



*Board of Directors:* Philip Clark, Chair; Jeff Donohoe, Secretary; Jan Knode, Treasurer; Rebecca Dolinsky; Chuck Goldfarb; Patsy Lynch; Chris Man; Jim Marks; Kim SESCOE; Dan Vera

## Year Ten: 2010

2010 marks the end of the first decade of the Rainbow History Project's attempts to fulfill its mission "to collect, preserve, and promote an active knowledge of the history, arts, and culture relevant to sexually diverse communities in metropolitan Washington DC." This past year marks the beginning of a transitional period for the organization, one that we hope to navigate successfully with the support of our members, advisory board, and benefactors.

### **Board of Directors and Advisory Board**

In 2010, the board of directors welcomed a new member, Dan Vera. Dan is a local poet who has led successful walking tours of sites in D.C. related to GLBT poetry.

We also said goodbye to Mark Meinke, co-founder and one of only two chairs of the Rainbow History Project (RHP) through its first 10 years. We wish Mark all the best, both in his new activities and in being able to get a relaxing break from those activities that Rainbow History has continuously brought into his life!

Our advisory board has remained stable during 2010. We look forward to meeting with the advisory board and getting its collective advice during our annual meeting in April.

### **Collections**

Rainbow History Project has continued its partnership with the Historical Society of Washington (HSW), slowly moving items from its collections over to HSW. All items donated to RHP are kept in one relatively small storage unit in Arlington, so it is crucial that we continue to transfer objects and papers to our archival partner. This will allow us to maintain the storage space as a place to keep items in our permanent collection, such as oral history tapes and tapes from the *Friends* radio collection, available and accessible for research. The storage space is Rainbow History's single largest annual expense.

Much of the ability of RHP to transfer materials to HSW depends on those materials being scanned and processed for inclusion on the Rainbow History website (<http://www.rainbowhistory.org>). It will be important for RHP to find volunteers who are willing to take on these projects.

## **Walking Tours**

Rainbow History Project continued to present walking tours of GLBT historical sites in 2010. Many of these were presented during Cultural Tourism D.C.'s WalkingTown DC weekends; board members Philip Clark, Mark Meinke, and Kim Sescoe variably gave tours of Dupont Circle, East Dupont, and Capitol Hill. In addition, student groups connected to a theater/performance class at the University of Maryland and the gay student union at Johns Hopkins University received tours. Finally, Rainbow History continued its support of the Sexual Minority Youth Assistance League (SMYAL), as new chair Philip Clark led members of the SMYAL Youth Advocacy program on a private tour of GLBT sites on Capitol Hill.

## **Programs**

In April, Rainbow History Project participated in Youth Pride Day, manning a table and introducing GLBT youth to the organization's walking tours, website, and programs.

Also in April, RHP sponsored a group reading at the Sumner School from board member Philip Clark's new anthology, *Persistent Voices: Poetry by Writers Lost to AIDS*. Poets with ties to the D.C. area whose work was read at this event include Donald Britton, Tim Dlugos, Jim Everhard, Chasen Gaver, and Essex Hemphill.

In June, the Rainbow History Project co-sponsored, along with the Black Lesbian Book Clubs of D.C., a reading by local editor and publisher Lisa C. Moore at Grace Episcopal Church in Georgetown. Moore discussed being the publisher of Redbone Press, an African American LGBT press, and read selections from Redbone Press books.

And on November 16<sup>th</sup>, the Rainbow History Project celebrated its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary with a reception and one-night-only exhibit at the Charles Sumner School Museum and Archives. This very well-attended event featured exhibits of materials drawn from the RHP collections, including historic LGBT t-shirts from the Cheryl Spector collections, buttons and other items donated by Deacon Maccubbin, and photographs by board member Patsy Lynch from Rainbow History's past Community Pioneers programs. We were also able to thank outgoing RHP chair and co-founder Mark Meinke for his years of dedicated service to the community.

## **Conferences**

The Rainbow History Project was invited to speak at the annual meeting of the American Library Association (ALA) at the Washington Convention Center in June, as part of a panel about GLBT community archives. Board member Philip Clark spoke about RHP's history and mission alongside representatives of the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture (New York City) and the Canadian Lesbian and Gay Archives (Toronto).

In August, board chair Mark Meinke addressed the annual meeting of the Lesbian and Gay Archivists' Roundtable, part of the Society of American Archivists. He spoke to LAGAR about the history of RHP and its collecting aims.

Rainbow History was once again involved in the Washington Historical Studies Conference in early November. Board secretary Jeff Donohoe represented RHP on the planning committee for the WHS conference, and board members Rebecca Dolinsky and Kim SESCOE moderated a panel about LGBT spiritual communities in the D.C. area, featuring panelists Imam Daayiee Abdullah, Barrett Brick, Bishop Kwabena Rainey Cheeks, Eva Freund, and Hajjah Benita Paschall.

### **Celebrations**

Rainbow History could not continue to exist without support from local community organizations. Rainbow History was invited to participate in three celebrations in the latter half of 2010.

At the beginning of August, the Best of Washington social club held its annual picnic at Fort Washington Park. Best of Washington invited the Rainbow History Project board, advisory board, and community pioneers to attend as it honored RHP with a community service award.

In mid-October, the Academy of Washington, a long time supporter, held its sixth annual benefit performance for RHP. The drag performances and silent auction raised over \$2,000 to help fund the Rainbow History Project's activities.

And as Halloween approached, RHP was one of two community organizations honored by the Dupont Social Club at the annual Miss Adams Morgan Day pageant. Pastor Prime, the outgoing Miss Adams Morgan, chose Rainbow History as a recipient of a \$6,000 grant for its contributions to the community.

Many thanks to these organizations and others for their continued support of the Rainbow History Project, and we look forward to a productive and history-filled 2011.