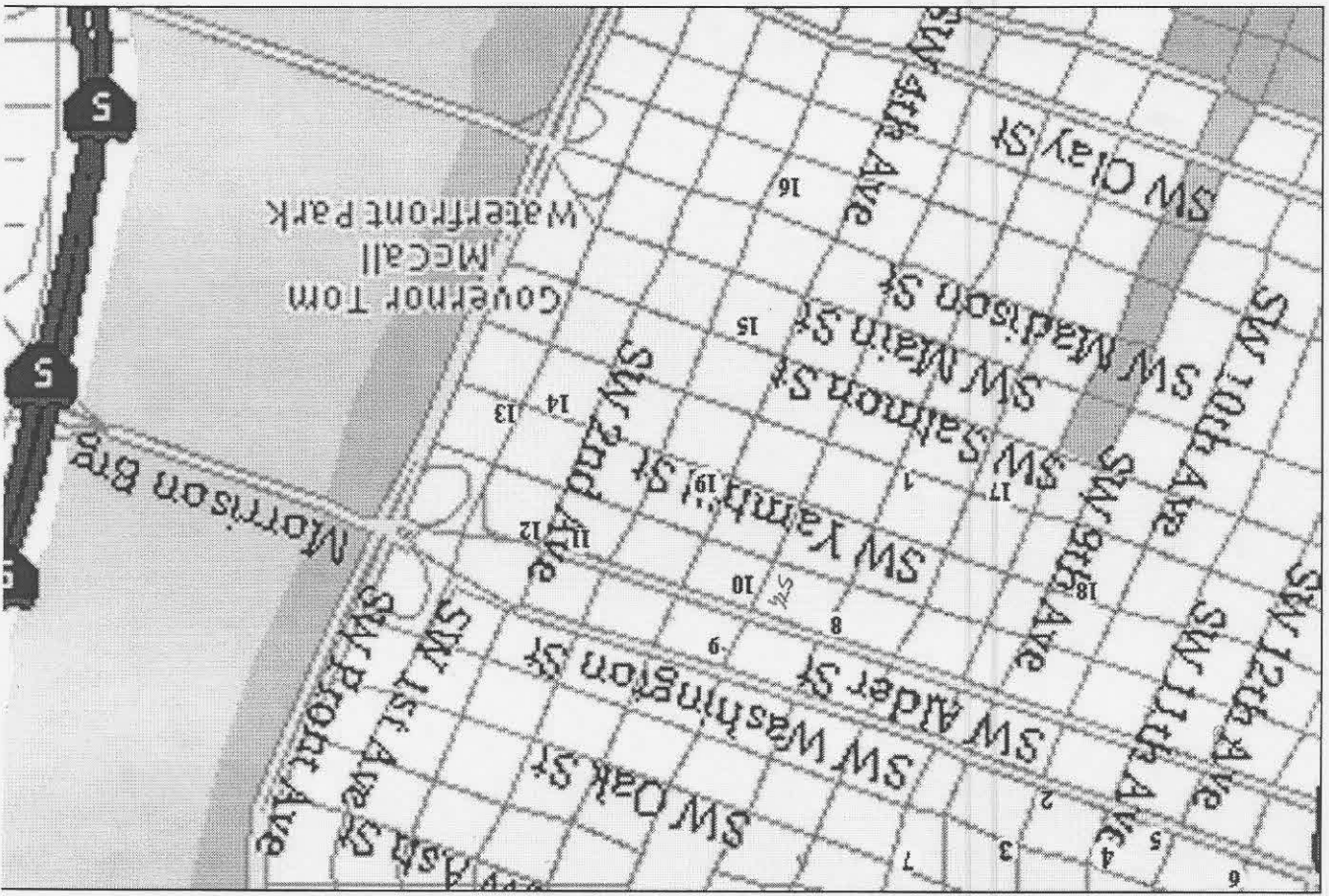


**A WALKING TOUR
OF DOWNTOWN
PORTLAND:
A CENTURY OF GAY,
LESBIAN AND
TRANSGENDER
HISTORIC SITES**

copyright June 1999

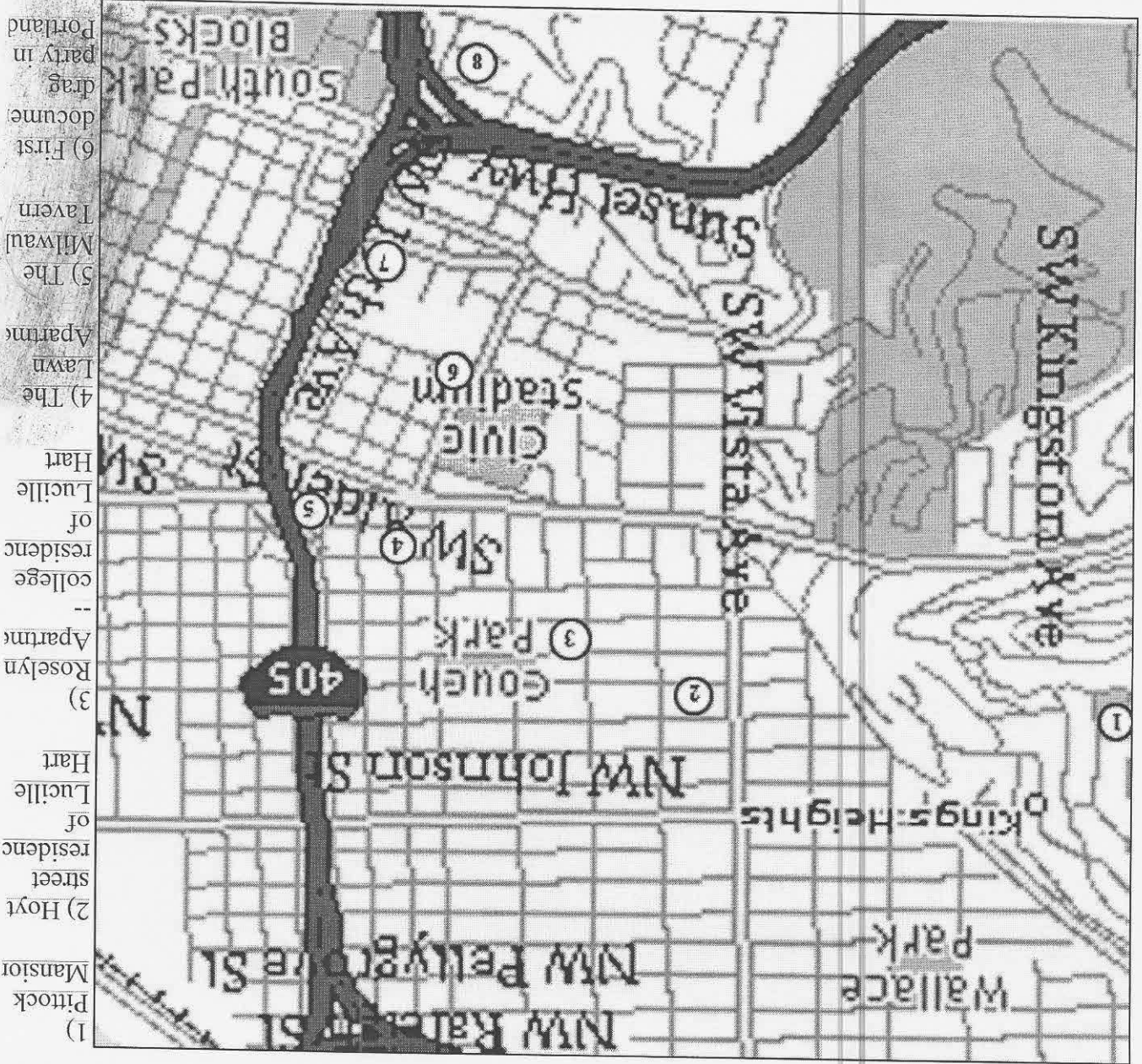
Published by the Gay and Lesbian Archives of the Pacific Northwest
P.O. Box 3646, Portland, Oregon 97208-3646

- Hotel
- 6) The Buick Cafe
- 7) The Tel & Tel (Derek's) Tavern
- 8) The Selling building
- 9) The Circle and 10) The Capitol Theaters
- 11) Gay Community Center/The Other Inn
- 12) Dahl & Penne Tavern
- 13) The Harbor Club
- 14) The Half Moon Tavern
- 15) Lowsdale Square
- 16) Aero-Vapor Bathroom



Gay and Lesbian Sites in downtown Portland

Gay and Lesbian Sites on Portland's westside



- 1) Pittock Mansion
- 2) Hoyt street residence of Lucille Hart
- 3) Roselyn Apartment
- 4) The Lawn Apartment
- 5) The Milwau Tavern
- 6) First drag party in South Park Blocks
- 7) Minor White residence
- 8) Dr. Marie Equi residence

7) Minor White residence

8) Dr. Marie Equi residence

HOME MENU E-MAIL

Web Author: Tom Cook

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Quarter PK

Gay and Lesbian Sites on Portland's eastside



residence of Lucille Hart

6) Erv Lind Softball field - Normandale Park

7) Dr. Harry A. Start residence

8) Frederick Hammerich residence

9) Charles Kerwin Greene residence

Hayden Island's Bare Ass Beach (not shown on map)

HOME MENU E-MAIL

Streets
 Jojo's
 THE UELM
 HAMBURGER PLAZA BOOKS
 A WOMAN'S PLACE BOOKS
 BLACKHAWK TAV
 PDX STEAM
 JPS EAST
 Other site in
 MIMUBAT
 CLUBS
 206
 CENTRAL-WILSON
 MLC
 9/16/2004

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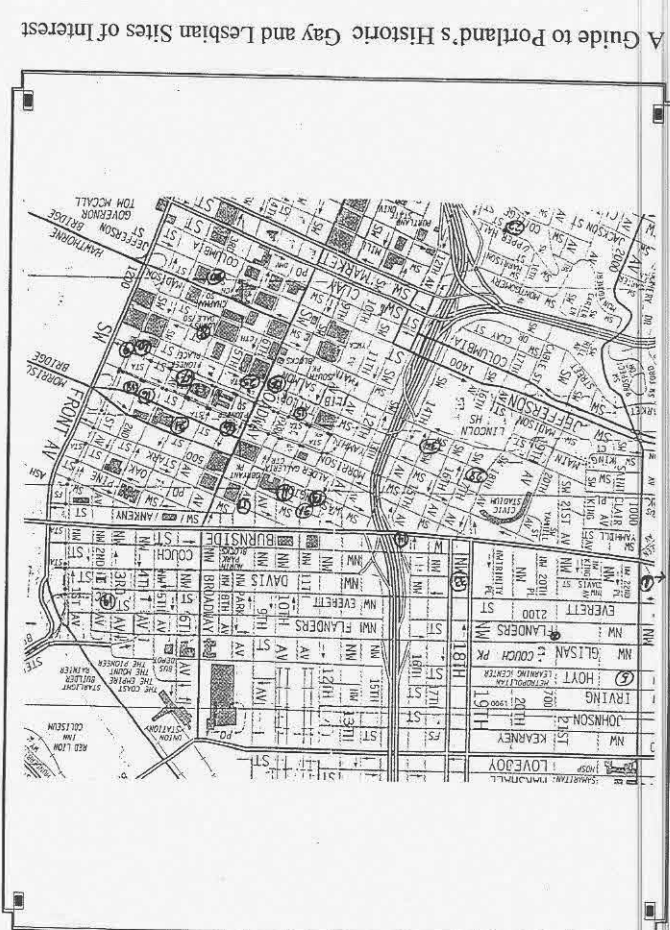
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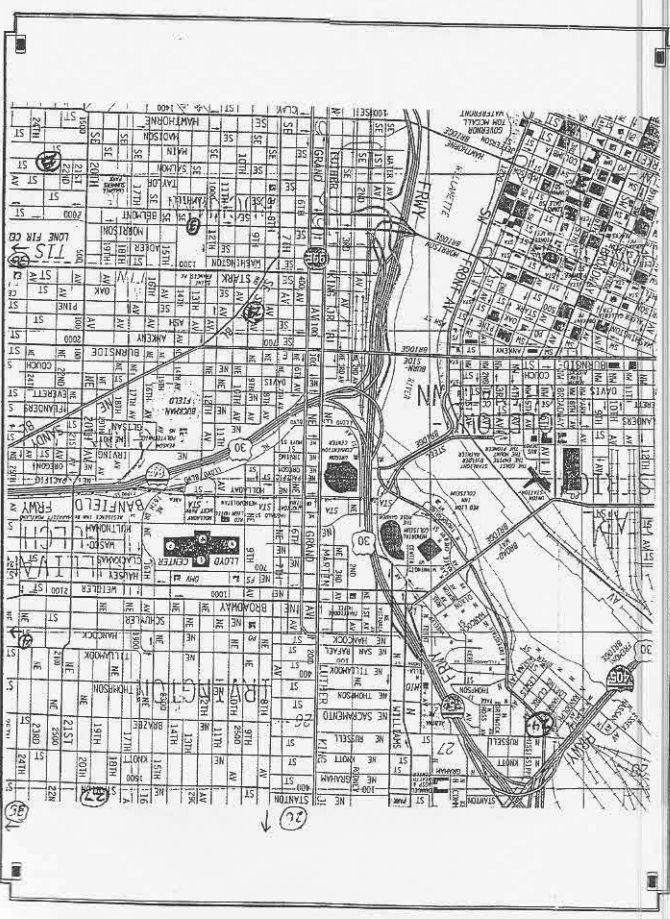
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A Guide to Portland's Historic Gay and Lesbian Sites of Interest



A publication of the Gay and Lesbian Archives of the Pacific Northwest
 P.O. Box 3646
 Portland, OR 97208-3646
 email: Glapn@aol.com

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The Milwaukee Tavern, 1535 W. Burnside st. This storefront once a tavern, was fingered in the 1964 Vice Reports of Chief of Police McNamara as being a lesbian hangout. The reports noted that it was frequented almost entirely by women who "dress like men, act like men, and are believed to be from areas outside Portland." Owner Edna Joridal who was a widow at the time of the hearings in front of the Portland City council in December 1964. She had worked previously at the Transfusion Inn which was a notorious lesbian dive located on South Front street almost at water level. The only employees at the Milwaukee Tavern were women—one who was identified in the records as "Miss Lewis" who was the manager and had "served eight years in the service with an honorable discharge," and the other a young woman of 22 who moonlighted in the evenings following her day job at Meier & Frank.

The Pied Piper, 1217 SW Stark st., formerly known as Riddles, Stark St. Station, Flossies, (now Silverado) The oldest continuing gay bar on Stark Street operating since the late 1960's under various names. It is quite possible that it may have had a gay clientele even earlier than the late 60's because Robert Saunders who also owned the very gay Tel & Tel Tavern on Oak street, attempted to open this site under the name of The Mocambo in 1960, but his license application for a Dispenser Class B license was refused by the Oregon Liquor Control Commission. This suggests that perhaps the location was already attracting some gays back then.

Majestic Hotel and Club Bath, 303 S.W. Twelfth st. (1970's to present day) The oldest continuing gay bathhouse in the city.

The Buick Cafe, 1239 SW Washington st. In reports of the Women's Protective Division dating from 1949, this little restaurant on the northeast corner of 13th and Washington (now Surtiya) was mentioned as the hangout for a group of lesbians who congregated at the Music Hall nightclub on Tenth and Stark. The police department noted that "these women are reported to attempt their pick-up at the Music Hall and in case of failure before the Hall closes, they then retire to the Buick and look for other prospects." The report added that "these women were recently ousted from San Francisco for their actions and are, apparently confirmed lesbians."

The ABC restaurant, Washington st. Bet 12th and 13th, now Rosenbaum Plaza, formerly 442 Washington st. (old number). The delicatessen of Claude Bronner and Burt Thornton was once located in this building on Washington st (1912). Although we have no definite evidence that this was a particular hangout for Portland's queer men of the day, it would seem quite likely that at least some of the vice scandal defendants and their friends would have frequented this establishment. Washington street at that time was an interesting conglomeration of small hotels, art galleries and curio shops, the type of street that might attract the theatrical and artistic crowd.

Year	Address	Name	Occupation	Age	Sex	Marital Status	Other
1925	1100	John A.
1926	1100
1927	1100
1928	1100
1929	1100
1930	1100
1931	1100
1932	1100
1933	1100
1934	1100
1935	1100
1936	1100
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1963	1100
1964	1100
1965	1100
1966	1100
1967	1100
1968	1100
1969	1100
1970	1100

Figure 1 The 1910 U.S. Census shows one of Portland's earliest gay couples, Claude Bronner and Nathan Healey living together at 384 1/2 Morrison st., one of several residences of the pair. Bronner later served one year in the Oregon State penitentiary for sodomy.



Figure 2 Lionel Deane (center) with friends, circa 1899 in Portland, ORHI 38092, Oregon Historical Society

The Washington Hotel, 1135 SW Washington. The tavern now called the 12th Avenue Grill, was formerly a gay bar under the name of the Timber Topper (1970-1974), the Axe Handle (1974), and The Alley. Few people know however that the Hotel was built in 1911 by architect Lionel Deane, who was arrested with thirteen other men the weekend that the Portland vice scandal began in November 1912. Deane himself is listed in the Portland City directory of 1912 as being the keeper of the saloon which had its entrance off of twelfth street.

Deane was born in Canada in 1861, and immigrated to this county at a young age. He began the study of architecture at the age of sixteen and one of his early works was a Dominican monastery. He came to Portland in 1889 and is listed in the city directories of the time as a "draughtsman" for Justus Krumbeln. In 1899 he moved to San Francisco and entered into a partnership with James Kollroth that last four years. He served as Secretary of the California State Board of Architectural Examiners. He returned to Portland in 1911 to work on the Washington Hotel project. After having his name published in the newspaper from the 1912 Scandal, he left the city and by 1920 was living in New York City with a practice.

Hotel San Marco, S.W. corner of 11th and Washington, (lately the New Ritz Hotel) One of those young men arrested during the Portland vice scandal of 1912 was nineteen year old Harry Work who worked as a desk clerk at this hotel. He was arrested by police while at work, and was promised immunity from prosecution in return for evidence against prominent attorney Edward S. J. McAllister. During the course of his testimony in front of a Multnomah County jury, he talked of first meeting "queers" in Chicago where he had been engaged in hotel work previously, "where you couldn't help but meet them, it being a common thing in the east." He also denied being "queer" himself, even though he freely admitted to being "sucked off" numerous times. An interesting revelation regarding the gay life in early twentieth century America is the way working class youths distinguished between the stigmatized "queer" defined as "those that sucked cock" and "trade" who were "those they'd done." An important element of gay male identity in our past that has largely fallen by the wayside and has been forgotten over the decades.

called them up and asked to meet with them, and the practice of excluding pant-wearing women soon ended. the issue, but he refused. A picket line formed shortly thereafter on a busy weekend, and Swerdlow relates how the bar owner discriminatory practice of excluding women wearing pants. Gay Lib activists requested the owner to meet with them to discuss Lanny Swerdlow recalls that in the beginning months of the Gay Liberation Front, the bar was targeted for its much of the information for the history of many of our bars.

remained under his management until April of 1973 according to Oregon Liquor Control Commission records which provide laws required him to serve food. It was re-opened by Roman Wydra as "Roman's Ripide" in November 1970. The bar under continuing pressure from the city who refused to issue him food permits, and from the OLCC which under the state liquor 3, 1965, it is considered one of the first gay bars established on Stark street. Honegger closed the establishment in April 1969 The Ripide, formerly at 949 S.W. Stark st. Originally opened by Johnnie Honegger, (the owner of the Harbor Club) on June

surrounding it's perch on 20th avenue. Northeast Fremont street was painted lavender and was in itself quite a site to see with lush ornamental shrubs and landscaping was paid him by the tremendous success of this bar and his other establishment--the PDX Eagle. Adams' stucco house on bar. Adams was known as a generous contributor to a multitude of gay causes over the years, and the respect of the community bought the Rhondee but changed the name to C.C. Slaughter's a mythical western figure whose picture adorned the wall of the known as one of the fastest bartenders on the street, he having got his start at the old Fish Grotto across the street. Adams probably, and even earlier this was Julie's Supper club. In the late 1970's it was purchased by bar owner John Adams who was The Rhondee Lounge, 1014 SW Stark st. (1979-81), later Slaughter's. It's gay history dates back to the mid 1970's most

dance floor and mezzanine conducive to the cruising crowd. Somebody's Place, 11th north of Stark st. This was the site of a popular gay bar in the early 1980's which featured a small

would be at 1204 N.W. Northrup, the Parkhurst Apts.) locations around the city were 415 Yamhill (old number) from 1907-08; 260 - 20th st. N. (Old number in 1912, which today companion Harriet Speckhart lived together in this Hotel according to Portland City directories of 1909 thru 1911. Other Dr. Marie Equi residence, Nortonia Hotel, sw corner of 11th and Stark (now The Mark Spencer) Marie Equi and her longtime

Figure 3 Harriet Speckhart, circa 1900, Orth 60817, Oregon Historical Society



The Music Hall, a.k.a. Schneiderman's Music Hall, 413 1/2 SW Tenth st. One of the highlights of Portland's gay and lesbian history is a visit to this wonderful building where in the late 1940's following World War II, much of the city's queers came for entertainment and socializing. Opened by a Russian Jew named Paul Schneiderman in 1937, the nightclub took it's name from the tradition of the old English Musical Hall. Early on it featured vaudeville type entertainment as well as big name acts. At some point (around 1947 we believe) Paul's son Leonard booked a San Francisco female impersonator's troupe, and the rest is history. The nightclub soon blossomed with a lively mixed lesbian and gay crowd that howled with laughter at the double entendre and risque innuendo of its entertainers.

Duane Frye who frequented the Music Hall at this time, recalls

...My first bar was **The Back Stage** and named thus, as it was connected by a back stairway to an upstairs night club named **The Music Hall** where drag shows were performed nightly. There was some genuine talent in the Music Hall shows as Mickey Mercer, a female tenor, emceed the shows with head liners such as Harvey Lee, the only female impersonator to ever work in Earl Carroll's **Follies** in Hollywood. He was elegant and dressed in wonderful costumes and was truly beautiful. He used a white Russian wolf hound in his stately act. Unfortunately the hound fell in love with the pianist and often spoiled the illusion and mood straining at the leash to be with the object of his affections.

This was before lip syncing, so all the drags sang their own songs...Other performers such as Lynn Carter performed there and later became a hair stylist.



Figure 4 Drag artists that appeared at The Music Hall in 1949 appeared on the front page of *The Oregon Journal* on March 17, 1950, when Dorothy McCullough Lee declared that "pansies weren't welcome in Portland."

Dorothy-Lee was mayor of Portland at the time. There were never any problems with the police department at that time even though gay bars were thought of as illicit in most of the states. There were no crackdowns as happened in what was thought of as more liberal places such as San Francisco. Unfortunately the Music Hall billed a very popular trio of the time, **The Mills Brothers**, for a run of performances, and instead of omitting the drag shows, included them on the bill. Among the crowds that paid to see **The Mills Brothers** was the City Council who were offended by the inclusion of the drags and upon

Investigation discovered both The Music Hall and the Backstage were being run on the same liquor license and they closed both places—never to re-open.

Figure 5 Vice report from the Women's Protective Division, officers Plumlee and Trout, February 1949; contained in the minutes of the Portland City Council, March 7, 1950, city council documents, Portland City Archives and Records Center.

MUSIC HALL

Report of Vice Squad:
On this date, February 9, 1949, we visited the Music Hall. The Master of Ceremonies appeared to be a man; but later in the evening she announced she was a woman.

The first performer was a female impersonator. One of the songs she sang was "Virgin Sturgeon". There were references to the lady cod fish with cod fish balls and the oyster that was pregnant but didn't diddle. The next song was about her new house but with no Johnnie, not even a pot. The singer jumped around a lot, crossing his legs, etc. to give the impression that the need to defecate was urgent.

Next a huge man, dressed as a woman, did a key west impersonation and sang "Come Up and See Me Sometime". This person had a smutty line of patter. Announcing her next song as: "This Time It's Love". Next time it will be \$2.

We checked the Music Hall tonight from 10:45 to midnight - to 12:15 a.m. We stayed this late because the crowd did not start coming in until about 11:30 p.m. We observed several women, who were, apparently, what we were looking for; but no contacts were made.

Sgt. Warren of the Detectives said we would probably have to go there several times until we were better known before we would be accepted. The cover charge was 50¢ apiece. We had three 7-up and orange drinks apiece @ 30¢ plus 30% in tips. Total \$3.10 out of \$5.

2-11-49:
Workers went to the Music Hall at 11:00 p.m. The floor show was the same as on the night of the 8th, but with minor variations. The first number was a group of songs, sang by one of the impersonators. There was nothing objectionable in this act.

The next performer did a sinuous dance, comparable to that of a hula or a belinese dancer.

The third act was more singing by a different impersonator. He repeated his act of the other night by singing his song regarding the lack of "John" around the house and the inconveniences suffered thereby. The song was accompanied by obscene gestures, indicating the urgent need to urinate.

The most vulgar part of the show was a take-off on Mae West; which was done by one of the impersonators and this act was the so-called high light of the entire performance. The dirty stories were told in a very suggestive tone of voice and facial expressions. Some of the stories are as follows:

"As I was walking over a manhole, a man underneath said: 'You aren't a blond.' I retorted: 'I am a blonde, but I just paid my coal bill today.'"

"I was approached by a man the other day, who asked me for \$1.10 for a cup of coffee. When asked why that amount, he replied that the coffee made him passionate. I gave him the money he asked for, but later I got the \$1. back."

C O P Y

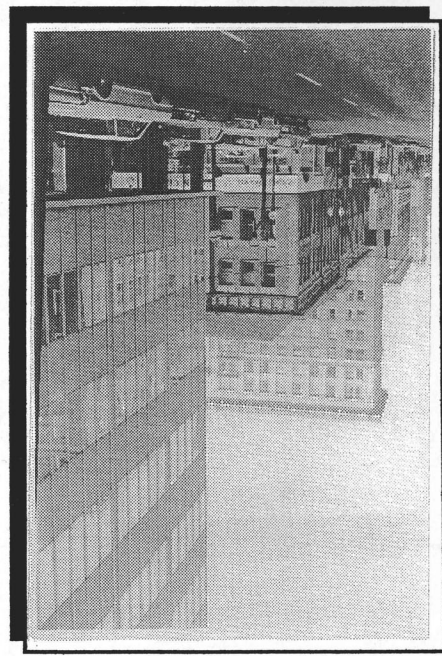


Figure 6 Looking east towards The Bohemian on Washington street, circa 1968, ORHI 100789, Oregon Historical Society

The Bohemian, 910 SW Washington st. Operated by Roman Wydra from December 1969 to December 1970. The restaurant was once one of the most popular dining establishments in the city. During its heyday in the 1920's, it was one of Dr. Marie Equi's favorite hangouts, although at that time of course it was not a queer establishment.

JUST OUT newspaper offices (1980's) Ninth st. north of Stark

The Tel & Tel, (known as Vince's, Derek's Tavern, The Annex, and The Family Zoo, 820 SW Oak st. This building dates as far back as the 1930's when it was the waiting room for the Linnton Trolley line. Known as the Tel & Tel Tavern (because of the offices of the Pacific Telephone and Telegraph Bldg which was directly across the street) from October 1957 until April 1962 it was owned by Robert Saunders. In February 1963 it opened under the ownership of Derek Akerson and was renamed Derek's Tavern under which name it continued until January 1965 when it became known as The Annex. In 1971 the tavern was sold to Robert Hoblitt who changed the name to The Family Zoo. According to Akerson, the bar had already an established gay reputation of considerable years when he purchased the place. According to the legend that he had heard, the corner of Oak and Park was a drop off site for buses carrying G.I.'s up and down the west coast. Because so many military servicemen were dumped on that corner, the bar became the first watering hole where the men (thirsty and horny) would stop. Thus the location evolved its own cruising history, and even years after the war had ended, gay men continued frequenting the location. The vice reports of 1964 noted that Derek's Tavern was "frequented by homosexuals of higher class and means," and Akerson remembers that Johnnie Mathis and ballet dancer Rudolph Nureyev used to frequent the bar when doing gigs in the city. Although it was almost entirely male only in patronage, he also remembers a small group of "professional" lesbians who enjoyed having lunch at the bar in the 60's. It was Derek's attorney Jim Damis who defended the constitutional right of homosexuals to gather in a public place. At this time all gay taverns were automatically considered a "disorderly premise." Damis was one of eight attorneys who appeared before the Portland City Council in November and December 1964 to plea for their liquor licenses, but it was Damis alone who argued that the U.S. constitution provided that right. Years later Damis, who is still at this writing a practicing attorney, spearheaded an effort by his colleagues in the Multnomah County Bar Association to sign a letter condemning the Measure Nine Initiative of 1992. After Hoblitt took ownership of the bar, it certainly became one of the most popular gay hangouts in the city, although it later developed a deserved reputation for indiscriminate drug use. Gay write Edmund White visited the bar and immortalized it in his famous travelogue, *States of Desire: Travels in Gay America*. From 1986 until now it has housed The Salvation Army's Greenhouse.

Benson Hotel Bar, listed in Dameron Guidebook of 1966, Broadway and Stark st. Larry Wormington mentioned that the Piccadilly Room was the home to the gay "cufflink" crowd.

The Hotel Oregon, S.W. Broadway and Stark sts. Marie Equi's apartment in 1920 was located on this spot. She was a lesbian physician who provided abortions and early medical care for women in desperate situations. Her medical offices were located in the Lafayette Bldg formerly located at the corner of Sixth and Washington street. Many of her patients were indigent and from the immigrant classes, yet she charged them only what they were able to pay which endeared her to many. In fact, at the same time that her radical politics could bring her into court on charges of sedition and into eventual imprisonment for her political beliefs, a newspaper like the *Oregon Journal* in 1927 praised her generous instincts in a noteworthy editorial entitled "One Good Samaritan." [March 13, 1927]

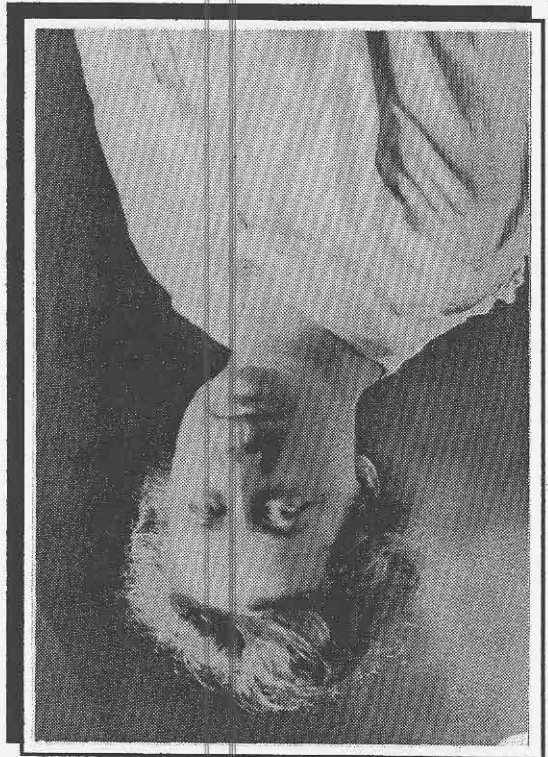
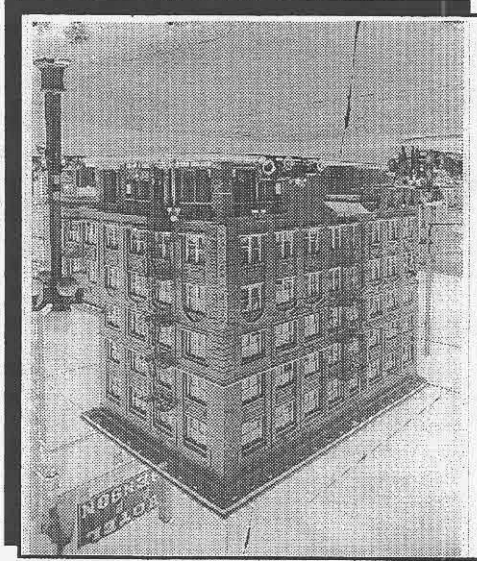


Figure 7 Marie Equi (1872-1952), OrHI 23494, Oregon Historical Society

The Imperial Hotel (now the Vintage Plaza Hotel) corner of Broadway and Washington. This is one of the locations cited during the trial of Edward McAllister where he was reported to have cruised for male companionship—specifically the first floor lobby restrooms, which have probably been remodeled from their original state.

The Club Continental Baths, 1978-1985 (formerly the Cornelius Hotel) 531 SW Park avenue. A popular bathhouse that opened in the mid-1970's, it featured erotic black-light drawings on the walls, an orgy room, Jacuzzi, and a number of individual rooms for private assignments. In the late 1970's and early 80's this bathhouse was considered one of the cleanest in the city, and it became a popular location for community fundraisers, and all-male socials. The rise of the AIDS epidemic and the fear surrounding the disease helped to bring about its closure due to lack of business.

Figure 8 The Hotel Oregon, residence of Marie Equi and Harriet Speckhart in 1920, OrHI 100809, Oregon Historical Society.



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 NW Fountain

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 and double rooms (12 hour limit) and
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 with glass-enclosed six-man
 shower • Cruise around steam room with
 hot water jet pool • Circular water-
 ch Sundays
 Travel Guides
 Also free beer (over 21) Friday and Saturday
 nights • Complimentary Continental Brun-

(Above: advertisement from NW Fountain, January 1979)

The Medical Building, N.E. corner of Park and Alder Sts., (offices of Dr. Harry A. Start)

Dr. Harry Archer Start was arrested in his offices in this building in November, 1912 during the Portland vice scandal. At the time of the arrest, the police discovered a young fellow by the name of Andrew Borland who jumped out of the office windows on the fifth floor landing on the roof connecting this building with the one immediately to the east (then Pantages Theatre). Start was tried before a Multnomah county grand jury and was convicted under the charge of sodomy. He appealed his conviction along with Edward McAllister, the attorney, and Edwin E. Wedemeyer, a clerk at the Dornbecher Furniture Co. All three convictions were overturned in a series of landmark rulings by the Oregon Supreme Court in 1913. Because the Oregon legislature replaced the old sodomy statute with a new one describing what was legalistically and essentially a "different crime, Dr. Start and the others could not be retried under the new law (passed in January 1913) because the legislature had failed to provide a grandfather clause. Start was unable to rent office space in the city, and the Medical Board revoked his license. With creditors at his heels he fled the country, emigrated to China where newspapers of the day reported he was working with the Chinese provisional president, Dr. Sun Yat-Sen (whom they noted was a friend of Dr. Start's). He had planned to send for his wife who had stood by him loyally thru out the scandalous trials, but she committed suicide in August 1913 before the plans could be finalized—the only successful suicide connected with the scandal. [One of the other men arrested, William H. Allen attempted suicide but recovered, and was never charged or brought to court].

Zorba the Greek's, 626 S.W. Park ave. A gay bar all through the 1970's.

Rich's Cigar Store, 734 S.W. Alder st. (Site of the store from early 1961 to 1981; prior to that the store was located at 539 S.W. Washington st.)

In the 1950's when the homophile movement began publishing and distributing periodicals such as Mattachine Review and ONE magazine, Rich's Cigar store was the only newspaper/magazine stand in the city that would carry them. It might seem odd to honor a magazine stand as a significant place in our liberation—but very few homosexuals would allow themselves to have such materials mailed to their homes in those days. W. Dorr Legg, the manager for ONE magazine related that in the early days he would travel from city to city persuading newspaper stands and bookstores to carry the publication. ONE was kept

behind the counter at Rich's stand, and each copy that circulated in the city was passed from hand to hand thereby increasing the actual circulation far beyond the few souls brave enough to actually pay for a copy. At the same time that the U.S. Supreme Court made several landmark rulings that opened up the laws on mailing "obscene" materials, a noticeable increase in pulp erotic fiction and magazines began to appear on the newsstands throughout the county. Mayor Terry Schrumk in Portland, who began his political career as Multnomah County sheriff, believed that the rising appearance of "pervert" magazines was signaling a breakdown in social morality. To counter this revolution in mores, he formed an extra-governmental commission of local do-good citizens to put pressure on the local magazine outlets carrying the so-called "filth" (of which homosexual publications such as ONE and Mattachine Review were clearly included). Rich's Cigar store was one of two magazine stands in the city which refused to sign on to Schrumk's "Decency in Literature" campaign.

Mr. Virgil L. Shipley
Box 352
Portland, Oregon

Dear Mr. Shipley:

Thank you for your letter relative to the City Council action on restricting places of businesses known to cater to the homo-sexual. You may be assured that we will continue to work on this problem.

I am happy to see that you have been following our Decent Literature Committee work which has been stepped up during the past months, due partly to the distribution of magazines and books which cater to the pervert. We have been aware, as you are, that there is a definite correlation between the availability of this printed poison and the percentage of increase in homo-sexual activity.

Many of the publications that were on sale here have been withdrawn because of the protests of the people with whom our committee has been working, but it takes constant vigilance on the part of the community to keep this down. I am sure that you and your family are playing an important part in this action.

Yours truly,

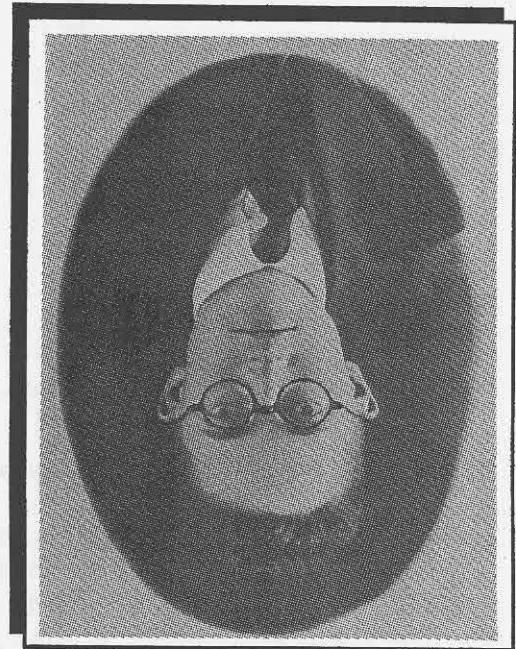
MAYOR

TDS:old

Figure 10 Letter from Mayor Terry Schrumk, Oregon Historical Society Miss 1497, Box 1

The Selling Building, 610 S.W. Alder St. (1917) Medical offices of Dr. I. Allen Gilbert were located here on the seventh floor. It is believed that here is where Oregon transgendered medical student Alan Lucille Hart (1890-1962) underwent psychological analysis with Dr. Gilbert for a condition that Gilbert evidently mis-diagnosed as a case of "sexual inversion." His only solution to "Lucille's" dilemma was to accept her view that "she" would be better off living "her" life as a man and making the best of the situation. From a medical standpoint of the period--this was complete heresy! Most psychoanalysts were attempting to "change" or "cure" the inverted, and gender dysphoric people of that time. Thus very clearly Hart played a part in his own transformation from woman to man, and with the help of the kindly Dr. Gilbert--the disguise was completed to the point where shortly after the consultation, Dr. Hart eloped, and married a Portland school teacher (Inez Stark, 1892-1986) in Martinez, California returning to Oregon to practice medicine. Dr. Hart went on to write three novels, specialized in roentgenology (the study of x-rays) and its application in the diagnosis of tuberculosis, graduated from Yale University and finally died in Hartford, Connecticut at the age of 71.

(Below: Dr. Alan Lucill Hart, circa 1922; from the Wyoming State Museum)



(Below left: Dr. J. Allen Gilbert, Professor of Psychology at the University of Oregon Medical College; image circa 1897 from the Hawkeye yearbook, University of Iowa archives)



Figure 12 Alan Lucill Hart as pictured in the 1917 Oregon yearbook

