons, but just be very important in this community. Pass him on, don't give them to a yard sale. One of the major issues we dealt with in the 80s is that our history was tossed out with the trash when someone died. The families came in and said, this is trash. Important stuff was just tossed. There's a lot of people that started preserving stuff and there were some people that were.

[01:27:10] You had someone designated that should I get sick? Come in there and clean the house.

[01:27:21] Yeah, that's. Get the letters, the toys, the history, the books. Get them to safety. You know, I've been fortunate to receive several the collections from over the years from Lee Willis and other other people looking at that address book.


[01:27:38] Of all those people and the gold stars next to them, and I look at that and it's like every single name is gone, they're all gone. But their story still lives.

[01:27:51] It's writing it down. I just wrote the history for all the organizations I started 30 years ago, Seattle Men Leather. I did the short history of two pages for the organization. Right now about the 20 pages of the bigger history, in telling stories. And each group needs to do that. The bar histories. You know who? What happened in what bar? The events it started. What groups started in that bar? You know who started Northwest AIDS Foundation who started Chicken Soup Brigade, who started Lesbian Resource Center? Those are important stories that we need to write down and record and pass those on and get them to a safe place with the Internet, we're able to record easily online. Now.

[01:28:44] We link them together.

[01:28:47] It's a really good point. I'll just say add that there's some really great social media ways of sharing art, whereas archives are the best way to preserve these things, there's great ways of sharing them. There's some great Instagram accounts. Ward 5B is an excellent one, the AIDS Memorial Project and others. So so that you don't have to go to special hours in the basement of the UW library, which, as you know, can happen and should happen. There's ways of getting it out there and getting recognition for these for these paraphernalia and historical materials as well.

[01:29:16] If I may, I also want to say that I'd be happy to facilitate a connection with our Seattle Room as well, who I know are working on preserving more of our Seattle history and stories.



[01:29:26] Awesome. Thank you all so much. I know we've got a few minutes late and we don't have the space for very long. So I just want to thank everyone for spending your Saturday morning with us. I think it's been a great conversation. Historic Seattle is committed to working on the preservation of cultural spaces that contribute to the soul of our city. This is part of that discussion. It's an important part of our advocacy work. And so we thank all of our panelists for their unique and rich and beautiful stories and all of yours as well. We hope you'll visit our Web site, stay engaged with Historic Seattle. Reach out to us. If you have advocacy issues you want us to help you with or we're there for you and join us again. Big thank you again to our panel and happy pride. Thank you.

[01:30:09] This podcast was presented by the Seattle Public Library and Foundation and made possible by your contributions to the Seattle Public Library Foundation. Thanks for listening.

