

Watch this Space
for New Logo!
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Lambda Archives of San Diego NEWSLETTER

"Preserving and Teaching Our History"

Our New Name: Lambda Archives of San Diego

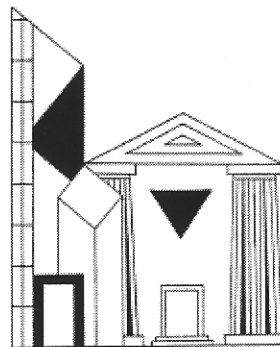
by Sharon K Parker

What's in a name? For starters, it is your identity. It is also your history. Many of us were born into a name and didn't have the luxury or freedom of choosing our own. For others who have changed their names, it can be an empowering experience.

Here at "the archives," our name has gone through several changes. We have celebrated our 15th year, our teenage years of self-identification if you will, by choosing a new name to reflect and encompass our rich and diverse San Diego community. Our new name, **Lambda Archives of San Diego** (serving the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, and questioning community) does just that.

The Board formally adopted the name after careful thought and discussion. We obtained valuable input from our members, volunteers, and representatives from the bisexual and transgender organizations in our community.

In December 1987 when the Lesbian and Gay Archives of San Diego was founded (primarily by Jess Jessop, who collected materials in virtually every corner of his apartment), the search was on not only for a new home but also for a logo that would reflect the true meaning and mission of the Archives. The logo was created in 1988 by the late Tim Grummon, the local artist who designed not only for San Diego



Original Logo 1988-1993



LGHSSD Logo 1993-2003



Prototype of New Logo

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Obelisk Bookstore Celebrates 10 Successful Years

by Frank Sabatini

It was January, 20, 1993. Our nation's capital was swept up with excitement over Bill Clinton's presidential inauguration. And here in San Diego, an aspiring entrepreneur was officially opening a landmark business that would outlive Clinton's two terms in office.

The timing was pure coincidence, quips owner Bruce Kerschner, but the inaugural event has served as an easy

reminder of the store's anniversary.

Obelisk remains San Diego's only bookstore that speaks directly to LGBT audiences. Most of its tomes are either written by LGBT authors, both obscure and well known, or pertain to myriad issues and subjects that affect our community.

"I used to check out the gay bookstores whenever I traveled to other cities. And I realized that San Diego didn't have anything that spe-

cialized mostly in gay and lesbian subjects," Kerschner recalls.

So after completing graduate school at San Diego State University, Kerschner decided to launch the business. "The store was a success from day one," he says. "And it's paid for itself ever since."

Kerschner originally intended to incorporate a coffee shop into the quaint 2,000-square-foot space, but ended up using the entire floor plan as the bookstore. The espresso ma-

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President's Report

by Sharon K Parker

It's Pride time once again. This Pride season we celebrate not only the achievements of our community, but also the adoption of our new name, Lambda Archives of San Diego.

Pride takes many forms throughout the year, but in particular at this time. Where can you witness such a diverse cross-section of our community and its

supporters? From the secular to religious organizations, from social services to entertainment venues, from businesses to recreation – our community has it all!

But it's also important that the Archives has it all. What do you do with the brochures, programs, invitations, pamphlets, letters of record, organization "start-up" papers and – yes, sadly – dissolution papers? What becomes of these materials when your closets and garage are too full? Before you pitch them into the trash barrel, contact us.

Remember, the Archives had its beginnings as stacks of materials stored in Jess Jessop's apartment. From that beginning we have grown to our present collection of books, periodicals, photos, news clippings, personal documents, art works, and ephemera. But we need more! There are individuals who have stories to share; and there are organizations

whose documents have not yet found their way to our archival boxes.

Take a moment and consider the items you may have collected throughout the years. Are you ready to part with them? Do you wonder if they are of historical value? Are you just *not sure*? Give us a call at (619) 260-1522. Or email us at lghssd@aol.com. We will be glad to discuss these matters with you.

Here's how else you can help. We seek volunteers to help with the critical work of preserving our history by processing our many collections. If you can't volunteer, please donate what you can to fund our vital work.

Claim the Pride in your community. Take Pride in your history. Have Pride in your local Archives that is striving to ensure your place in the pages of history. And, while you're enjoying the San Diego Pride weekend, keep your eyes open for history-in-the-making!

Board Member Debbie Lou Receives PhD

Her dissertation studies Hillcrest as a gay neighborhood

Our newest board member Debbie Lou documented and analyzed the development of the Hillcrest neighborhood in her PhD dissertation, which she successfully defended in May. She is a graduate of the Department of Sociology, University of California, Santa Barbara.

Titled *Gay/Lesbian-Straight Relations and Neighborhood Revitalization: The Construction of "Positive" Gayness in Hillcrest*, Debbie's dissertation examines the history of how and why gays and lesbians chose Hillcrest as the site of community building. She describes how lesbians and gays contributed to the revitalization of Hillcrest, while fostering acceptance, cooperation, and friendship between lesbian/gay and heterosexual people in community relationships.

"I have always had a personal and intellectual concern with the experiences and struggles of minority populations," explained Debbie, "particularly those of racial/ethnic, gender, and sexual minorities. I became interested in Hillcrest from having grown up in San Diego and frequenting its cafes. I observed its colorful and diverse character, and wanted to understand how it is that a once largely stigmatized group can become so open, vibrant, and influential within a certain neighborhood."

Debbie is now an adjunct professor for the San Diego Community College and Southwestern College districts.

We extend our congratulations to Debbie and proudly house her scholarly contribution in our collection.

Obelisk

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chine he had purchased was soon sold to California Cuisine.

The store's original inventory consisted of about 80 percent books. But Kerschner began diversifying his shelves with music CDs, movie rentals, bumper stickers, and other novelties that he refers to as "sidelines."

The literary sections, however, remain a major draw. Aside from carrying numerous LGBT titles, the store also features a section for *New York Times* best sellers. Humor books abound as customers stumble upon such titles as *Bad Hair*, *The Easy Bake Oven Gourmet Book*, and *Is Martha Stewart Living?*

The store has also hosted book signings with popular gay and lesbian authors such as Greg Louganis,

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New Name

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Walks for Life, but also had showings of his *Panels of Love*.

Following is how Tim described his logo design:

Two buildings – one sleek and modern, the other classic Greek, and (of course) a triangle placed directly above one of the building's doors.... The skyscraper represents San Diego as a modern and vibrant city, and the Archives is part of the present, yet the present needs the past. That is why the Greek building has been integrated into the skyscraper's structure.

In 1993 the Board and members voted to change the name to Lesbian and Gay Historical Society of San Diego (LGHSSD). There was concern that the term "archives" didn't fully describe our work.

An archives was perceived as a repository for materials, while an historical society included education, public outreach, exhibits, and more.

Artist Julie Warren, then a Board member, designed the LGHSSD logo with the late Bruce Kamerling's guidance, borrowing architectural themes from Balboa Park. Bruce was a curator for 20 years at the San Diego Historical Society and president of the

LGHSSD for many years.

In recent years, it became apparent that our name should adapt to embrace the diversity of our larger community. So once again, after numerous discussions, the Board unanimously adopted Lambda Archives of San Diego as our new name.

Why is the *lambda* a symbol of the LGBT community? In *More Man Than You'll Ever Be*, Joseph P. Goodwin writes:

The lowercase Greek letter lambda carries several meanings. First of all, it represents scales, and thus balance. The Greeks considered balance to be the constant adjustment necessary to keep opposing forces from overcoming each other. The hook at the bottom of the right leg of the lambda represents the action required to reach and maintain a balance. To the Spartans, the lambda meant unity. They felt that society should never infringe on anyone's individuality and freedom. The Romans adopted the letter to represent "the light of knowledge shed into the darkness of ignorance." Finally, in physics the symbol designates an energy change. Thus the lambda, with all its meanings, is an especially apt symbol for the gay liberation movement, which

energetically seeks a balance in society and which strives through enlightenment to secure equal rights for homosexual people. (Indiana University Press, Bloomington, 1989, p.26)

From *The Big Gay Book*, "What Do the Terms Mean?":

The Lambda was designated the symbol of gay liberation by the Gay Activists Alliance of New York in 1970. It was adopted as the international symbol of gay liberation by the Gay Rights Congress in Edinburgh, Scotland, in 1974.

Historically and internationally, many organizations have chosen *lambda* in their names and logos, including the Lambda Legal Defense Fund and the Lambda Literary Foundation

What's in a name? Indeed, it can be what you make it.

While we still collect and maintain archival materials, we continue the broader functions of an historical society, including outreach and education. By adopting *lambda*, we recognize and embrace the dynamic diversity of our community.

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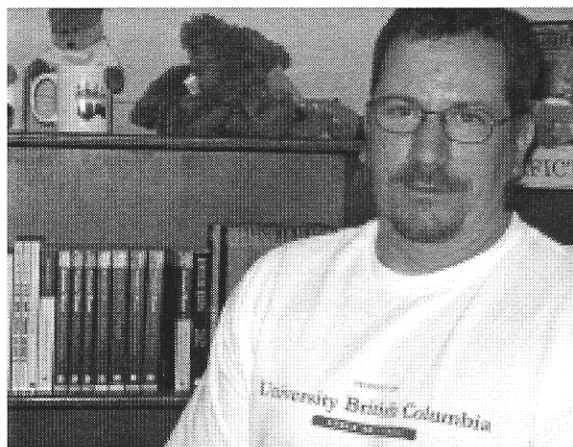
Obelisk

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Armistead Maupin, and Rita Mae Brown, as well as "horrormeister" Clive Barker.

"I am very happy with the way things have gone," says Kerschner, who grew up outside of Philadelphia and worked for Cable Value Network in Minneapolis before settling in San Diego.

Obelisk recently underwent some remodeling in recognition of its 10-year anniversary, with a



Obelisk owner Bruce Kerschner

fresh paint job and new carpeting. The store is open seven days a week. Store manager is Mark Hernandez, who has also been a Lambda Archives volunteer.

On behalf of the Lambda Archives of San Diego Board, we congratulate Bruce Kerschner and his staff for their ongoing success and commitment to our community.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

- major donor \$250
- sustaining member \$120
- couple \$180
- general \$25
- couple \$40
- student/ltd. income \$10

Please bill my

Sustaining Membership:

- monthly
- quarterly
- annually

Name(s) _____

Address _____

Phone _____

In addition to my membership marked above, I would like to make a contribution of \$_____ for the following purpose:

- used at the discretion of the board
- building / lease fund
- endowment fund
- acquisition of books
bookplates available at \$20 each to read:

Total amount enclosed\$ _____

- Contact me about volunteer work.

How to Contact the LGHSSD

Telephone: (619) 260-1522

E-Mail: lghssd@aol.com

Web Site: Bookmark it !!

<http://www-rohan.sdsu.edu/~clgoyne/lghssd/homepage.html>

Board Meetings: Second Sunday of each month. Call for details.

Research: By appointment.

In This Issue

Our Name Changes

Bookstore Celebrates 10 Years

Board Member Receives PhD

Newsletter: Beth Givens, Fred Weir

NEW ADDRESS

LASD

1010 University Ave., Box 1885

San Diego, CA 92103-3395

(619) 260-1522