

LGBT-081 Robert “Bob” Deibler Collection

LGBT Center of Central PA History Project
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COLLECTION REGISTER

Name: Deibler, Robert “Bob” **LGBT-081**

Material: Papers (1961-2007)

Volume: 0.5 linear feet (1 document box, 3 oversized folders, 5 VHS tapes, 9 artifacts, 1 book)

Donation: Donated by Robert “Bob” Deibler, 2018

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

Robert “Bob” Deibler was born on January 20, 1940 in upper Paxton Township in Dauphin County, PA. He graduated from Millersburg Area High School and went on to attend Bloomsburg University with majors in social science and English. He later went on to teach English at Millersburg Area High School from 1961 to 1991, where he was also the musical director.

Besides teaching, Deibler was an active member in two men’s clubs, the Pennsmen and the Satyr Men. After meeting his long-term partner, Ronn Fink, in 1985 and retiring from teaching in 1991, Deibler decided to move to Harrisburg, PA. While in Harrisburg, Deibler supported Fink in the running of the Bare Wall, a gift shop and video rental store and local landmark for the gay community in Harrisburg. Fink was diagnosed with bladder cancer and passed away two years after his diagnosis, at which time Deibler took over running the Bare Wall. After six months, he was unable to keep the Bare Wall running. He sold the business but stayed in Harrisburg.

Within this collection, the papers of Richard Schlegel are also included. Deibler and Schlegel were distant family relatives, with their mothers being first cousins. Deibler kept Schlegel’s records for future reference.

Born in 1927 in Berrysburg, PA, a small borough in Dauphin County, Richard Schlegel grew up in various small towns in Pennsylvania. When he graduated from Pennsylvania State University in 1949, he moved to Washington, D.C. where he pursued a master's degree and later took a job in the federal government. However, his career ended in 1961 when he was fired for "immoral and indecent conduct" after being followed by secret investigators who investigated his personal life. Schlegel appealed his case, *Schlegel vs. the United States*, which went all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court but lost.

Schlegel then returned to Pennsylvania, and once back, sent his resume to the Governor's Office of Administration, Bureau of Personnel in Harrisburg. He was hired as Director of Finance for the Department of Highways (now referred to as Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, or PennDOT). Schlegel started a small chapter of the Janus Society in Harrisburg by recruiting a small membership and opening a post office box to communicate with the larger Janus Society in Philadelphia. This is believed to be the first gay organization created in central Pennsylvania. Yet, what happened in D.C. occurred again in Harrisburg, and Schlegel was fired from his state position in 1965 after a postal inspector told his state government superiors about the post office box. After this, Schlegel moved to Philadelphia. He later retired to his parents' home in Lewisburg, PA. He passed away February 26, 2006.

COLLECTION DESCRIPTION

The contents of this collection are broken into two series: Robert "Bob" Deibler and Richard Schlegel.

Robert "Bob" Deibler's papers include five categories: Bare Wall, Articles and Newspaper Clippings, Pennsmen, Media, and Artifacts. The Bare Wall category includes business cards for the Bare Wall and Ronn Fink. The Articles and Newspaper Clippings group includes articles about the Bare Wall, the Pennsmen, and an article authored by Fink. The Pennsmen series is comprised of event programs and photographs, with a focus on the Keystone Capital Run events. For preservation reasons the photographs have been removed from their original photo album and housed in photo sleeves. The photos are organized in the original order in which they appeared in the album. The Media series includes VHS tape recordings of the annual Mr. Harrisburg contest sponsored by The Pennsmen. Lastly, the Artifacts series is composed of Pennsmen and Satyr Men membership pins and a leather bracelet.

The Robert Schlegel papers include five categories: Employment, Articles and Newspaper Clippings, Certificates, Photos, Oral History, and Books. The Employment category contains information regarding Schlegel's time as a government employee in Washington D.C. and a copy of his case brief *Richard L. Schlegel vs. United States*. The Articles and Newspaper Clippings grouping includes coverage of Schlegel's time as the Director of Finance for the Department of Highways and his obituary. The Certificates category contains Schlegel's nomination into "Who's Who in America." The Photos section is comprised of images from Schlegel's time as Director of Finance for the Department of Highways. The Oral History category contains the transcription on an oral history interview recorded in 1993, and lastly the Book category contains a book that was dedicated to Schlegel.

COLLECTION INVENTORY

Series 1 Bob Deibler

1.1 Bare Wall

- 1.1.01 Business card for The Bare Wall – undated
- 1.1.02 Ronn Fink’s business card – undated

1.2 Articles and Newspaper Clippings

- 1.2.01 “Captain Phillips Saga Filled with Many Historic Milestones,” *Bedford County Press*, written by Ron Fink – Aug. 2, 1959 (see oversized OBL)
- 1.2.02 *Crossroads* magazine, “The Pennsman and All Things Leather,” Bob Deibler interviewed – Feb./Mar. 1997
- 1.2.03 Bare Wall newspaper clipping – circa 2006 (see oversized OBS)
- 1.2.04 “Business Spotlight: The Bare Wall,” *Panzee Press* – 2007

1.3 Pennsman

- 1.3.01 Keystone Capital Run program – Feb. 13-15, 1998
- 1.3.02 21st Anniversary Banquet and Mr. Harrisburg Contest flyer – Feb. 14, 1998
- 1.3.03 Keystone Capital Run program – Feb. 12-14, 1999
- 1.3.04 Keystone Capital Run 22nd Anniversary Banquet and Mr. Harrisburg Contest mini program – 1999
- 1.3.05 Mr. Harrisburg Contest program – 1999
- 1.3.06 Keystone Capital Run program – Feb. 11-13, 2000
- 1.3.07 Keystone Capital Run Anniversary Banquet and Mr. Harrisburg Contest mini programs – Feb. 12, 2000
- 1.3.08 Keystone Capital Run and Mr. Harrisburg Contest program – Feb. 10-11, 2001
- 1.3.09 Ron’s Rainbow Raffle program with ticket attached – undated
- 1.3.10 Manhunt Raffle Ticket instructions pamphlet – undated
- 1.3.11 Photos (#01-15) from Pennsmen Mr. Harrisburg Contest album – circa 2000
- 1.3.12 Photos (#16-30) from Pennsmen Mr. Harrisburg Contest album – circa 2000
- 1.3.13 Photos (#31-45) from Pennsmen Mr. Harrisburg Contest album – circa 2000
- 1.3.14 Photos (#46-63) from Pennsmen Mr. Harrisburg Contest album – circa 2000
- 1.3.15 Photos (#64-84) from Pennsmen Mr. Harrisburg Contest album – circa 2000

1.4 Media

- LGBT-081-V01 Mr. Harrisburg Contest vhs tape – 1995
- LGBT-081-V02 Mr. Harrisburg Contest vhs tape – 1997
- LGBT-081-V03 Mr. Harrisburg Contest vhs tape – 1998
- LGBT-081-V04 Mr. Harrisburg Contest vhs tape – 1999
- LGBT-081-V05 Mr. Harrisburg Contest vhs tape – 2000

LGBT-081 – Robert “Bob” Deibler (cont.)

1.5 Artifacts

- LGBT–081–AC01 Satyr Men 15 Years pin – 1992
- LGBT–081–AC02 Pennsmen 1977-1997 pin – 1997
- LGBT–081–AC03 Pennsmen 1977-1999 22nd Anniversary pin – 1999
- LGBT–081–AC04 Pennsmen Keystone Capital Run pin – 2001
- LGBT–081–AC05 Satyr Men 25 Years pin – 2002
- LGBT–081–AC06 Millersburg Ferry pin – undated
- LGBT–081–AC07 Highway T.N.T 18 pin – undated
- LGBT–081–AC08 Entre Nous Boston, Massachusetts pin – undated
- LGBT–081–AC09 Leather beaded bracelet – undated

Series 2 Richard Schlegel

2.1 Employment

- 2.1.01 Resume and performance appraisal – Feb. 1, 1953-Apr. 30, 1961
- 2.1.02 *Richard L. Schlegel v. The United States* brief – circa Apr. 1963

2.2 Articles and Newspaper Clippings

- 2.2.01 Newspaper clipping of PA Highway Engineers at management seminar at Bucknell University – Aug. 1963
- 2.2.02 Newspaper clipping of photo of PA Highway Department Executives (from left to right: District Engineer Max Frey, Ken Larson, Richard Schlegel, and James Mifflin) – May 12, 1964
- 2.2.03 “Man Says Being Gay Cost Him Top Government Job,” *Sunbury Daily Item* [PA] – Aug. 13, 2002 (see oversized OBL)
- 2.2.04 “Delta Pi Celebrates Its Past, Present and Future” recognizing Richard Schlegel as the recipient of the “Who’s Who in America,” *Rainbow* - Dec. 2004
- 2.2.05 “Richard Schlegel Presents Gift Annuity to Slifer House,” *The Victorian Times* – Winter 2004
- 2.2.06 Richard Schlegel memorial article, *The Penn Stater* – Jul./Aug. 2006
- 2.2.07 Newspaper clipping of PA Highway officials discussing Area Road Projects (from left to right: Max Frey, district engineer; James E. Krick, assistant district engineer; Richard Schlegel, director of highway finance) – undated

2.3 Certificates

- 2.3.01 “Who’s Who in America,” Richard Schlegel biography certificate – circa 2004
- 2.3.02 “Who’s Who in America” copy of certificate – circa 2004

LGBT-081 – Robert “Bob” Deibler (cont.)

2.4 Photographs

- 2.4.01 Bucknell University seminar for highway executives, left to right: Ken Larson, Dr. George McManmon (standing), Richard Schlegel, and James Mifflin – Aug. 1963
- 2.4.02 Pennsylvania Highway Information Association dinner at the Scranton Holiday Inn, left to right: Ken Larson, James E. Krick, Max Frey, and Richard Schlegel – Mar. 11, 1964
- 2.4.03 Richard Schlegel at desk – circa 1962-1965
- 2.4.04 Richard Schlegel with large group of men in front of building [PA Highway Dept. staff?] – circa 1962-1965
- 2.4.05 Richard Schlegel (right) at dinner – circa 1963
- 2.4.06 Richard Schlegel with Department of Highways Deputy Secretary Wilbur Webb, Secretary Henry Harral, and Joe Micco with others at event – circa 1963-1965

2.5 Oral History

- 2.5.01 Transcription of oral history interview with Richard Schlegel – May 11, 1993

2.6 Books

McLeod, Donald W. *A Brief History of Gay: Canada's First Gay Tabloid, 1964-1966*. Homewood Books, 2003 [SC-LGBT 306.76 M165b]