

## Transcript of an Interview with Carol Speser

Interviews with LGBTQ Elders completed by Keith Gemerek, Box 74

<https://library.buffalostate.edu/archives/LGBTQ>

34:29 minutes

[ ] = indicate extra information or uncertainties where scribe couldn't decipher what was said

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**Keith:** Today is December first—

**Carol:** [in the background] World's AIDS Day.

**Keith:** —2004 and I'm here with Jim Haynes and with Carol Speser at Temple Beth Zion in Buffalo and this is a recording for the Buffalo GLBT Archives for the elders of the gay community project funded by the Mid-Atlantic Foundation hosted by CEPA Gallery. Okay Carol, huh, one of the things that we're trying to do is collect the stories of people who have had positions of leadership and, huh, responsibility in the gay-lesbian-transgender community. Your name, of course, is right at the top of the list because you have been so many different kinds of things, not just one thing, but so many different things. I guess what I would like to have you discuss first is, uh, how you came to be where you are now. What were the motivating factors that caused you to, uh, become what Carol Speser is now?

**Carol:** Ooh, now that's a tough one. I don't even know that. Um, when I was—when I was in sixth grade I knew that I was different and my friend, Janet Ness, said that, um, boys who like boys and girls who like girls are called homosexuals. I went and looked it up at the Fairfield Library in Amherst Street and it didn't look like a good thing to be a part of back in the 50s or whatever and it didn't seem like a good group to hang out with. It was in a litany of child molesters, and you remember that litany, and drug addicts and stuff. So I stuffed that all down, and dated, and did a pretty good job at dating. Fake and dating. And went to college and in college I dated this fella, John, um, most of the time and, huh, one time we did a lot of drugs and one time John said to me, um, [muttering, inaudible speaking], "I think I'm gay," and I said, "You think you're gay? I think I'm gay!"—or, like, homosexual. We didn't have the word "gay" there. And so then, um, so John went to a psychiatrist who told him it would take 20 years to cure him. And then John came back and told me that. And, uh, so then I came with the worst idea of my life, which was, I said to John, "Well this is awful. I think we should kill ourselves together." So, um, so we tried and he died and I didn't. And so I wound up in a mental hospital for that for two years. And they gave me shock treatments and a lot of stuff to try to beat that—beat that gay stuff out of me. But it didn't and I did lot of sort of mystical healing in the hospital because I didn't talk for a very long time because I was upset that I had said that to have led John to need to do that. But when I emerged, I knew that would be my path would be to—so that, you know, so that nobody, no kids like us, would ever have to do that. Because we were like 19. So, that's

how I got here. That was my commitment and you know, so I would say. Now I get awards, get my picture taken. Years ago I just got a diagnosis. Now I get awards. Bah-boom. You know.

*Time stamp — 3:29*

**Keith:** Well, we're, you know, that's—

**Carol:** [in the background] That's the beginning.

**Keith:** —absolutely fascinating. Huh, but what now that you have become, you're out and you're an openly gay woman, and you have a partner and you are very active in the community. I know that you have done a great deal of work with the, huh, Solstice. And I attended a number of those situations. And how did that come about and what's going on now?

**Carol:** Politics. I started in politics. I started, um, my role in the community, if I was looking at it historically, has always—has been to shift, to help shift the community to the next level of consciousness. So I helped shift us out, I-I-I did the first outdoor pride celebration and, huh, um, I did the first database mailing kind of thing, and I did the first spiritual stuff. I helped break the silence on spirituality so, um, when I—and I founded Stonewall democrats, the politics stuff. When I would do the politics, um, I would, um, it was all about changing r—laws and rules and policies so people would be nice to us. But, um, you know, and I began to see that it really all rested with us an-an-and ourself—and how we saw ourselves. You know, that internalized oppression was really about the most brutal thing that—that—and there were certainly reasons that we had it. And I began to see that might be the core problem and we got a lot of our, um, perceptions from ourselves, our-our ways that we-we thought gay people were from the culture and the culture got it from religion, so I knew that religion was a ground zero kind of place, began to see the difference between spirituality and religion, and started to shift my work into that area. Even when I did politics, I would say when I would do politic things, when, you know, meeting with people, other politicians, meeting with, um, sometimes in a troubleshooting way, with people who had done homophobic things, I would say, “I have come to liberate you from your disconnection from the oneness.”

**Keith:** [chuckles]

**Carol:** You know. [chuckles] But that was it! Because we knew we were all in this together. We—you know, but they were otherizing us, so, um, so I-I-I began to see that the context was a healing one, not political. That it was about, um...accepting who we were, embracing who we were, true self. You know, it-it-it was not about a battle to change policies and laws. The other thing too is that our oppressors were in worse shape, because at least we knew what was happening. I mean, we knew they were wrong, but they didn't know they were, you know. And it wasn't to me ever Coke versus Pepsi. It was ethics, it still is, ethics and moral. We're on the side of justice and on the side of love and, you know, frankly on the side of how I think of kind and loving universe works, you know. So, so I—politics became healing work and healing turned into, you know, overtly addressing this spiritual void.

**Keith:** Now, since you have been addressing this spiritual and—and all those aspects, would you address the notion that the, huh, has been propound recently, in the recent elections about the morality of the, uh, Republican Party and amorality of the Democratic Party and the leaders in those two parties and what—how do you reconcile or do you reconcile those aspects of morality and politics there?

**Carol:** Well, you know, I-I don't really, you know, I don't really know how I reconcile it. I mean, I have to tell you, they're wrong and at some point they're going to realize it. Because at some point, as more and more people begin to say this is who I am, whether it's to say I'm-I'm gay, I'm transgendered, I have a gay kid, I have an uncle who is, you know, my mother has come out in the condominium in Florida, you know. In a book club thing where people started saying, well I think that character is a lesbian and my mother took a breath and said, [whispering] "My daughter's a lesbian". And then the room got real silent, but then pretty soon a couple other people said so is my kid. [Keith laughs] So as more and more people come out, I'm very sure that, um, that people who—who have oppressed us or I donno, use those politic words, but people who have—who have otherized us, who—who are—who were taught, wrongly, just like we were taught wrongly that—I mean—to use the Bible and lots of other things to justify slavery, that women—you know—were property, and I mean there's just a-the-the Native Americans were treated horribly. I mean, we're in an-in an unfolding process towards freedom and we are one piece of this and transgendered people, I consider myself gay and the transgender to be part of this, but I, they weren't on the horizon when we started this work, so who's—who can't we see? You know, who is beyond us, you know?

**Keith:** [in background] Yeah.

**Carol:** Who still need—who still isn't living their true self. I think it might be animals, but I won't go there.

**Keith:** [laughs] Don't you think that this depends a great deal on who is defining the word morality?

**Carol:** Oh yeah. Yeah, I-I think the only thing—the only—uh, I think, um, the only thing that I think that is true in the universe is love. I think-I think, um, hate and fear—fear is a subcategory—hate is a subcategory of fear, anger is often a part of fear. You know, people fear us. They fear what's different. And, uh, I remember Holly Neer once said, uh, her parents taught her fascination, not fear. Being gay or transgendered has an odd factor 'til, you know, it has a half-life though. People get desensitized to it real fast. So...I have lots of thoughts on the morality end of it all, but th—but the—because you can use the Bible or other religious things to justify any kind of oppression, um, but kindness, the Dalai Lama said my religion is kindness. Kindness, compassion, you know, those are universals and so, you know, when you look at that—

**Keith:** Acceptance?

**Carol:** Hmm hm. I know you're going to ask me about the Solstice, but a thought just went through my head. Why did I start these Solstices? Because they're earth centered. And they're about the darkest day of the year, which is a time of introspection and reflection and, huh, it's a still point on the earth and, um, and I wanted to have a, sort of a holiday something for people and also a ritual that would be meaningful. But because it was earth centered, not, huh, and I stress the—being Jewish, we have Hanukkah at the solstice and Jesus's birthday is at the solstice. There's a lot of things that happens at the solstice though. It's not religious specific or Wicca specific, but one of the things with, um, with it being earth centered is I-I had a life altering experience when I went to the Rose Center in New York City. Um, the planetarium where you come in and along the wall are pictures and descriptions of the story of the universe from the Big Bang, you know, right on up, every-every pace you take is so many billion years and at the very end of this very long road, there is a piece of hair this way, behind the plexiglass and the piece of hair is how long humans have been a part of this universe. And it began to...it began to illustrate to me very clearly how we are so much, uh, not much in this story of the universe and then this little abrade tributary of gay people not being part of the story of the universe, not being part of creation, and if you're looking at it a religious way, um, was just nuts. So I—when I had—when I would do the Solstices, they were very grounded and that theory, in that theoretical framework, or that belief and I would always begin it with you are part of the universe. You're, you know, uh, with-with the drama of that, to-to take us from that Big Bang to our breath, you know, in the beginning and say that we are a part of this. That has always been a message for me as an activist, whether I'm working in politics or in a spiritual context or whatever, but that we are a part of this, you know.

**Keith:** Carol, would you address the notion, you know, that in some religions and in some churches, there is a very anti-gay bias and they preach from the pulpit all sorts of horrible things about gays and lesbians.

*Time stamp—13:00*

**Carol:** It's so sad. Um, it's sad, but it-but it's like, as we're taking pictures here, a snapshot in time. You have to—we know it is—there's—everything's changing, so we are—so this, these pictures, they're being—they're literally capturing this moment. And things are changing as we speak, so I'm hopeful that-that-that-that the way gay people are hurt by organized religion is, you know, get to a place where won't get hurt anymore. But-but, uh, terrible things are said. Particularly, you know, um, certain religions are worse than others and I don't know, you know, I don't know why it even started that way. I once did some research to see why gay people, why did it evolve this way and I think it might be when we stopped being hunters and gatherers and started to farm, you know. Then it wasn't good to have people that weren't procreating and bringing more people to help on the-on the, you know, in the work. That's my guess on how it got to—there was a value judgment that there wasn't the-wasn't the best thing. Though, in other cultures, like Native American and some other cultures, it's, uh, you know, people love us.

**Keith:** Now can I ask you to address the ethnic issues of the various cultures?

**Carol:** Well, I mean, they're different cultures see it, you know, see gay—you know, see the Berdache or they call them in Native American traditions and I mean, different people see it differently, but, but um, but it's—it breaks my heart that, because it's a very complicated oppression, it's about sin. It's not even—it's about a state of being, not what you do, because we know we're gay no matter if we're having sex, which is such a small part of our lives, you know, it's blown up so much. For-for all the sex I've had, this life is so hard, you know what I mean [laughing]. Sorry, you know what I'm talking about. It's like it's a small part of your life, you know. But it's everything! But it—yet, there's a paradox. It's everything because it's who you love. So, I probably lost my train of thought. But it-but it's-it-it—when we're pressed for this state of being, you know...

**Keith:** [in background] Uh huh.

**Carol:** It makes me, it makes me very sad when I think I'm the...the truth of it is we're very old souls and I feel that, um, gay people are here for, not just in a random way, but probably for a big reason. We're always people that are change agents. We tend to see outside the boundaries. I mean I could even corroborate this. I got a master's degree in creative studies. I bet I could.

**Keith:** [laughs in background]

**Carol:** But, um, there's never been a study on it. [zipping sound] I...

**Keith:** Okay—

**Carol:** —we're here for a reason, so...

**Keith:** Let's—let's shift from the religiosity or the spirituality.

**Carol:** To a good story?

**Keith:** Well [laughs lightly]

**Carol:** [also laughs in background]

**Keith:** To a good story and then switch from that to the, uh, Stonewall Democrats. I'd like to hear what—about them from you.

**Carol:** Okay. When I started it, you mean?

**Keith:** Uh huh.

**Carol:** Well I saw there was a need to have a, huh huh, political club. So, at the time I had been very involved with Governor Cuomo and the Office of Lesbian and Gay Concerns with Lance Ringel and some other folks there. Huh, I'm drawing blanks. That's why I gotta write things down. I can't remember names. Um, but, um huh, I-I had Shelia Healy from the Office of Gay and Lesbian Concerns came into town, specifically she and I planned that I would call a meeting to start this organiza—to start an organization for politics locally. I asked this guy, Bill Goodman, he has since moved away, if he would like to coordinate it ahead of time. I said I

would throw it to him. When we, you know, as if it was random, but he should accept it fast, you know.

**Keith:** [laughs]

**Carol:** You know, because it was like a pre-planned meeting thing. So, um, a lot of people came, but then this one woman in our community, who's still here, somehow started bitching and got it off on the wrong track. Nothing could get—nothing, you know, it didn't take, so a couple months later Shelia had to come back and then it took and Bill coordinated it, Bill Goodman. And I said, well someone should coordinate it. What should we call it? How about, you know, Stonewall Democrats? But it was—but it—I thought of it ahead of time, so, um, then we had a political voice. And, uh, a way to...

**Keith:** Could you discuss that political voice a little bit more in detail?

**Carol:** Well, eh, when I started doing activism, people participated as individuals, but never as a-as a-as a group. Gay people were p-participating in democratic politics, but, you know, [inaudible 17:49] politics as individuals who might be out, but never as a community. So it was my friend, Bill Eaton, and you know Bill. You remember Bill because he passed away from lung cancer. And, um, tonight, as the AIDS Memorial Service people will—someone will call out his name.

**Carol:** But he didn't die of AIDS, that's the interesting thing. People thought he did, because he was such a...I won't go into that.

**Keith:** [chuckles] Well you can.

**Carol:** He was very—he was—he had a lot of...he was...he had a lot of, um...sex, boyfriends, whatever. I didn't even know how to get there, but you know. He didn't hurt for that. Okay, Bill was a wonderful guy and he had a friend, Bill Hoyt, who was running for mayor, Sam Hoyt's dad, who was our assemblyman. And Bill's daughter, Whitney, was a lesbian and Bill wanted to run for mayor. His daughter Whitney, who lived in San Francisco, said, you can't run for the mayor of Buffalo unless you vow the gay community. So Bill Hoyt contacted Bill Eaton. They were friends and Bill Eaton called me. We met for breakfast at the, um, at the restaurant. What's that old hotel on North? Why can't I think of the name? You know...

**Keith:** Norwell?

**Carol:** You know, right next to Walgreens.

**Keith:** I know. We pass it all the time.

**Carol:** I know. I, ah, okay we met there for breakfast and, huh, he talked about wanting to involve the gay community in his election and so I got people together and we worked very actively on it. And that was the first time people had ever worked on, um, a political campaign as a group. And it was good. And then-and then that experience led to the Stonewall Democrats stuff. And also, another time I coordinated lesbians and gays for Cuomo, Bill and I did in this

area. And I got a lot of people working as volunteers for one of Cuomo's races. And um, so many because we're so eager, you know, to participate that they made me coordinate a round of volunteers for the entire campaign for that thing and then I—then I got a lot of gay people volunteering, but I have a story out of there that was—that's a good one. The guy that was sent here by Cuomo's campaign to manage the Buffalo office called me into his office one day and says to me, "I have—I wanted to let you know that I'm—I'm gay." He's in the closet. I said, "Really? I didn't know that." And, uh, because I didn't. Such as you can't tell. Women can't tell, I don't know. But, um, he said, "And I like that you have all these gay people working here, but I want you to get rid of one of them. She's too dyke-y looking. Her name is Bobby Previs [spelling?]."

**Keith:** [laughs] Oh!

**Carol:** "And so I want you to get rid of her and I don't want her to work here." So, um, I was just freaked by that. So I didn't know what to do and it was at the time of outing. So I—I-I thought of outing him in a big way, because I—the last thing I was going to do was, you know, hurt Bobby.

**Keith:** Uh huh.

**Carol:** But, you know, I-I caved and I regret that I didn't out him. I quit. And then a lot of people were pissed off at me, saying, "Why did you quit?" And I never said because it was, you know, I was supposed to fire Bobby.

**Keith:** [chuckles]

**Carol:** You know. I wasn't going to do it. But, huh...

**Keith:** Well, now, you mentioned Bill Eaton and you mentioned, huh um, the Hoyts and-and Bill Hoyt.

**Carol:** Uh huh.

**Keith:** And, huh, we're really trying to get some sense of history of some of the people who are no longer with us. Now, Bill Hoyt is no longer with us and Bill Eaton is no longer with us.

**Carol:** Uh huh.

**Keith:** And would you care to say more about either one of them or both of them?

**Carol:** Bill Eaton and I did a lot of early politics together. We were on the founding board of ESPA, Empire State Pride Agenda. And we used to take the train to Albany to be on the founding board. They were in a big mish mash and all the white boys from New York City were not very nice to us hicks over here in, huh, this end of the state. So they would hold meetings without us and then they would—it was just screwy. We resigned twice. Um, but they talked us, sweet-talked us back into it, but Bill was fun. Um, he had a drinking problem and he struggled. He would get into a treatment plan, but then there was no way to socialize, you know. It's complicated how bars are such a part of our history, so that you're pretty much—didn't—hm—

years gone by, he had no way to socialize if you weren't at the bars. So Bill would try to be sober, but then he wouldn't have anyone to hang out with. So he struggled with that a lot. Um, but, uh, we did a lot of early stuff. We represented Buffalo a lot in means with Governor Cuomo when he would have people from all over the state there because he was very good about—on the gay issues. And the first time we met Governor Cuomo, I was excited and, well everybody was excited, so Bill took my picture with Governor Cuomo and I took his picture. And my picture that Bill took of me and Governor Cuomo didn't turn out because Bill—it was early in the morning and—

**Keith:** [chuckles in background]

**Carol:** —he was really shaky, so whenever I show this picture, it's very blurry and they say, what's that? I said, well it's Bill's drinking problem. [laughs] It's like right there, so, um, because he struggled with that all the time. He's-he's—

**Keith:** Would you care to address more about Governor Cuomo? He was fairly pro-gay. I was on his—the—Governor Cuomo's task force for gay and lesbian concerns for four years.

**Carol:** He's good.

**Keith:** And, uh, would you care to talk about Cuomo more?

**Carol:** I thought he was a really ethical person and really—a really, um, good person and very pro-gay. And Jinny [Virginia] Apuzzo was his first liaison and then she had, you know, like huh, she was one of the commissioners and it was no longer a gay thing because she was just—became one of his commissioners. But once I was in this meeting, I was about forty, um, activist meetingg with-with Governor Cuomo and he, um, and people were bitching about that he wasn't more vocal and more out and more supportive in a public way and they were making a lot of demands of him. They were even demanding that he—that he trade off the death penalty in support of SONDA [Sexual Orientation Non-Discrimination Act] Bill. You know, because he could, you know, he goes, well why don't you just let that—I-I—you know, it's right, but I said, why don't you dump—somebody said, why don't you dump the-the-the death penalty thing and-and stop fighting that and be supportive to Cuomo? That's the trade off in the-in the, you know, in the senate with, you know, the leaders. Um, so uh, he-he wouldn't do that, but-but people were bitching about all the things they wanted him to do. And he said, “Well what could I do to be more visible?” And so, um, this one guy's name is Howie Katz, I remember his name, and he said, “Play on our-our basketball team for the Gay Games.” And, huh, so, um, and the room got quiet. And Governor Cuomo said, “How tall are you, Katz?” And he said six-something and Governor Cuomo said, “I could take you on a one to one—one on one or whatever.” And-and uh, he said, “I'll play on your team.” So suddenly the energy in the room was different. We didn't have one more right in terms of legal rights. We didn't have one policy change, but Governor Cuomo was playing on the basketball team and everybody was happy and we ended the meeting and we, you know, you walked out you had—[inaudible 25:20]—that is really what all the laws were about. You want that acceptance. You want that ease with the way people participate in



your life, so Governor Cuomo gave us exactly what he wanted—what we wanted. He played on the basketball team. So I always liked that he did that—

**Keith:** [laughs]

**Carol:** —for the Gay Games. He did pass the SONDA bill two years later, but I mean it wasn't just his responsibility, but-but that was something.

*Time stamp—25:44*

**Keith:** Well, now, you also mentioned Bill Hoyt, who was one of our—at least one of my heroes.

**Carol:** [in the background] Me too.

**Keith:** He's a man who—whom I really worked.

**Carol:** Me too.

**Keith:** Do you—could you address the issue of Bill Hoyt and then the inheritance of his legacy from his son—by his son Sam?

**Carol:** Yeah, he's—well, Bill was...uh...he was a ver—he was a scholar, you know, intellectual kind of guy. And I—and he was a very kind man and progressive. Where I come in on this is-is his daughter Whitney, encour—was a lesbian, encouraging him to, you know, reach out and that was just really, really important, because lots of politicians reach out now because it's a smart thing to do to get votes and, you know, this small constituency counts these days in terms of votes. But there was nothing happening that was—there was nothing beneficial for him. He did the right thing. And his son does that. His son Sam does the right thing and-and...uh...regardless of the issue, he operates from—I may disagree with him on some—he operates with a moral compass.

**Keith:** Uh huh.

**Carol:** You know. And I—and I'm—and I appreciate that. When his dad died, and I was in this—this is a side thing to talk about healing and stuff. I was in this healing group at the Unity Church and, um, Tonawanda with Bill's wife, because Bill was waiting—had a beeper, waiting for a heart transplant. Went from the Cleveland Clinic and I go to the Cleveland Clinic, so we knew each other that way. And so, um, when he died, on the floor of the assembly with, you know, perhaps he should have been in bed, but, um, but I think he died with his boots on. So when he died, um, Sam was offered the, you know, to take his place to be appointed and I talked to Sam on the phone and so did Bill Eaton. And Sam said, "Well I didn't have a chance to grieve. I don't know if I should take it." We both said, "Oh you grieve later. You take this. You take this seat, because you're—it's not going to come back to it." At that time Sam just worked for Senator Moynihan and he was in—he did nothing extraordinary, but I think he's a—he's a—he stuck his neck out and he's the most pro-GLBT, um, elective official that I've ever seen in this area.

**Keith:** Okay, uh, we're going to the end of our time, but what I would really like to have you talk about is **Carol** Speser and what her future—how she sees her future, uh, in the politics and in the, um, spirituality role in gay-lesbian-transgendered people in Buffalo.

**Carol:** Okay.

**Keith:** Big bite.

**Carol:** Well I think—I don't think there's—I have switched my context to work to working in a spiritual way, in a healing way, with GLBT people, but the politic end of it is in the area of religion, because that is the frontier. Because getting policy changes in the churches, getting people to change the way things are done in the churches, and synagogues, and mosques. That is—that's where the politics are, that's where the values come from that influence the politicians, so-so I find it merging there. You know—you know, doing spiritual work with, um, GLBT people and that's just another, you know, in a variety of ways, but-but the organizing end, that's in the, um, congregations. And I think it should be—I think it's all local work. We can't change anything on, uh, you know, on a—I-I can't get the board of rabbis or the Vatican or anybody that—you know, I don't believe I'm going to get in there, but I can get the priest at the Parish down the street and I can get the rabbi in the Orthodox synagogue. I can get them to stop saying, you know, hurtful things. I can get them to say God loves you. I mean, everybody can stop hurtful behavior and we can do that locally. Plus, Buffalo is very small, very interconnected, and everybody knows each other, you know, two degrees of separation. You know, instead of six, I always say, you know, because of the wind chill factor. But, um, we-we know each other and from lots of different ways and people...won't be—can easily stop being mean or wounding to people that they know once those people are out, because you know some politics it's about, you know, in large cities, a constituency base group of people going to try to change something, convince people to change things, but this is about somebody's nephew and somebody's son and somebody's cousin and somebody's neighbor and it all...it all makes it so much more understandable. Like the transgender law we have passed all, I'll stop here too, but the transgender law that we passed a couple years ago, um, I worked with Camille Hopkins and, um, they call it the Camille law, because all it was was Greg Hopkins, who worked at City Hall, was...wanted to be a girl, you know, that's how he saw it, and if-if Greg, who we adore, wants to be a girl, we'll pass a law to protect him. And so-so it wasn't any more complicated than that and I was at the-at the hearing and it was a very loving tribute to Camille. It was not about politics, except when people said this is—I want, this is, my son turns out to be transgender, I want him protected too. It was a—I have a transcript of it, it's very Buffalo. It's very sweet, so that's why I think things are easy to change in a smaller city.

**Keith:** Okay, we discussed a wide ranging number of things. Is there anything that you would like to add that you think we haven't really discussed that you want to say?

**Carol:** No, I-I-I'm, you know, I-I-I was going to say I'm going to—I'm in a Chaplin program to become a certified Chaplin sort of like clergy. During this sort of introspective time in my life, I want to—I am going to start writing down a lot of my, you know, funny and sad, and neat

experiences. They are, you know, part of history and collect the tapes and make this commitment on tape, see. [laughs]

**Keith:** Okay. [laughs]

**Carol:** That's what I'm doing. I will start doing that. I-I have participated in a lot of stuff and I don't want to die unexpectedly and, uh, you know—

**Keith:** [in background] Yeah.

**Carol:** —you know what I'm saying. I feel responsible and to not...that—to-to-to put that in order. [at the same time as Keith] And I think it's [blocking] the rest of my life.

**Keith:** [at the same time as Carol] That's-that really...[Carol stops talking] why I have been working with the archives, because we have a past but no history.

**Carol:** That's good.

**Keith:** And, uh, we need to collect all this stuff because of all the times that things have happened in Buffalo, we forget that and we don't know what—eh—like, you know, those of us who are [clears throat] the gay and lesbian and transgender seniors, uh, are not always going to be around here. Uh, there will come a time when we're no longer present and there will come a time when our memories are not as good. [chuckles]

**Carol:** I think that time has come and gone already.

**Keith:** [laughing] I do too.

**Carol:** I-I got a button that said, "I don't remember your name either." [laughs]

**Keith:** [laughs]

**Carol:** That's funny, but—

**Keith:** Well anyway...

**Carol:** I'm okay with—I-I—you, we're on the same wavelength and-and keep doing this project, it's the right thing, because it makes me start—because I'm just all over the place on the tape, but, you know, and it shows me, I'm just like, shooting ducks that are jumping up.

**Keith:** [laughs]

**Carol:** I have to write stuff down. And I've saved a lot of—I'm a librarian too, so I have really archived well.

**Keith:** Just remember any of that stuff that you want to donate to the archives we will be happy to—

**Carol:** It's all gonna go to the archives and a lot of stuff is already there, but I mean I have to sort it. But I have-I have just, you know, I've moved a couple of times, but I—but they're in order—you know Joyce Cromwell, right?

**Keith:** Uh huh.

**Carol:** Because Joyce took this tape in boxes and my photos, because I've taken—I've documented a lot and so she's putting them in order, you know. So she takes a box and, you know, so it's good.

**Keith:** Well thank you very much.

**Carol:** Well thank you. I was honored to be a part of it.

Other male voice: Thank you, Carol.

**Carol:** Okay. I hope I said the right stuff and...

**Keith:** Well it was, you said, you did say the right stuff, because whatever you said was the right stuff.

*Time stamp—34:29*