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July 2018; Buffalo-Niagara LGBTQ History Project Minutes

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Buffalo-Niagara LGBTQ History Project

Meeting Agenda – July 3, 2018

Dramatis Personae: Ana, Nissa, Brigitte, Melissa, Christiana, Adrienne, Anne Marie, Carolyn, Collin, Moira, Amanda

IMPORTANT NOTE: Because we are very close to the kickoff event, we are having a meeting next week. It will be on **Tuesday, July 10 at 6:30 p.m.**, at Amanda's house.

Website Update:

Melissa and Brigitte, our webmasters extraordinaire, began the meeting by announcing that they have some basic content up for the website. In order to complete the design, though, they asked the group the following questions: 1) What message do we want the home page to convey? 2) What content do we want on the website specifically?

For the purposes of this meeting, the group decided to focus on the content of the homepage. We felt that the homepage should have the following content:

- A single featured document/featured piece of our digital archive, that could be an entryway into the broader archive. (Christiana, Anne Marie)
- Information about our next event and our next meeting. (Nissa)
- Information about whether we are seeking new members, and how people can get involved. (Carolyn)
- Contact info, and/or a means of subscribing to our email list. (Adrienne, Anne Marie)
- Information about our Patreon page. (Anne Marie)
- Possibly a community calendar.

Adrienne and Anne Marie drew up some possible templates for the home page. Anne Marie also suggested that Melissa and Brigitte look at the website of Justice for Migrant Families (<http://www.justiceformigrantfamilies.org>) for possible design ideas. Melissa and Brigitte are working with fixed templates, so it's unclear whether they will be able to exactly

reproduce the group's ideas, but they are at least good starting points. Amanda has, in the past, also expressed interest in helping with web design; once the kickoff event is over, there will hopefully be time and room to work further on the graphics of the website.

Group Homework: Everyone, look at the website. (<https://bnlgbtqhistory.omeka.net>) Look in particular at the tabs at the top. Do we need all of those tabs? Are there tabs we don't currently have, that we should? Basically, what subpages should we have? Come with ideas at the next meeting.

Patreon Update:

A brief update on the Patreon campaign from Anne Marie: the button designs have been finalized, and Anne Marie is planning to order them tomorrow. Once the buttons have arrived, we will plan a mail-out party.

Online Communication:

Nissa came to the group with a proposal for changing the way we plan events. At present, most of our planning has taken place in a large group message on Facebook. Nissa pointed out that there are a few problems with this mode of communication: it can get overwhelming in real time, it can quickly use up data on one's phone, and if one turns off the messaging app to conserve data during the day, one runs the risk of coming back to over 100 unread message. Plus, it's hard to keep track of topics in a group message.

The proposed solution: a private, closed FB group that is specific to the planning of this event series. This will be better than the FB working group, because a bunch of people who have never gone to meetings and aren't part of the planning process are on that group. Threaded conversations will make it easier for us to keep track of topics. Nissa offered to set the group up, and to make a couple of dummy posts to get us started.

In general the group was amenable to this idea, although a couple of concerns were expressed. We answered them in the following ways:

- *Will the group be private, or just closed?* Private; we want to keep our plans secret to those who may attend our events.
- *How will we decide who gets to join?* Anyone who has shown up to a meeting, or helped plan the event in any way, will be invited to the private group.
- *Should we try Slack instead?* We have tried Slack in the past, but people don't tend to post there. Facebook seems more amenable to group participation.

Ana expressed the concern that in the past, when we've used asynchronous modes of communication to plan things, she has had to repeatedly remind people to check the threads. She does not want to be placed in this position any longer, and wants people to commit to checking the page.

Following a show of hands, it was revealed that no one in the group was opposed to opening a Facebook group. Members were either in favor, or neutral on the subject. Nissa will therefore start a new Facebook group before the meeting on July 10.

She Walked Here Kickoff:

If you were not at the meeting, and you want to help out in one of these areas, please email us at bfolgbtqhistory@gmail.com!

Task	What Has Been Done	What Needs to Be Done	Who Will Do It
Press and Poster	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Amanda has finished designing the poster. ● As of today, Adrienne has 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Posters need to be printed. ● Posters need to be distributed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Adrienne will email poster and press release to Nissa. ● Nissa will put poster and

	finished press work.		<p>press release up on Facebook group, to facilitate multiple people printing it.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ana will ask the UB print shop if we can print our posters with them, and will get a price quote. • Anne Marie and Christiana will print some quarter sheets for easy distribution. • Adrienne will ask Marek where the Queer-B-Que posters were printed, and see if we can get some of our own posters printed in the same place. She will also try to print some posters at work on Monday. • Overall goal: To have a pile of posters to distribute to the city by Tuesday, July 10.
Venue	The Colored Musicians Club is secured for Saturday, July 21.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The venue's space needs to be checked, and we need to make sure its accessibility features work. Ana was going to do this sometime this week, but she no longer has a car with which to do it. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ana will secure a time with George of the Colored Musicians Club to check out the space. • Brigitte will drive Ana to the venue. Amanda has also

			agreed to come along, and any History Project member who also wants to check out the space is invited to do so.
Live Performances	We have brainstormed a group of women who might be able to read during the kickoff event. Beyond that, not much.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Absolute Goal: Decide which quotes are going to be performed by Tuesday, July 10. ● Reach Goal: Arrange chosen quotes in an order that makes them flow. ● Put potential speakers on notice by Tuesday. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Anne Marie, Brigitte, Carolyn, Amanda, and Nissa will decide quotes to be performed. ● Adrienne will invite Camille Hopkins and a bunch of women from the Dyke March committee to act as readers. ● Ana will invite Carol Speser and D to perform. ● Anne Marie will invite Sherri Darrow and Ruth Meyerowitz (whose mother is on the cover of the book) to read.
Interactive Map	Nissa has been doing a ton of legwork on this. She found a 1940s map in the UB archive, and created a prototype map with bar sites marked on it, which is available to the group on Google maps.	To get the map designed. This will be a physical map (as opposed to a digital map projected onto the wall). Moira suggests we check out the website Queering the Map as a possible prototype.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Amanda: Will have a basic draft of the map designed by Tuesday. Will also message Ana with the basic dimensions of the map. ● Ana: Will alert UB that we want them to eventually print the map, as well.

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Christiana: Can help us with the creation of Google maps, as needed.
Archive Exhibition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Members of the group have visited the Madeline Davis Archives twice to look for things to display. Carolyn and Ana report that most of the archival material they have found is textual rather than photographic in nature—drafts of chapters, ruminations about the research, and a lot of readings and notes on butch/femme sexuality. ● Adrienne had wanted to ask Madeline Davis if she had anything in her personal archives, but MD is recovering from a serious injury and cannot be asked to do more than she is already doing. 	<p>We brainstormed a number of possible solutions to this issue: cutting the archive portion entirely, creating a reading nook in a corner of the venue, etc. In the end, we decided not to cut this portion of the event, but to seriously decrease it.</p> <p>Using the archival material we have already researched, we will put together 1-3 “reading packets” of material that will hang close to the interactive map, and will give guests some historical context to the map itself.</p>	<p>Carolyn and Ana will work on assembling reading packets. Amanda will join them when she’s done with the interactive map.</p>

Walking Tour:

Last Sunday, Adrienne, Ana, and Nissa hunted down several historic lesbian bar sites mentioned in *Boots of Leather, Slippers of Gold*, and began the work of trying to cobble together a walking tour. Adrienne gathered a number of site

pictures into a PowerPoint, and presented them to the group, so that we could start talking about the creation of the walking tour for later in the summer.

Here are some of our preliminary observations:

- The sites are too far apart to realistically turn into a single walking tour, so we need to do some creative problem-solving on that front. Brigitte has suggested splitting the tour in half; it's possible that we could do something like a bus, van, or bike tour, as well
- The overwhelming majority of bar sites are now parking lots. At least one of them (the first Carousel site) is now the M&T Bank parking lot. We need to do more research on who owns these sites, but we strongly suspect that most of them are now owned by Carl Paladino.
- All of the Black lesbian bars from the 1950s are on Cherry Street--which looked very different in the 1950s. Nissa has done some sleuthing and determined that the street numbering has changed since the 1950s, so pinpointing the exact site of each bar is difficult. More importantly: Highway 33 was built right through the middle of Cherry Street. At least one of the bars, the 217, was located where the highway is now, and is more or less marked by the walkway that goes over Highway 33.

All in all, the walking tour is not pretty, but the ways in which it is not pretty are provocative and important. Our next steps involve figuring out how to make the route navigable, what we will say on the tour, and what acts we will perform to mark the existence of these bars.

To that end, Adrienne will send everybody a copy of the PowerPoint. Collin and Moira have expressed interest in helping with the walking tour, so she will get in touch with them.