

LGBT-041 Sam Edmiston Collection Inventory

LGBT Center of Central PA History Project
Archives and Special Collections
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COLLECTION REGISTER

Name: Edmiston, Sam **LGBT-041**

Material: Papers (1961-2015)

Volume: 0.25 linear feet (1 document box, 6 artifacts)

Donation: Donated by Sam Edmiston, 2015

Usage: These materials have been donated without restrictions on usage.

Processor: Sarah Wakefield, December 2020

Support: Funding to process this collection was provided by a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Sam Edmiston was born on July 17, 1945 in Middleburg, PA to Samuel Richard and Stella Mae Thomas Edmiston. His family later moved to Beaver Springs, PA where Edmiston finished growing up and graduated from West Snyder High School. In the April of 1963, Edmiston enrolled in the US Navy, and three weeks after his graduation, went to the Keel United States Naval Training Center in Great Lakes, Illinois for recruitment training. While in the US Navy, Edmiston was a dispersing clerk until he was dishonorably discharged for being gay in 1966. Edmiston fought to change the discharge, and his papers were later changed to a “general discharge under general conditions.”

After coming home from the US Navy, Edmiston moved in with his parents and started a job at a local shoe factory where he worked in the production line and later became a commissary clerk. He then worked at the Laurelton State Center, a residential facility for the mentally and physically challenged. Then he went to college at Bloomsburg State College (now Bloomsburg University) in 1973, where he graduated with a degree in Sociology focused in social welfare. He worked various jobs until he retired from working for seven years for personal health reasons. After the seven years, Edmiston found a job with the Social Security Administration through Administrative Careers of America. He went on to work for the Social Security Administration for the next 10 years until he finally retired permanently. Edmiston currently resides in Central PA.

Throughout and after college Edmiston was active in the pursuit of gay rights. He started the Susquehanna Valley Gays United in 1976 with friend Sam Deetz, was the secretary for the PA Rural Gay Caucus, contributed to the *Lancaster Gay Era Newspaper*, and was part of Dignity/Central PA.

COLLECTION DESCRIPTION

This collection contains three series: Photographs, Documents, and Artifacts. The photographs series is split into three categories: Military, Activism, and Personal. The military category contains pictures from Edmiston's time in the US Navy. The activism category contains pictures of marches and activist activities in which Edmiston participated. Finally, the personal category holds photos of Edmiston's personal life, friends, and family.

The document series is also split into three categories: Military, Employment, and Miscellaneous. The military category contains documents concerning Edmiston's discharge from and recognition of military service, and a yearbook of his time at the Keel United States Naval training center. The employment category contains rewards that Edmiston received while working for the Social Security Administration, and the miscellaneous category includes two newspaper articles and Edmiston's MENSA membership award.

Finally, the artifacts series contains a pin, two buttons, a metal, and banner that pertain to Edmiston's time in the military and activist groups Dignity/Central PA and Susquehanna Valley Gays United.

COLLECTION INVENTORY

Series 1 Photographs

1.1 Military

- 1.1.01 Portrait, United States Naval Training Center in Great Lakes, IL – Jun. 1963
- 1.1.02 Aboard USS Intrepid CVS-11 – 1964

1.2 Activism

- 1.2.01 Civil Rights March in Harrisburg – circa 1975
- 1.2.02 Civil Rights March at Bloomsburg Fair Grounds – 1978
- 1.2.03 Dignity/Philadelphia at Pride Parade, Philadelphia, PA – Jun. 14, 1998
- 1.2.04 Mary and Bob in Staging Area with Dignity Banner at Pride Parade Philadelphia, PA – Jun. 10, 2001

1.3. Personal

- 1.3.01 Headshot of Edmiston – circa 1960
- 1.3.02 "Our Farmhouse" – Mar. 1961
- 1.3.03 "House in Beaver Springs before our Renovation" – 1961-1962
- 1.3.04 "Elwell Hall-BSC taken by Jeffrey Thomas" (roommate at college) – Winter 1976

LGBT-041 – Sam Edmiston (cont.)

1.3 Personal (cont.)

- 1.3.05 Sam Edmiston, "Picture Bari Weaver took of me at his Boarding House" – Fall 1980
- 1.3.06 "Mom and Daddy" – Sep. 1985
- 1.3.07 "The Cleaning Lady Halloween at Matt and Dowie McClure" – circa 2000
- 1.3.08 "Same Place Different Pic" – Cleaning Lady Halloween – circa 2000
- 1.3.09 "About a Month Before I left SSA-PHTSC" – Jan. 2001
- 1.3.10 "Karaoke at the Former CC's Bon Lewisberry, RDC" – 2012

Series 2 Documents

2.1 Military

- 2.2.01 Keel United States Naval Training Center Yearbook, Company 221, Recruit Training Command; Great Lakes, Illinois – 1963
- 2.2.02 US Navy discharge papers (copy) – Feb. 4, 1966
- 2.2.03 "Thank you for your Service" packet from Pennsylvania Representative Russ Fairchild
 - Vietnam War Veterans Welcome Program – Sep. 28, 2006
 - Letter from Russ Fairchild thanking Edmiston for service – Oct. 2, 2006
 - Certificate of Appreciation for Edmiston's Service

2.2 Employment

- 2.2.01 Social Security Administration Award for "Special Act of Service," – Jul. 10, 1995
- 2.2.02 Social Security "On-the-Spot Award" Certificate - Aug. 16, 1995
- 2.2.03 Social Security Administration, "Recognition of Contribution Performance Award – Aug 7, 1996
- 2.2.04 Social Security Administration Award and letter of congratulations – May 20, 1997
- 2.2.05 Social Security Administration, "Recognition of Contribution Performance" Award - Oct. 8, 1997
- 2.2.06 Social Security Administration Award for 10 Years of Service – Dec. 16, 1998
- 2.2.07 Social Security Administration, "Recognition of Contribution Performance" Award – Apr. 4, 2000
- 2.2.08 Social Security Administration, "Recognition of Contribution Performance Award" – Mar. 5, 2001
- 2.2.09 Example of Social Security Administration Award Enclosure

2.3 Miscellaneous

- 2.3.01 Letter from *Daily Item* (Sunbury, PA) regarding guest column – Oct. 13, 1988
- 2.3.02 American MENSA Continuous Membership Award – circa 2001
- 2.3.03 "Franklin D. Roosevelt's Forgotten Anti-Gay Sex Crusade," *The Daily Beast* – Jun. 24, 2015

LGBT-041 – Sam Edmiston (cont.)

Series 3 Artifacts

- LGBT-041-AC01 Susquehanna Valley Gays United banner – circa 1976
- LGBT-041-AC02 “I Marched on Washington April 25, 1993!”– Apr. 25, 1993
- LGBT-041-AC03 “UCDC Sam Edmiston Lewis” Red Striped Button – undated
- LGBT-041-AC04 Black and White Edmiston Portrait Button – undated
- LGBT-041-AC05 “Honored Vietnam Veteran, Union County, PA” Metal – undated
- LGBT-041-AC06 Palmer House Bar Sign (see oversized – stored on west wall)