

THE ATLANTA

LG
BT
Q+

HISTORIC CONTEXT STATEMENT



VOLUME 3 *****

The Chanticleer

Covering the Gay Scene for the Southeast

IT WAS A VERY GOOD YEAR

They said we would not make it through the year. They were dead wrong!! Not only did "The Chanticleer" make it through 1973, but we accomplished a few other things we are a little bit proud of.

We grew from eight pages in the first edition to sixteen or more currently. We distributed more than 30,000 copies of the paper throughout the southeast, in Colorado, Texas, Kansas, Nebraska, and points west.

We progressed from black and white to color and progress for our ads and photographs.

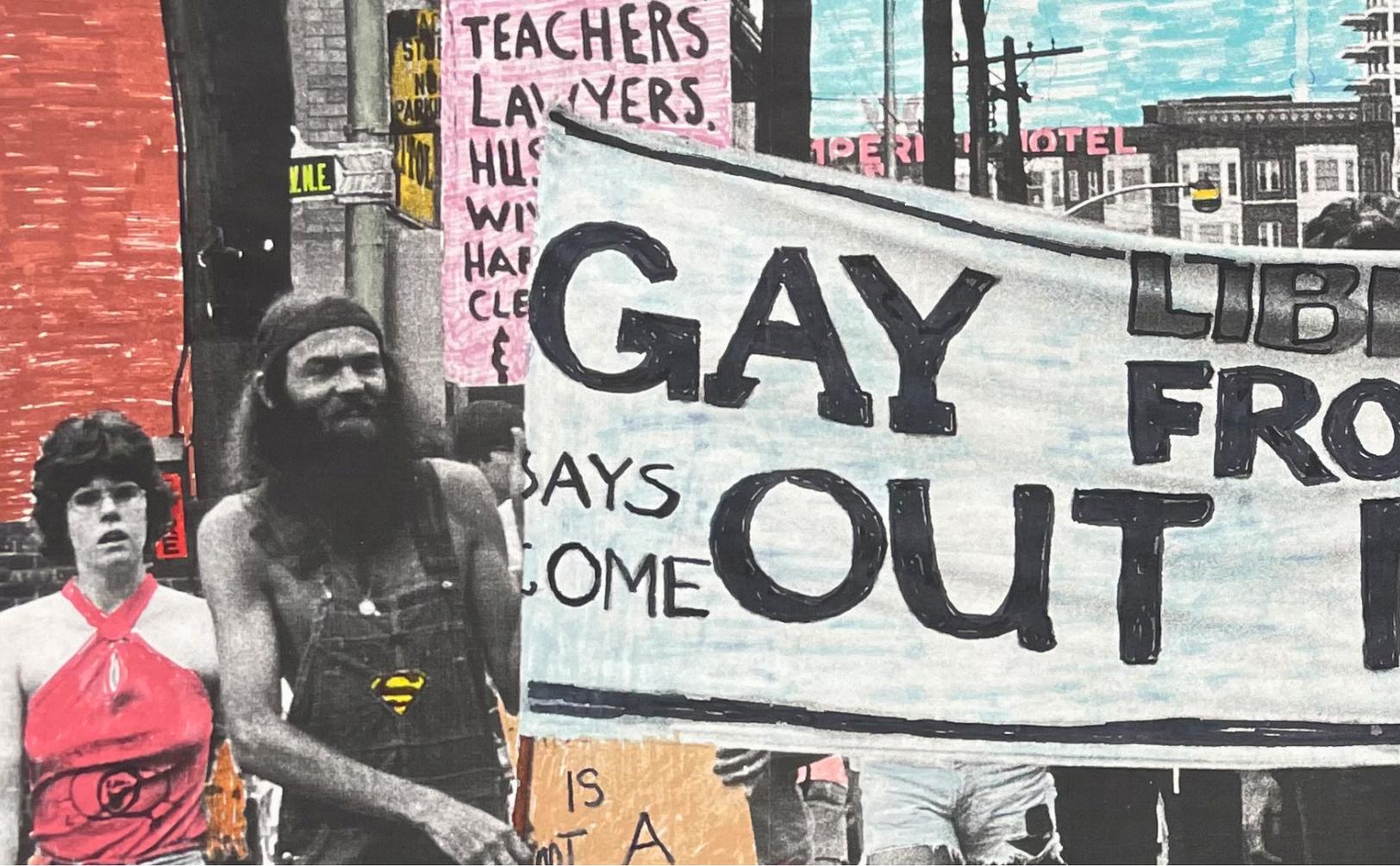
But, these things are not the ones we are really pleased about -- We made more new friends in a short period of time than we ever dreamed to be possible.

We were able to give part-time work to numerous people from the gay community at times when they really needed it. We even found permanent jobs for five of them.

As time went on, we turned down advertising, both business and personal. That was not a good thing. We will not do it again that you will be ashamed to have in your home. And, speaking of advertising, "The Chanticleer" comes to you only because we have the support of our business and have the support of our people in the gay world.

THE CLUB SOUTH BAR
THE DRY LOUNGE
THE CLUB THREE
MRS. PE LOUNGE
KEY HOUSE
THE OTHER SIDE IN
BOB BEEB STORE
CHRIS KEY (CROSS)
DOLLS FOR GAYS
DREBE'S LOUNGE
THE NATALON (ON)
CLUB HOLLYWOOD
THE GAYS
STEREO SLEET,
THE STANDART
SCORE ONE





THIS IS ATLANTA'S HISTORY.



Source information for images appearing on the front cover are located on the inside back cover.



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Atlanta has been a location of notable LGBTQ+ events and communities in the Southeast since at least the mid-20th century. As an underrepresented group, a historic context and historic resources associated with the LGBTQ+ community in Atlanta have yet to be adequately identified and documented. To date, there has not been a property in Georgia listed in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) with a focus on LGBTQ+ significance. As extant resources associated with this theme are identified as potentially eligible for the NRHP, the need for informed analysis of Atlanta's LGBTQ+ significant historic resources sufficient to pursue NRHP nomination, becomes increasingly imperative.

The purpose of the proposed historic context statement is to develop a framework for identifying and evaluating historic resources associated with Atlanta's LGBTQ+ community within the incorporated city limits and provide essential information that will facilitate analysis of associated resources for potential nomination to the NRHP. As such, the historic context statement explores the impact these events and broad themes of history had on the built environment within the city limits of Atlanta, and identifies historic resources, both extant and not extant, associated with the LGBTQ+ community, along with significant historic associations, events, patterns, and themes.

The *Atlanta LGBTQ+ Historic Context Statement* defines nine historic themes that can be used to

better understand the history of Atlanta's LGBTQ+ places and spaces. These themes provide context on areas of Atlanta history that proved pivotal for the LGBTQ+ communities. From early anti-lesbian and gay state laws, municipal ordinances, and police harassment, to the origins of the city's LGBTQ+ Rights Movement and growing political activism among its residents; from religion to healthcare; from arts and culture to community life; these themes provide a context for understanding the physical places associated with Atlanta's LGBTQ+ community. The study provides guidance on how to evaluate these resources for nomination to the NRHP. It also includes brief case studies that illustrate how the NRHP evaluative framework and the nine identified themes can be used to evaluate and nominate historic LGBTQ+-associated resources to the NRHP. This historic context statement may be used as a model for other communities as they seek to understand the history and significance of LGBTQ+ resources in their communities, and further, how to begin listing these resources in the NRHP. The themes included in this context reflect notable trends in LGBTQ+ history that transcend geography and can be applied elsewhere. The NRHP guidance following each theme can further assist Georgians to identify and evaluate their LGBTQ+ resources. Furthermore, this study outlines several specific research strategies and challenges that may prove useful to communities outside of Atlanta. Although this story is about Atlanta, the study may have relevance to communities throughout the state. These types of resources and history can be found statewide.

(Opposite) Cover of *Etcetera*, June 25, 1993 (Source: *Etcetera Magazine*, Volume 9, Number 26. Atlanta Lesbian and Gay History Thing papers and publications. Kenan Research Center at the Atlanta History Center.)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Though the goals of this project are specifically related to identifying the historic themes and areas of significance associated with Atlanta's historic LGBTQ+ resources, this work rests on a foundation of similar efforts to understand the city's LGBTQ+ history. The authors of this work owe a debt of gratitude to the activists, archivists, authors, and historians who previously compiled and interpreted materials from the city's LGBTQ+ past. Organizations that contributed to this effort include the Atlanta Lesbian and Gay History Thing; Touching Up Our Roots; the Georgia LGBTQ History Project; the Atlanta LGBTQ+ History Project; Atlanta as Black Queer Space; the Counter Narrative Project; the Gay Barchives; Gay Atlanta Flashback; Houston LGBT History; and the earlier work of Historic Atlanta.

Archival repositories throughout the city have also catalogued, maintained, and exhibited large collections of LGBTQ+ materials, and these resources heavily informed this context. These institutions include the Auburn Avenue Research Library on African American Culture and History; the Archives Research Center at the Atlanta University Center Woodruff Library; the Kenan Research Center at the Atlanta History Center; the Special Collections at Georgia State University Library; and the Stuart A. Rose Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library at Emory University. The project team would especially like to thank Serena McCracken at the Atlanta History Center, and Morna Gerrard and Michelle Victoria Asci with the Georgia State University Library for all their help navigating these extensive LGBTQ+ collections at their respective archives. A thanks to Paul Fulton, Jr., and Andrew Wood as well for access to publications and images in their personal collections.

This project would also have not been possible without the invaluable contributions of individuals who provided information and perspectives gained through their first-hand experiences in the city's LGBTQ+ history. The participants in the oral history component of the Atlanta LGBTQ+ Historic Context Statement supplied details of events that were underrepresented in the available archival materials described above. Interviewees included Mary Anne Adams, Dallas Denny, John Gill, Johnny Mims, Anthony Moultry, Gil Robison, Rosser Shymanski, and Duncan Teague. Several long-time community members also aided the project by discussing their memories of people, groups, and events from the city's LGBTQ+ history. These contributors include Marci Alt, Clare Butler, Tom Dempsey, Maria Helena Dolan, Lorraine Fontana, Cal Gough, Dave Hayward, Gus Kaufman, and Laurie Stevens. Though it is impossible to individually thank the many members of the history-oriented groups on the social media website Facebook for their contributions to this project, their efforts to preserve these details of Atlanta's hidden history should be recognized. Facebook groups consulted during the research for the Atlanta LGBTQ+ Historic Context Statement include "You've Lived in GAY Atlanta a Long Time if You Remember...;" "History of Black Gay Atlanta;" "I Partied at the Armory;" "I Partied at Backstreet;" "I Partied at the Metro Video Bar;" "Sweet Gum Head;" and "The Cove, Atlanta: Glorious Results of Misspent Youth."

Our sincere thanks to the Georgia Department of Community Affairs, Historic Preservation Division, Historic Atlanta, the National Trust for Historic Preservation, the Georgia Trust for Historic Preservation, Intuit Mailchimp, and the

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

AABC	Atlanta Association of Baptist Churches
AALGA	African American Lesbian/Gay Alliance
ABPG	Atlanta Business & Professional Guild
ACT UP	AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power
ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
AEGIS	American Educational Gender Information
AGC	Atlanta Gay Center
AIAN	Atlanta AIDS Interfaith Network
ALCI	Atlanta Lesbian Cancer Initiative
ALFA	Atlanta Lesbian Feminist Alliance
APA	American Psychiatric Association
ARCA	AIDS Research Consortium of Atlanta
AUC	Atlanta University Center
AZT	Azidothymidine
BWMT	Black and White Men Together
CARE	Comprehensive AIDS Resources Emergency
CDC	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
CCC	Community Crisis Center
CRC	Community Relations Commission
DAR II	Dykes for a Second American Revolution
DFCS	Georgia Department of Family and Children's Services
DHR	Georgia Department of Human Resources
ELGO	Emory Lesbian/Gay Organization
ERA	Equal Rights Amendment
FDA	U.S. Food & Drug Administration
FFWHC	Federation of Feminist Women's Health Centers
FLAME	Feminist League Against Macho Empire
GAAC	Georgia AIDS Action Committee
GABC	Greater Atlanta Business Coalition

GAC	Georgia AIDS Coalition
GALA	Gay and Lesbian Alliance
GAMA	Gay Atlanta Minorities Association
GAPAC	Greater Atlanta Political Awareness Coalition
GGLF	Georgia Gay Liberation Front
GLF	Gay Liberation Front
GOAL	Georgians Against Archaic Laws
GMHI	Georgia Mental Health Institute
GSA	Gay Student Alliance
GSU	Georgia State University
GSV	Gay Spirit Visions
GWCC	Georgia World Congress Center
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HPAC	Historic Preservation Advisory Committee
HPD	Georgia Historic Preservation Division
HSL	Hotlanta Softball League
IAC	International AIDS Conference
IDC	Infectious Disease Clinic
IOC	International Olympic Committee
ITLA	In the Life Atlanta
LBA	Spelman Lesbian and Bisexual Alliance
LEGAL	Legislate Equality for Gays and Lesbians
LGBTQ	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer
LGT	Lesbian, Gay, and Transperson
MACF	Metropolitan Atlanta Community Foundation
MACGLO	Metropolitan Council of Gay/Lesbian Organizations
MARTA	Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority
MCC	Metropolitan Community Church
MNA	Midtown Neighborhood Association
NABWMT	National Association of Black and White Men Together
NAGAAA	North American Gay Amateur Athletics Association
NAPWA	National Association of People with AIDS
NGLCC	National Gay & Lesbian Chamber of Commerce

NGLTF	National Gay and Lesbian Task Force
NHL	National Historic Landmark
NOBLA	National Organization of Black Lesbians on Aging
NOW	National Organization of Women
NPS	National Park Service
NPU	Neighborhood Planning Unit
NRHP	National Register of Historic Places
NTFAP	National Task Force on AIDS Prevention
NWHP	National Black Women's Health Project
OCC	Olympics Out of Cobb County
PRCC	Police Relations Coordinating Committee
PWA	Person with AIDS
RFUFC	Redefined Faith Unity Fellowship Church
SAME	Southeastern Arts, Media, and Education
SCLC	Southern Christian Leadership Conference
SDS	Students for a Democratic Society
SGA	Emory Student Government Association
SONG	Southerners on New Ground
STI	Sexually Transmitted Infection
TAMS	The American Music Show
UFC	Unity Fellowship Church
WOCC	Women of Color Caucus
YLIGA	You've Lived in GAY Atlanta a Long Time If You Remember

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INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

In 2016, the National Park Service (NPS) released *LGBTQ America: A Theme Study of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer History*, as part of the LGBTQ Heritage Initiative the NPS started in 2014. The initiative and thematic study marked the first federal effort to address the value of LGBTQ+ historic resources with the goal of increasing the

number of resources associated with LGBTQ+ heritage listed in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). The study notes that, at the time of its publication, only 0.08 percent of LGBTQ+ sites were designated as National Historic Landmarks (NHL), and only 0.005 percent were listed in the NRHP. Following the NPS thematic study, several municipalities and states produced historic context statements as important tools for recognizing LGBTQ+ historic places and spaces and the need for their continued preservation.

The LGBTQ+ history of the City of Atlanta, in many ways, mirrors that of the United States.



As a southern city with roots in deep social conservatism, Atlanta's LGBTQ+ communities experienced the same struggles with police harassment and the fight for civil rights as elsewhere. Out of this struggle rose vibrant and strong communities that carved out safe places to live, shop, eat, dance, and organize. Atlanta became known for its thriving LGBTQ+ community throughout Georgia and the region, serving as the capital city of the LGBTQ+ South. The community largely utilized existing buildings throughout the city to establish clubs, bars, bookstores, churches, and community centers, unintentionally acting as early practitioners of adaptive reuse and with many later becoming leaders in Atlanta's

nascent preservation movement. The Midtown neighborhood emerged as the heart of LGBTQ+ life in the city during the 1970s, with Peachtree Street and Piedmont Park becoming the early commercial and cultural landmarks for Atlanta's LGBTQ+ community and cherished spaces for both celebration and protest during the annual Pride Parades. At the same time, Atlanta's significant LGBTQ+ history is one that extends to all corners and demographics of the city, with other important enclaves established in the Little Five

Moderator Paul Fulton and Panelists Mary Anne Adams, Duncan Teague, and Nurse Holly at the Out Front Theatre for the event "Our Story: Celebrating Atlanta's LGBTQ+ History" in October 2022



Points and Candler Park neighborhoods, Northeast and Southwest Atlanta, and the Old Fourth Ward, among others.

The City of Atlanta designated the Atlanta Eagle, a renowned LGBTQ+ bar in Midtown, as a Local Landmark Building/Site in 2021. As a result, the building became the first locally protected LGBTQ+ historic property under the city's historic preservation ordinance. The designation also helped to increase attention on Atlanta's LGBTQ+ places and spaces as worthy of historic designation and recognition. The non-profit preservation advocacy organization, Historic Atlanta, was the proponent of the local designation of the Atlanta Eagle. Through their leading efforts and in cooperation with the City of Atlanta Office of Design and the Georgia Historic Preservation Division (HPD), this historic context statement was made possible.

PROJECT SUMMARY STATEMENT

Historic context statements identify important themes in history and then relate those themes to the built environment. While it is not intended to be a complete narrative history of the LGBTQ+ experience in Atlanta, this study seeks to establish an understanding for what resources may be historically significant under the identified themes.

The Atlanta LGBTQ+ Historic Context Statement defines nine historic themes that can be used to better understand the history of Atlanta's LGBTQ+ places and spaces. These themes provide context on areas of Atlanta history that proved pivotal for the LGBTQ+ communities. From early anti-lesbian and gay state laws, municipal ordinances, and police harassment to the origins of the city's LGBTQ+ Rights Movement and growing

political activism among its residents; from religion to healthcare; from arts and culture to community life; these themes provide a context for understanding the physical places associated with Atlanta's LGBTQ+ community. While this study does not make NRHP eligibility determinations it does provide guidance on how to evaluate these resources for nomination to the NRHP. It also includes brief case studies that illustrate how the NRHP evaluative framework and the nine identified themes can be used to evaluate and nominate historic LGBTQ+-associated resources to the NRHP. This historic context statement may be used as a model for other communities as they seek to understand the history and significance of LGBTQ+ resources in their communities, and further, how to begin listing these resources in the NRHP.

PERIOD OF STUDY

The identified study period for this historic context statement, based on the thematic context, is 1895 to 2000. The beginning date of 1895 was chosen to reflect the earliest documentation of LGBTQ+ activity in Atlanta, with the performances of female impersonators in 1895 at the Cotton States and International Exposition in Piedmont Park. The study period extends through the twentieth century to include the *Lonesome Cowboys* raid (known as the "Stonewall of the South") watershed event of 1969 and the political activism, organization, and general opening of the city to the LGBTQ+ community in the decades that followed. The study period concludes in 2000, as the 1980s and 1990s include the AIDS epidemic, the city's first LGBTQ+ rights ordinance, and the 1996 Olympics. Atlanta became a "beacon" for LGBTQ+ people in the South during the decades after 1969 and the importance of providing a context and guidance for the evaluation of LGBTQ+ associated resources that gained significance

during this later period is a critical goal of this historic context statement.

The period of study includes 27 years (1973-2000) that are not considered within the normal NRHP time frame for evaluating properties for eligibility to the NRHP. The NRHP criteria for evaluation, as described in the National Register Bulletin 15, *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*, allow for properties that are 50 years or older to be evaluated under Criteria A-D. Properties less than 50 years of age must also be evaluated under Criteria Consideration G for properties that have achieved significance within the last 50 years, and hold “exceptional significance.” Many of the most critical events associated with Atlanta’s LGBTQ+ history occurred during the latter decades of the twentieth century, therefore, this context study includes those years.

METHODOLOGY

On the heels of the NPS’ national 2016 study, several municipal historic context statements and statewide contexts followed. These include contexts from Washington, D.C., San Francisco, Los Angeles, and New York City. These served as important guides for the development of the Atlanta LGBTQ+ Historic Context Statement. The project sponsors, Historic Atlanta and HPD, contributed to the creation of the study outline and development throughout the project. Historic Atlanta also provided invaluable guidance through its LGBTQ Historic Preservation Advisory Committee (HPAC). From the project kick-off to the draft reviews, the HPAC and project sponsors provided insight, guidance, and clarity to the project team.

The geographic study area for the LGBTQ+ Historic Context Statement is confined to the current (2023) city limits of the City of Atlanta.

Although Atlanta’s metro area is much larger than the city limits and contains locations that would undoubtedly be of interest to further related LGBTQ+ context studies, for the purposes of the study, those that researchers came across were noted but not included. The Recommendations section of this study includes these localities outside of the current municipal boundary, as well as research topics of note that the project team encountered throughout the project.

ARCHIVAL AND SECONDARY RESEARCH

Archival research was initiated through the development of a research plan that identified major repositories, both for online and in-person research that would be a part of the research efforts. Online repositories were investigated first, with collections targeted for in-person research to follow. The expanse of Atlanta’s archival holdings regarding LGBTQ+ history proved large and comprehensive. Therefore, it was not possible, due to project scope and schedule, to pursue all research avenues. Collections targeted for in-person research included the LGBTQ+ Collections at Georgia State University (GSU) Library Special Collections and Archives; Atlanta History Center, Kenan Research Center; Auburn Avenue Research Library on African American Culture and History; the Atlanta University Center Woodruff Library Archives Research Center; and the Emory University, Stuart A. Rose Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library.

The initial phase of research was completed between March and April 2022, using digitally available resources to create a foundation for



both the context and map (Click Here for Atlanta Historic LGBTQ+ Community Map) of LGBTQ+ resources.

Several major collections of digitized LGBTQ+ associated publications were reviewed along with the digitized archives of the larger Atlanta newspaper dailies. Commonly consulted LGBTQ+ resources included HoustonLGBTHistory.org, an online archive with digitized copies of LGBTQ+ publications; the Atlanta History Center's digitized collection of *The Barb*; Georgia State University's digitized collection of the *Great Speckled Bird*; and Kennesaw State University's digitized collection of the *Southern Voice*. Newspapers.com, GenealogyBank, and the Georgia Historic Newspapers database provided access to digitized copies of the *Atlanta Constitution*, *Atlanta Journal*, and the *Atlanta, Georgian*.

Researchers consulted archival physical collections between June and August 2022 to investigate areas of the city's LGBTQ+ history that were not covered or were only briefly mentioned in the online resources. Multiple large collections at the Kenan Research Center in the Atlanta History Center were reviewed, including the Atlanta Lesbian and Gay History Thing papers and publications, the Lesbian, Gay, Bi-Sexual, and Transgender Serial Collection, and the collection of Police Department Annual Reports. Archival materials associated with Black LGBTQ+ experiences were mostly concentrated at the Auburn Avenue Research Library in their African American Lesbian and Gay Print Culture and ZAMI Records collections. Among the collections reviewed at the GSU Library included the Atlanta Gay and Lesbian Center Records, the Terry Bird Atlanta Lesbian and Gay History Thing Records, the Lorraine Fontana papers, the Maria Helena Dolan papers, and the Andrew P. Wood papers. The Atlanta University Center Woodruff Library housed the administrative archives of Mayor Maynard Jackson, which included outreach and correspondence with various LGBTQ+ individuals

and organizations in Atlanta. Major collections accessed at the Emory University archives included the David A. Lowe papers, the Jesse R. Peel papers, and the National Association of Black and White Men Together collection.

Several individuals and groups have previously organized information and produced works regarding Atlanta's LGBTQ+ past. Their research was regularly consulted during the project and was an invaluable resource while creating this document. Secondary sources consulted include: Wesley Chenault's research, Atlanta History Center exhibits and publications, and dissertation, which are all known as "Atlanta's Unspoken Past;" Cal Gough's "Atlanta Since Stonewall" timeline of Atlanta's LGBTQ+ history (https://outhistory.org/exhibits/show/atlanta-since-stonewall/out_in_atlanta); Touching Up Our Roots (touchingupourroots.org, accessible via *Internet Archive*), the Atlanta-area LGBTQ+ history non-profit founded by Berl Boykin and Dave Hayward; Paul Fulton, Jr.'s Gay Atlanta Flashback website (gayatflashback.com); and the LGBTQ Religious Archives Network (<https://lgbtqreligiousarchives.org/>).

Because research of Atlanta's LGBTQ+ history involves information that dates from the recent past, a significant, though atypical, online resource was the social media website Facebook. Members of Atlanta's LGBTQ+ communities have created and joined Facebook groups themed around the history of the city's LGBTQ+ spaces. Discussions within these groups were helpful tools for uncovering details and stories about many of Atlanta's rarely acknowledged LGBTQ+ spaces. The "You've Lived in GAY Atlanta a Long Time if you Remember" Facebook group (YLIGA) was particularly helpful in understanding the city's social spaces.

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEWS

Over 100 oral history recordings exist in the various LGBTQ+ collections at the Atlanta History Center and GSU, of which approximately one-quarter were identified through subject and keyword searches for a more in-depth review. These oral histories were of great importance to the identification of the locations identified in this study's Inventory section. Many of these did not include transcriptions that could more easily be reviewed; therefore, time was spent listening to interviews and taking notes.

These existing oral history interviews, along with archival research, assisted in the creation of a candidate interview list for the purposes of the Atlanta LGBTQ+ Historic Context Statement. The project team developed the list to conduct a set of oral history interviews that focused on notable historic buildings, structures, and sites related to Atlanta's LGBTQ+ community. This list was reviewed and refined by Historic Atlanta and the HPAC, resulting in the following list of candidates that were contacted for interviews: Duncan Teague, an artist, minister, HIV/AIDS healthcare advocate, and active member of Black LGBTQ+ life in Atlanta; Gil Robison, an early lobbyist and political leader in LGBTQ+ rights organizations at the city and state levels; Anthony Moultry, aka Tony Escada, a founding member of the House of Evangelista/House of Escada, the first Ballroom House in Atlanta; Dallas Denny, Trans woman and founder of the American Educational Gender Information (AEGIS) in Atlanta; Mary Anne Adams, LGBTQ+ healthcare advocate and founder of ZAMI National Organization of Black Lesbians on Aging (NOBLA); John Gill, the founding pastor in the Metropolitan Community Church in Atlanta in 1972; Rosser Shymanski, artist and performer on

The American Music Show as DeAundra Peek, and; Johnny Mims, businessman, philanthropist, and owner of the Marquette Lounge.

Interviews were conducted between August 2022 and January 2023 with people who are or once were members of Atlanta's LGBTQ+ communities. Each interviewee completed and signed an oral history interview release form that allowed for the recording and dissemination of the interview for research purposes, some of which contained noted stipulations required by the subject. The majority of the interviews were completed via telephone, though the teleconferencing application Zoom was also used. Two interviews were conducted at the homes of the interviewees and one interview was held at the New South Associates office in Stone Mountain, Georgia. All interviews were recorded using a handheld digital recorder and saved as audio WAV files. After the interviews, the researchers had transcriptions made of the recordings and formatted in Microsoft Word for review and minor editing of the text. The interview transcripts and recordings will be archived at the Atlanta History Center.

THEMATIC DEVELOPMENT

Together with the archival research and oral history interviews, nine themes were identified for contextual development: Atlanta's LGBTQ+ Social Spaces; LGBTQ+ Atlantans and Harassment: Laws and Policing; Political Activism in Atlanta's LGBTQ+ Communities; Atlanta's LGBTQ+ Community Organizations; LGBTQ+ Healthcare and Advocacy; LGBTQ+ Atlantans and Religion/Spirituality; LGBTQ+ Media in Atlanta; LGBTQ+ Arts in Atlanta; and LGBTQ+ Neighborhoods and Enclaves. The Inventory of LGBTQ+ associated places was developed as research progressed, and each

location was ascribed a related theme or themes. Nine of these resources served as case studies on how the NRHP evaluative framework could be applied to each, identifying applicable themes and areas of significance while weighing the aspects of integrity.

PUBLIC OUTREACH

The City of Atlanta Office of Design and Historic Atlanta created a public outreach plan for the purposes of the study. Public engagement was identified as a priority in the development of the study from the outset, not only to provide information about the project to the public but also to gain information and comments about the project from the public. The public provided comments throughout the life of the project to let the team know what was important to include in the study, whether a particular place, topic, group of people, or who to contact for more information.

Through the project website and contact form, the public was able to engage in the project from its earliest stages. These comments relayed the desire for the Black LGBTQ+ community to be adequately represented in the study, as well as the Trans community. Comments provided archival resources and contacts associated with the performing arts community.

The City of Atlanta Office of Design helped to notify the public of the project through various outlets, including setting up the project website through the City's Future Places Project website (www.atlfutureplaces.com/lgbtq-grant), creating a project contact form, relaying project information to pertinent Neighborhood Planning Units (NPU), and social media posts. The City and Historic Atlanta created a comprehensive community

engagement plan at the beginning of the project, meeting with volunteers and staff bi-weekly to assess progress and update outreach efforts. The plan identified established events where the project could be included as an exhibit or informational booth, including Atlanta Pride and the City's Preservation Week events. Additionally, City and Historic Atlanta staff presented an overview of the project at Neighborhood Planning Unit (NPU) meetings in June 2022, bringing updates to the meetings in October 2022. While all NPUs were apprised of the project, a select group of NPUs that included known association with historic LGBTQ+ Atlanta was targeted for in person presentations. These include NPUs E, F, M, N, T, and W.

In addition to the NPUs, several organizations were provided presentations on the project, including:

- Atlanta Planning Advisory Board
- Atlanta Downtown Neighbors Association
- Midtown Neighborhood Association
- Midtown Alliance
- Central Atlanta Progress
- East Atlanta Community Association
- East Atlanta Business Association
- Little 5 Points Alliance
- Georgia Partnership for Transportation Quality

The City reached out to educational-affiliated organizations as well, including:

- Alliance for Gender and Sexual Diversity (Georgia State University)
- Georgia Tech Pride Alliance
- Georgia Tech LGBTQIA Resource Center

- Office of LGBT Life (Emory University)
- Savannah College of Art & Design
- Atlanta University Center
- Prism (Clark Atlanta University)

Several organizations were identified as stakeholder for partnerships. These groups were contacted throughout the life of the project to share project information, solicit input, and ultimately, share the report. They will be contacted as the work to fulfill the recommendations of this report continues. These organizations include:

- Atlanta Pride
- Pure Heat Community Festival
- Southern Fried Queer Pride
- Counter Narrative Project
- Georgia Equality
- OUT Georgia Business Alliance
- 7 Stages at Little Five Points
- Out Georgia
- Hebrew Benevolent Organization
- St. Marks UMC
- First Existentialist Church
- St. Bartholomew’s Episcopal Church

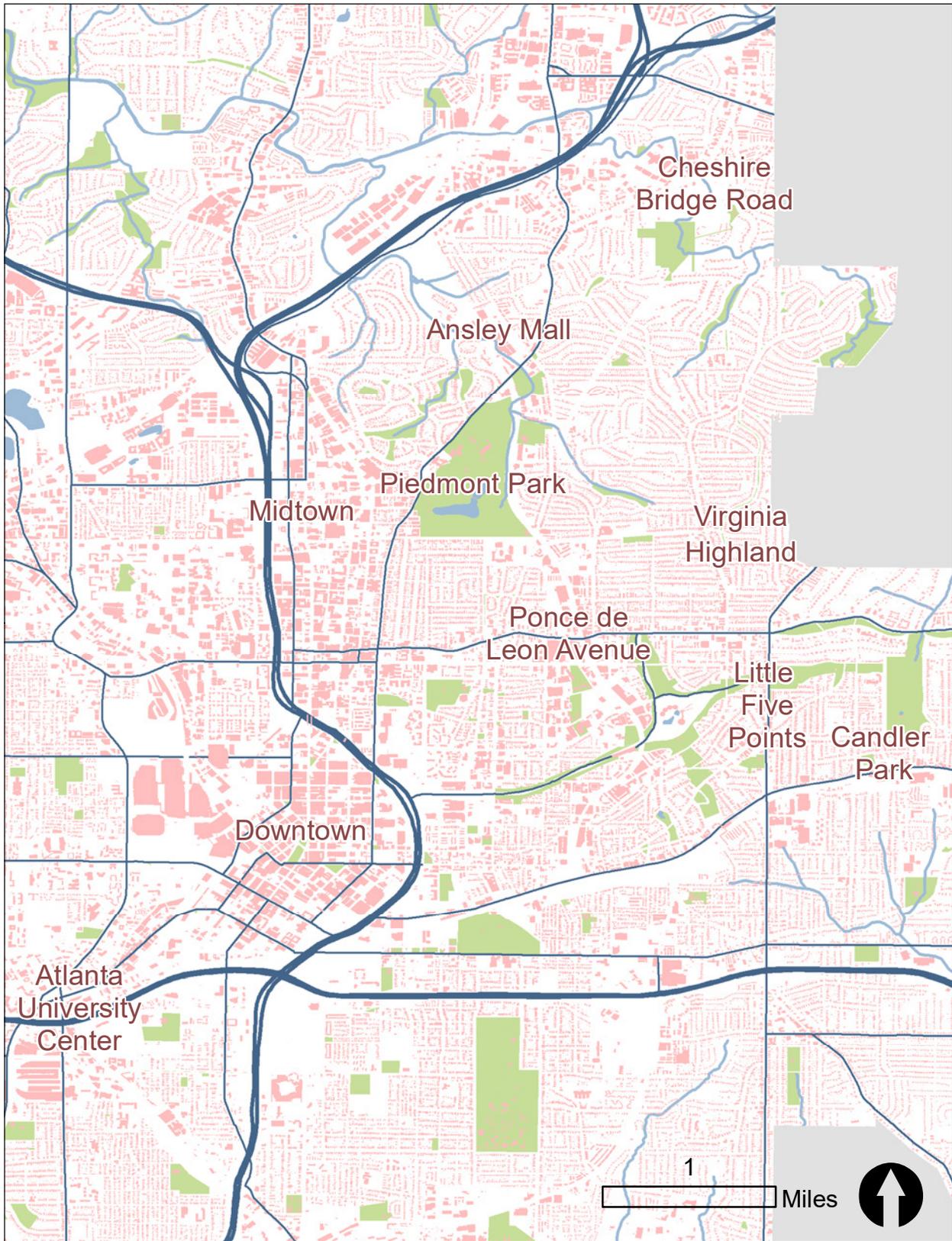
The City of Atlanta Office of Design and Historic Atlanta hosted a LGBTQ+ discussion at Out Front Theatre Company on August 27, 2022. Entitled “Our Story: Celebrating Atlanta’s LGBTQ+ History,” the event provided information about the historic context statement project and a moderated panel discussion on Atlanta’s LGBTQ+ history with moderator Paul Fulton and panelists Mary Anne Adams, Duncan Teague, and Nurse Holly of the

Armorettes. Later, in October 2022, members of Historic Atlanta with support from New South Associates, had an information table about the historic context statement at the Atlanta Pride Festival and Parade.

New South historians Wes Nimmo and Patrick Sullivan were interviewed by Victoria Lemos about the project for her podcast, *Atlanta Archives* in January 2023. In the two-part podcast interview, the historians discuss researching the project and the many interesting pieces of history revealed during the project.

STUDY TERMINOLOGY

In addition to the List of Acronyms included at the front of this document, a Glossary of Terms is appended that includes the various ways LGBTQ+ individuals identify themselves. As an overall identifier, the term LGBTQ+ is used where possible. However, over history, there are many other ways persons who would now identify as LGBTQ+ have identified themselves. These terms have evolved over time. Additionally, when referring to the individual groups within the LGBTQ+ community, terms such as gay, lesbian, and trans are used in this document where historically appropriate. Historic terms and identifiers used by LGBTQ+ people and organizations are used in their historic context throughout the report to best describe these groups in the ways they perceived themselves. Due to the evolution of these terms, some of these carry negative connotations in the present, such as homophile, and others, such as queer, have been reclaimed by LGBTQ+ people. Terms commonly used in describing the lived experiences of LGBTQ+ people are also included in the glossary.



Basemap: ARC (2020)

Map of Atlanta with Identified Major LGBTQ+ Enclaves from the Twentieth Century

THE NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

This section provides a general overview for the evaluation of resources to the NRHP, which includes understanding the property within a larger context and assessing its significance and integrity. The NRHP recognizes properties that are associated with history on a national, state, or local level. Properties considered eligible for the NRHP are first evaluated through a process outlined in the National Park Service's National Register Bulletin 15: *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*. The evaluation process, in essence, examines a historic property's historical significance, or importance, and its integrity, or authenticity and ability to convey significance. Four Criteria of Evaluation are used to determine the significance of a property. Under Criterion A, properties can be eligible for their associations with important historical events, while Criterion B applies to a property's association with significant persons. Criterion C is applied to properties that demonstrate distinctive artistic or design qualities. Lastly, Criterion D (most commonly used for archaeological resources) applies to properties that have the potential to yield significant information about the past. For further information on the criterion and their application, please see National Register Bulletin 15, available on the National Park Service's National Register of Historic Places website.

The contextual thematic history and evaluative framework outlined in this document is intended to aid evaluators in assessing whether a resource with historic association with LGBTQ+ history in Atlanta has potential for NRHP eligibility. Each property should be considered through an

examination of a property's developmental history and the relation of that history to an established theme and physical attributes. Intact character defining features and association with significant people, events, or trends is necessary to construct a case for eligibility.

DOCUMENTING PROPERTIES WITH LGBTQ+ SIGNIFICANCE TO NPS STANDARDS

As other LGBTQ+ historic context statements have noted, resources historically associated with Atlanta's LGBTQ+ community would be primarily eligible for historic associations with events or people under Criterion A or B. Although an added area of significance under Criterion C for architecture, for instance, might also apply to a property for significance not documented by this context, it is expected its primary significance under this context would be related to Criteria A or B. Eligibility under these criteria for association with LGBTQ+ history is, therefore, what will be explored following each theme.

While all properties eligible for the NRHP must meet one of the criteria for significance, they must also meet the aspects of integrity, as required by the National Park Service. As will be outlined in the NRHP evaluation frameworks that follow each theme, there are various considerations to weigh when evaluating a resource for the NRHP. These include the property's area of significance, period of significance, character defining features, and integrity. It is also important to have an understanding of what physical features are typical of a given property type in order to have a baseline from which to assess integrity in a meaningful way.

As discussed in the Resource Inventory of this context, pinpointing the exact locations of

LGBTQ+ places can take time and ingenuity. It is important to remember, when identifying potential LGBTQ+ places, that documenting the history of a given place can be a challenge because of the historic disenfranchisement, harassment, and discrimination against LGBTQ+ people. Many locations may have been transitory because of safety issues, and addresses weren't always freely given out in historic records. This is where tenacious research can be an asset, using a variety of sources, including oral history interviews, city directories, local magazines/newsletters, advertisements, and historic photos.

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE

Once the criterion, or criteria, of significance are identified, then the area or areas of significance can be determined. The NRHP includes a specific set of areas of significance that can be applied to an eligible property. The companion to National Register Bulletin 15, Bulletin 16A: *How to Complete the National Register Form*, outlines these as they were written in 1990, however, recent additions have been made to this list to include Social History: LGBTQ History. Bulletin 16a also includes definitions for each of these areas and should be

Historic Theme	Related Areas of Significance
Atlanta's LGBTQ+ Social Spaces	Commerce Community Planning and Development Education Entertainment/Recreation Ethnic Heritage: Black Ethnic Heritage: Hispanic Performing Arts Social History: LGBTQ+ History Social History: Women's History
LGBTQ+ Atlantans and Harassment: Laws and Policing	Ethnic Heritage: Black Law Politics/Government Social History: LGBTQ+ History Social History: Civil Rights
Political Activism in Atlanta's LGBTQ+ Communities	Ethnic Heritage: Black Politics/Government Social History: LGBTQ+ History Social History: Civil Rights Social History: Women's History
Atlanta's LGBTQ+ Community Organizations	Commerce Entertainment/Recreation Ethnic Heritage: Black Politics/Government Social History: LGBTQ+ History Social History: Civil Rights
LGBTQ+ Healthcare and Advocacy	Ethnic Heritage: Black Health/Medicine Politics/Government Science Social History: LGBTQ+ History
LGBTQ+ Atlantans and Religion/Spirituality	Ethnic Heritage: Black Religion Social History: LGBTQ+ History

Historic Theme	Related Areas of Significance
LGBTQ+ Media in Atlanta	Art Commerce Communication Entertainment/Recreation Ethnic Heritage: Black Social History: LGBTQ+ History Social History: Women’s History
LGBTQ+ Arts in Atlanta	Art Education Entertainment/Recreation Ethnic Heritage: Black Ethnic Heritage: Hispanic Literature Performing Arts Social History: LGBTQ+ History
Atlanta’s LGBTQ+ Neighborhoods and Enclaves	Commerce Community Planning and Development Entertainment/Recreation Ethnic Heritage: Black Social History: LGBTQ+ History

Bulletin 16A and the complete list of NRHP Areas of Significance are available on the National Park Service’s National Register of Historic Places website.

consulted for a more detailed understanding of each area as defined for the purposes of National Register analysis and nomination. The table, included here, contains examples of possible areas of significance in relation to each of the identified nine contextual themes defined in this document. A NRHP evaluative framework follows each theme and discusses these further and in relation to associated property types.

PERIODS OF SIGNIFICANCE

The period of significance is an essential component of the evaluative process. It can be defined as the length of time when a property was associated with important events, activities, or persons, or when it attained the characteristics for which it is eligible for the NRHP. For significant events and people (Criteria A and B), the period of significance includes the date of the activities or events, or the time frame when a significant person(s) or associated

event(s) occurred at the property. This will allow, if justified, for an end date to a property’s period of significance to continue to the year 2000, the end of this period of study. For significance under Criterion C in the area of architecture, this can frequently be marked by the construction date of the resource. There are general time frames developed for each of the nine themes that can serve as a starting point for defining an LGBTQ+ resource’s period of significance.

CHARACTER DEFINING FEATURES

During the evaluative process, each resource’s character defining features should be identified. Character defining features are visual and tangible aspects of a historic building or resource that collectively help convey its significance. These can include the overall shape of the building, its materials, craftsmanship, decorative details,

interior spaces and features, as well as various aspects of its site and environment. For LGBTQ+ resources, character defining features are also those qualities that contribute to their important associations and, as a collection of traits, remain recognizable to the LGBTQ+ community from the period of significance. For properties significant under Criterion A or B, the character defining features are the features that were present during the identified period of significance and convey the resource's significance.

INTEGRITY

Integrity is the ability of a property to convey its significance. A property must be shown to have significance under one or more of the criteria but also have integrity. The NRHP has identified seven aspects of integrity to be considered in the evaluation process:

Location is the place where the historic property was constructed or the place where the historic event occurred.

Design is the combination of elements that create the form, plan, space, structure, and style of a property.

Setting is the physical environment of a historic property.

Materials are the physical elements that were combined or deposited during a particular period of time and in a particular pattern or configuration to form a historic property.

Workmanship is the physical evidence of the crafts of a particular culture or people during any given period in history or prehistory.

Feeling is a property's expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular period of time.

Association is the direct link between an important historic event or person and a historic property.

When evaluating a resource for integrity, the seven aspects need to be weighed in the context of relevant areas and period(s) of significance. It may be that an LGBTQ+ historic resource that is eligible under Criteria A or B does not need to possess all aspects of integrity to be considered a property that retains integrity overall. Quite frequently, a property can be found to lack integrity of materials because of changes and alterations over time, such as with windows and siding. Perhaps the integrity of design has been diminished by the construction of a non-historic addition. By weighing the different concerns for eligibility, the evaluation can focus on those aspects of integrity that are most important for a particular property to possess in order to convey its significance. This process is an outcome of identifying the areas of significance, periods of significance, and the character defining features. The Case Studies following the end of each theme and NRHP Eligibility Standards will help illustrate how this evaluation framework can be practically applied to resources associated with one or more of this context's identified historic themes.

Specific to Atlanta's LGBTQ+ historic resources are issues such as the developmental pressures in Midtown, Chesire Bridge Road, Ponce de Leon Avenue, and Downtown that have adversely impacted LGBTQ+ resources. Another common integrity issue lies in the transitory nature of LGBTQ+ spaces. The LGBTQ+ community has largely been disenfranchised and marginalized, forcing LGBTQ+ people to establish businesses and organizations in existing buildings, but also in shorter time spans, with these businesses and organizations tending to relocate several times in some instances. This tendency for short term occupancy has led to the majority of LGBTQ+

resources being altered to accommodate a variety of uses, causing diminished integrity of design, materials, and workmanship.

ASSOCIATED PROPERTY TYPES

LGBTQ+ history in Atlanta is represented in all of the standard property types: buildings, sites, structures, objects, and historic districts. Each of those types of properties can be categorized by function or use. The following list explores common functions or uses for property types associated with LGBTQ+ history in Atlanta.

The following table identifies several different property types in Atlanta for which examples have been identified within this context as having an association with Atlanta’s LGBTQ+ history and historic themes. This is not an exhaustive list, as a comprehensive survey was not conducted for the purposes of this study but is intended as a starting point for looking at various property types. These were identified through the inventory development (see Resource Inventory chapter), but there is of course potential for additional property types in Atlanta to merit consideration for LGBTQ+ significance as the identification and NRHP nomination of Atlanta’s LGBTQ+ properties increase in the coming years.

Each of the themes is followed by a NRHP evaluation framework section entitled NRHP Eligibility Standards. These sections provide more detailed guidance for evaluating a LGBTQ+ resource for the NRHP by providing common property types associated with each theme, eligibility standards, character defining features, and integrity considerations. Lastly, each of these sections is concluded with an example of how to evaluate a resource provides real world applicability of the NRHP standards presented.

Property Function or Use	Common Subcategories
Building: Residential	Apartment Residential Hotel Single-Family Residence
Building: Commercial	Bar Bookstore Cabaret Club Coffeeshop Complex Cruise Bar Disco Health Club/Gym Hotel/Motel Levi/Leather/Western Bar Lounge Night Club Piano Bar Pub Retail Show Bar Theater/Auditorium
Building: Civic	City Hall County, state and federal buildings Courthouse Hospital Library
Building: Religious	Church Synagogue Temple
District	Commercial Landscape Residential
Sites/Landscapes	Cemetery Park Parade Route Plaza
Structures	Automobile Bridge Bandstand Gazebo Road Trolley or rail lines Tunnel
Objects	Fountain Marker Monument Sculpture Statuary

THE LGBTQ+ ATLANTA Timeline

1895 - The earliest documented performance by a female impersonator in Atlanta took place at the Cotton States and International Exposition in modern-day Piedmont Park.

1913 - While Anthony Auriemma, a female impersonator, was in Atlanta for a show, he contested the cross-dressing ordinances of the city with the Atlanta Chief of Police, James Beavers. Later, Auriemma became known as Francis Renault.

1920s-1940s - In the first half of the twentieth century, gay men and women created their own spaces in heterosexual public places. Though there were likely many of these places, only a few have been recorded. One such place was the Lounge, at 79 Forsyth Street NW in downtown Atlanta. In the 1940s, gay men used the rear booths to socialize, a place where they would not be visible from the main entrance of the bar.

1940s-1950s - The Lorelei Ladies and the Tomboys softball teams formed in Atlanta, in 1939 and 1948, respectively. Both teams competed across the country, and though they were not exclusively lesbian teams, many lesbian women in Atlanta were on or followed the teams.

1946 - George Hyde established the Eucharistic Catholic Church, a gay-affirming Catholic church, after being denied communion for defending a man who confessed his homosexuality to the priest of Sacred Heart Catholic Church. The first service was held at the Winecoff Hotel in downtown Atlanta.

1953 - Twenty men were arrested by the Atlanta Police Department for sodomy and similar charges during a stakeout of the Atlanta Public Library's men's restroom. The local newspapers called the operation the Atlanta Public Library Perversion Case, and in their coverage, they published the names and addresses of the men. Most of the accused lost their jobs, and several had to leave the city.



1969 - On August 5th, six weeks after the riots at the Stonewall Inn in New York City, the Atlanta Police Department raided the Ansley Mall Mini-Cinema during a screening of *Lonesome Cowboys*, Andy Warhol's homoerotic satire of Hollywood Westerns. The police arrested both the cinema's manager (George Ellis) and the projectionist (James Russ) for breaking the state's obscenity law, and they also photographed and questioned the approximately 70 patrons in the audience. The event is recognized as a turning point in LGBTQ+ history in Atlanta and is also credited with igniting the LGBTQ+ rights movement in the city.



1970 - In recognition of the first anniversary of the Stonewall riots, approximately 100 people gathered in Piedmont Park for Atlanta's first Pride rally. There was no media coverage of the event.

1971 - The Sweet Gum Head, known as "the Show Place of the South," opened on Cheshire Bridge Road. This show bar was known for its large productions, and there were many famous female impersonators, such as Rachel Wells, in its rotating cast.



1971 - The Georgia Gay Liberation Front, led by activist Bill Smith and formed in a cafe in Emory Village earlier in the year, organized the first Pride march through Atlanta on June 27th. *The Great Speckled Bird* reported that there were over 100 participants, which included both members of the LGBTQ+ community and allies, who were marching to protest anti-gay legislation and job discrimination. The city would not grant a permit for the march, so the marchers were forced to walk along the sidewalks.

1972 - January 16 - The Metropolitan Community Church, a Protestant Christian church formed in California in 1969 as an inclusive space for members of the LGBTQ+ community, held its first service in Atlanta.

1972 - June 23 - The Atlanta Lesbian Feminist Alliance (ALFA), an organization that focused on issues at the intersection of the gay and women's liberation movements, was formed in the Little Five Points neighborhood.



1974 - *The Atlanta Barb*, one of Atlanta's first LGBTQ+ newspapers, began circulating. The paper, which was renamed the Barb in 1975, covered many topics including political issues, harassment by the police, LGBTQ+ events, updates on drag acts at local bars and clubs, and the community's religious life.



1974 - Charis Books & More, the first lesbian/feminist bookstore in the Southeastern United States and one of the oldest continually operating feminist bookstores in the country, was opened by Linda Bryant and Barbara Borgman in Little Five Points.

1976 - The first location of the Atlanta Gay Center opened in Midtown, offering health, legal, and social services with a team of trained telephone counselors.



THE LGBTQ+ ATLANTA Timeline continued

1977 - The First Tuesday Democratic Club is created in Atlanta. The political action committee worked to promote LGBTQ+ rights through lobbying, candidates' forums, and voter registration drives. In 1980, the organization separated from the Democratic Party and was renamed the First Tuesday Association for Lesbian and Gay Rights.



1978 - Approximately 2,000 people protested the appearance of Anita Bryant, a singer and anti-gay activist, at the Southern Baptist Convention that was being held at the World Congress Center in Atlanta. The protest is remembered as a turning point in Atlanta's LGBTQ+ history, galvanizing a larger segment of the city's LGBTQ+ population to openly fight for their rights.

1979 - The Gay Atlanta Minority Association (GAMA) was established by Black LGBTQ+ people in the city to bring attention to racism within the gay community.

1981 - Phoebe Smith, a transsexual Atlanta woman, began publishing the Transsexual Voice, a newsletter for trans people. The newsletter, which Smith published through 1995, contained advice through articles and letters to the editor, descriptions of the personal experiences of trans contributors, and a section of personal ads.

1982 - AID Atlanta, a social service agency that provides HIV/AIDS-related services, was established. The CDC first mentioned the conditions now known as AIDS in 1981, and then labeled them AIDS in September of 1982.

1982 - An Atlanta police officer arrested Michael Hardwick, a gay Atlantan, in the bedroom of his Virginia-Highland home for sodomy. Though the district attorney decided not to prosecute Hardwick on the sodomy charge, Hardwick sued Georgia's attorney general, Michael Bowers, in order to invalidate the state's sodomy law. The case was taken to the U.S. Supreme Court, and in 1986, the court ruled that Georgia's sodomy law was constitutional, but only when it was applied to gay people.



1986 - Through an amendment to the city charter, the Atlanta City Council voted to prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, sex, sexual orientation, religion, national origin, age, or handicap. A local anti-gay group, Citizens for Public Awareness, attempted to get the ordinance repealed, but their effort failed.



THE NAMES PROJECT
IN ATLANTA MEMORIAL DAY WEEKEND



1988 - The NAMES Project AIDS Memorial Quilt was displayed at the World Congress Center in May, and the Atlanta chapter of the Aids Coalition to Unleash Power (ACT/UP) was established in August.



1990 - One of the Billboard Project's "Gay America Loves You" billboards was posted above the Downtown Connector near Grady Hospital.

1991 - The Atlanta Lesbian and Gay History Thing, an effort to collect historic materials from the LGBTQ+ community of Atlanta, was formed by activists Maria Helena Dolan, Cal Gough, John Howard, Gil Robison, Liz Throop, and David Whittier.



1993 - Outwrite Bookstore and Coffeehouse opens on Monroe Drive. The bookstore not only provided literature to Atlanta's LGBTQ+ community, but also gave them another space to develop community. In 1996, the bookstore was relocated to the intersection of 10th Street NE and Piedmont Avenue, where it remained until it closed in 2012.

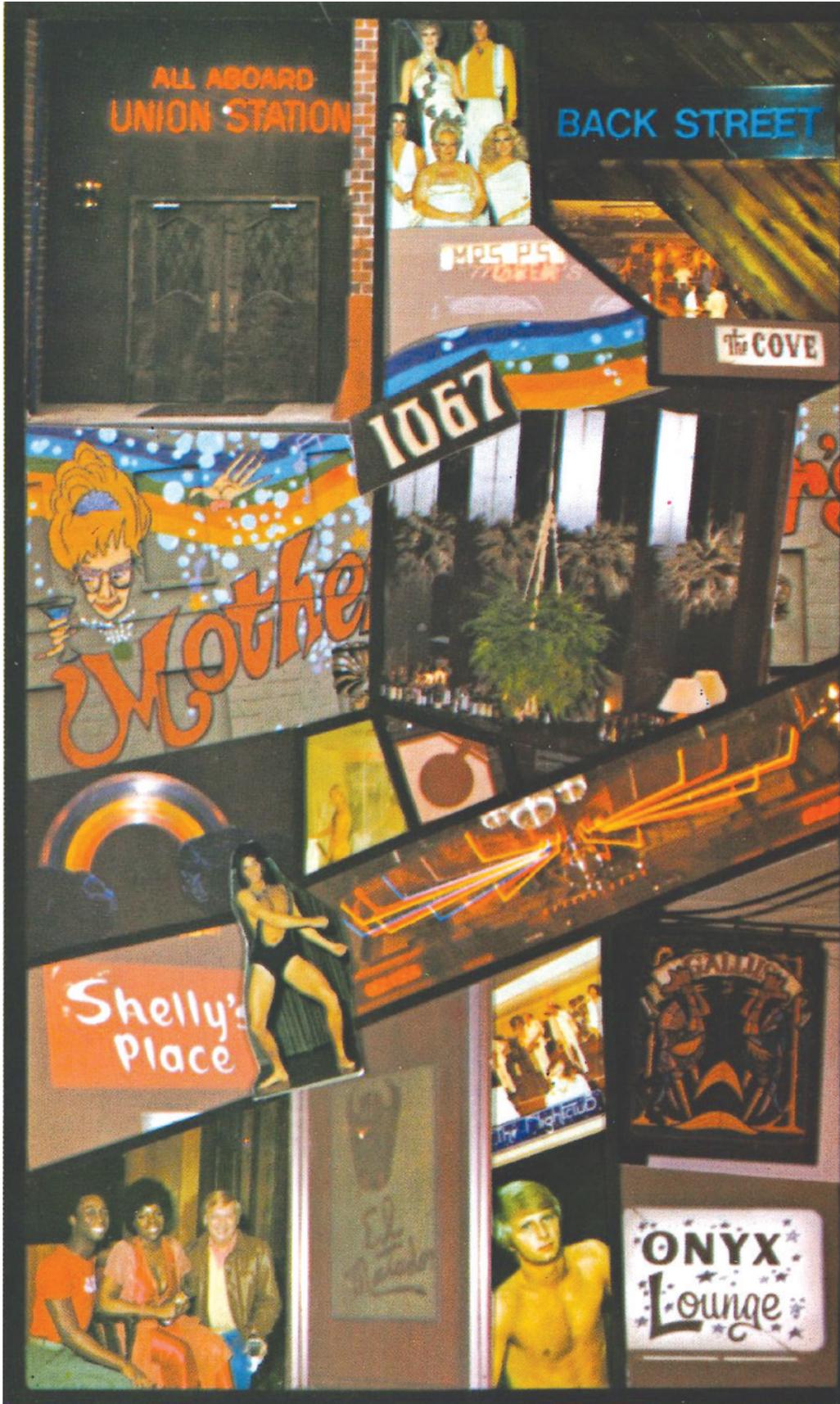
1994 - Atlantan LGBTQ+ activists Pat Hussain and Jon-Ivan Weaver established Olympics Out of Cobb County in response to two anti-gay resolutions passed by the Cobb County Board of Commissioners in August 1993. Through protest and organization, Olympics Out of Cobb County was able to persuade the Committee for the Olympic Games to relocate the women's volleyball competition from a Cobb County venue to the University of Georgia, as well as bypass Cobb County in the Olympic Torch Relay.

1996 - The first official Black Gay Pride was held over Labor Day Weekend in 1996, though Black LGBTQ+ Atlantans had been gathering over Labor Day Weekend since the late 1970s. Between 1976 and 1988, Henri McTerry, a successful gay Black event organizer in Atlanta, hosted picnics in his backyard that were attended by Black LGBTQ+ people from across the country.

1997 - Cathy Woolard was elected to the Atlanta City Council. She was the first openly gay elected official in Georgia and served as the City Council President from 2002 to 2004.

1998 - The Supreme Court of Georgia rules that the state's sodomy law is unconstitutional, making consensual, private sexual relationships between all adults legal. The U.S. Supreme Court did not overturn its decision from the *Bowers v. Hardwick* case until 2003.

2000 - The Atlanta City Council adopted an ordinance that made it illegal for business to discriminate on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity. The ordinance was proposed by Councilmember Cathy Woolard.



THEME: ATLANTA'S LGBTQ+ SOCIAL SPACES

Prior to the mid-twentieth century, LGBTQ+ people in Atlanta socialized with others who shared their gender and sexual non-conformity by gathering in private homes or creating their own spaces within public heterosexual, cis-gender places. According to historian Wesley Chenault, LGBTQ+ people living in Atlanta during the first half of the twentieth century crafted social geography that reflected typical social life in Atlanta, developing their relationships at home, in school, and throughout downtown Atlanta, similarly to heterosexual, gender-conforming Atlantans. Though Chenault, along with historian Jodie Talley, has argued that the culture of the “open secret” created an air of quiet acceptance in White southern communities during this time, as long as LGBTQ+ people did not disturb the social order through vocalization and public displays of their difference, it is possible that LGBTQ+ people also publicly expressed their sexualities openly by utilizing publicly accessible private spaces, such as restrooms or forested outdoor locations, to cruise.

BARS AND CLUBS: SAFE HAVENS OF LGBTQ+ LIFE

The Gay Bar as a Community Space

Throughout the second half of the twentieth century, as the visibility of LGBTQ+ people increased in Atlanta, gay bars were the most

(Opposite) Collage of popular LGBTQ+ social spaces in Atlanta during the mid-1970s (Source: *Cruise*, Volume 1, Number 2, February 1976. Lesbian, Gay, Bi-Sexual, and Transgender Serial Collection. Kenan Research Center at the Atlanta History Center)

common type of LGBTQ+ social space in the city. Bars represent some of the earliest public spaces in which LGBTQ+ people gathered in Atlanta. Though bars were not always a safe place, largely due to police raids, they were one of the first places LGBTQ+ people were able to publicly express their sexualities and gender identities in the city. These revolutionary spaces allowed people of the same sex to openly flirt, touch, and dance with one another, as well as dress in drag and experiment with their gender presentation. Bars served as important community centers as well, and fundraisers, benefit performances, and health drives were regularly held in these places to support both specific individuals in Atlanta's LGBTQ+ communities and the general LGBTQ+ population of the city. Though several bar owners were initially hesitant to allow political activity in their bars, by the mid-1970s, activists were utilizing bars for meetings and other organizational tasks. In the early 1980s, bars also started supporting voter registration drives. The most important role gay bars in Atlanta served during the twentieth century was providing a relatively safe space for LGBTQ+ people to meet others who shared their interests. Prior to the widespread use of the internet and smartphones in the twenty-first century, these places were cornerstones of LGBTQ+ community life in Atlanta, helping to foster the social worlds of the city's LGBTQ+ enclaves.

Social Spaces Within a Commercialized Space: Bar Business Models

Bars and clubs are businesses that provide a physical space for socializing outside of the home, but the activities and environments found in each vary from bar to bar. There are several types of bars that cater to the LGBTQ+ community based on the services or atmospheres their owners provide and curate for customers, and the terms

used in this chapter for each of these types are included here. Bars that simply provide beverages, whether they are alcoholic or not, and are meant simply for socializing are referred to here as hotel bars, lounges, taverns, pubs, and neighborhood bars. These types of bars sometimes host events and occasionally have games for customers to play. Discos and nightclubs are venues that have dance floors and play pre-recorded music so that patrons can dance. Bars that offer entertainment, including plays, musicals, comedy acts, female impersonation/drag shows, and live artists are known as show bars, piano bars, or live music clubs. Cruising bars are spaces where people who are looking for sexual partners gather.

Bars can offer multiple services that stretch across these types, but a business typically has a target audience that is represented by one of these types. For example, non-cruise bars can be described as “cruisey” as well, though their primary service isn’t providing a space for cruising. There are also more niche bar types that serve smaller segments of the population, such as Levi/Leather/Western bars. Providing too little or too much of a service can result in a loss of business or a change in clientele. Atlanta’s gay and gay-friendly bars and clubs have operated as all these types, and many have offered multiple or all of these services. Several of Atlanta’s LGBTQ+ bars have grown to include multiple bar types under one roof, and these are typically referred to as “complexes.” Examples of these include Backstreet (no longer extant), the Locker Room, and the Sports Page.

EARLIEST KNOWN PUBLIC SPACES

The earliest known public LGBTQ+ hangouts in Atlanta were small taverns and hotel bars downtown. By occupying rear and interior spaces of the buildings, such as the back booths of a bar,

White LGBTQ+ people could socialize without fear of being easily seen from the bar’s exterior, which could result in public outing. The Lounge at 79 Forsyth Street NW (no longer extant), across from the old Post Office building in downtown Atlanta, is the earliest known public LGBTQ+ gathering space. Owned by the Vocalis family, the Lounge was a tavern that operated in the late 1930s and 1940s. It had a section of booths at the rear that was not visible from the entrance due to the placement of the bar and small sundries stand. While the postal workers came in and sat at the bar after work, White gay men often gathered in the rear booths (Chenault 2008:44–46, 90). By the late 1940s, though this bar never explicitly catered to homosexuals, it had developed a reputation as a place where homosexuals gathered. The federal government took notice during their purges in the Lavender Scare, and at least one Atlanta man was taken in for questioning regarding his sexuality due to having been seen there (see Theme: LGBTQ+ Atlantans and Harassment) (Chenault 2008:88–89).

Most of the known LGBTQ+ spaces from this period were clustered in the downtown theater district north of Five Points. The Cotton Blossom was a hotel bar within the Winecoff Hotel at 176 Peachtree Street NW. Though few details are known about the bar, it was popular with gay men and was operated by people sympathetic to LGBTQ+ issues (Hyde 2005:6; Talley 2006:11). The management over both the bar and the hotel helped pay for the rented room used by Eucharistic Catholic Church, the country’s first gay-affirming church (Hyde 2005:6; Talley 2006:11, 52). On December 7, 1946, the hotel caught fire, and it is unknown whether the bar reopened or operated beyond that time (Hyde 2005:6). In the late 1940s, the Five O’Clock Supper Club opened less than a block south of the Winecoff Hotel, upstairs at 160 Peachtree Street NW (no longer extant) in

the heart of the theater district. Supper or dinner clubs were popular entertainment venues during the 1940s and 1950s that served food and drinks while also providing entertainment through dancing and performances.

In 1951, the Five O’Clock Supper Club became Club Peachtree (Chenault 2008:105–106; Chenault and Braukman 2008:44–45). As the Five O’Clock Supper Club, the club was a popular hangout for gay men that worked at the nearby Rich’s and Davison’s department stores. According to George Hyde, founder of the Eucharistic Catholic Church, the club “was gay for the cocktail hour. After six o’clock, it became non-gay” (Chenault 2008:68). Though the club’s patrons were likely mostly heterosexual, performances often included drag entertainers, then known as female impersonators. (see Theme: LGBTQ+ Arts in Atlanta). One of the female impersonators that appeared at the Five O’Clock Supper Club was Guy Dobbs, who performed under the names Little Gwendolyn and Terry Lynn. Female impersonation, made popular in the United States through late-nineteenth-century vaudeville shows, was a common and accepted form of entertainment in the first half of the twentieth century. During this period, because there were no explicitly public gay spaces, drag shows were held in heterosexual bars and clubs, and LGBTQ+ people had to utilize those places for socializing (Chenault and Braukman 2008:47).

CARVING OUT THEIR OWN SPACES IN THE 1950S THROUGH THE LATE 1960S

Peachtree Street through Midtown to Buckhead

In the 1950s, LGBTQ+ social life expanded north of the city center along Peachtree Street, through Midtown and toward Buckhead. Restaurants operated rear bars separated from the dining

areas, and LGBTQ+ people gathered in these places alongside heterosexual and gender-conforming people. Atlanta’s liquor laws at the time required businesses to stop serving alcohol at midnight. Bars that continued pouring mixed drinks beyond this time, whether secretly or through arrangements with the police or city officials, became gathering spaces for the LGBTQ+ community. Partially due to this accessibility to after-hours alcohol, LGBTQ+ people began to frequent places that were far from the original downtown core of nightlife (Chenault 2008:108–110).

Examples of these types of bars from this period include the Wisteria Garden Cocktail Lounge that was located at the rear of the Camellia Garden, a Chinese restaurant at 1851 Peachtree Road NE (no longer extant), and Pappy’s Plantation Lounge that was located at the rear of Mammy’s Shanty, a southern restaurant based on racist caricatures of Black people in the Antebellum South that was located at 1480 Peachtree Street NE (no longer extant) (Adams 2005; Auction Finds 2014; Banas 2013:66; Chenault 2008:108). Both bars were popular among White homosexual men during the mid-to-late 1950s.

The Tick Tock Grill, a wine and beer bar that was a frequent hangout for educated and professional White lesbians and White gay men in the 1950s, was also in this area of Peachtree Road, immediately north the Camellia Garden. Located at 1935 Peachtree Road NE, the Tick Tock Grill had a jukebox and dance floor where LGBTQ+ women were able to dance with one another (Chenault 2008:65, 109–110, 141, 2013:99–100). However, straight people still gathered at the Tick Tock Grill, and in the mid-1950s the police became aware that the bar was popular with lesbians. With the threat of closure from the county government, the owner, Louise “Lou” Allen, voluntarily surrendered

“GRAND OPENING”
 Friday, August 12th

FREE COFFEE*
FINE FOOD
FAST SERVICE
 24 HOURS—
 7 DAYS A WEEK
AIR CONDITIONED



It's Always
TIME TO EAT
at the
TICK TOCK

ATwood 9393
1935 PEACHTREE ROAD

SUPPLIERS:
 ARISTOCRAT ICE CREAM
 CIGARETTE SERVICE CO.
 CRISWELL BAKERY
 L. W. LAY CO.
 LOGAN PROVISION CO.
 GEORGIA NOVELTY CO.
 TENN. EGG CO.

Breakfast—Lunch—Dinner
Any Time
Sandwiches—Short Orders
Take-Out Service
Salad Bar—Ice Cream

GEORGE COOMBS—MANAGER
 Lou Allen and Fran Cleveland, Owners

*Opening Day

Advertisement for the grand opening of the Tick Tock Grill (Source: *The Atlanta Constitution*, August 12, 1955, Newspapers.com)

the bar’s alcohol license, and by the late 1950s, she had sold the business. New owners closed it at the beginning of the 1960s (*Atlanta Constitution* 1955; Chenault 2008:141; Fulton, Jr. 2020a).

Supper clubs also remained popular as nightlife locations for straight and gay people in Atlanta through the 1950s. One of these was Wits’ End, established at 50 5th Street NW (no longer extant) in the mid-1950s by Phil and Nancy Erickson. Phil had previously been a part of the Merry Mutes with Dick Van Dyke. The Wits’ comedy cabaret shows were well-known in Atlanta during the mid-twentieth century. They often included at least one female impersonator who would lip-sync to popular songs (Directory 43 1964:22; Emerson 2012; Wits’ End Productions 2002). Wits’ End was described as “gay in a sense,” with the crowd divided by sexuality; straight couples sat at tables in the cabaret and gay men occupied the space along the bar on the left side of the room (Adams 2005). This layout was likely common throughout the decade, as other bars have been described with similar divisions by sexuality, including the Copa Caprice, an early 1950s hotel bar with entertainment that gay men frequented. It was located inside the Imperial Hotel at 355 Peachtree Street NE in downtown Atlanta (*Atlanta Constitution* 1953; Phillips 2005).

Piedmont and Ponce de Leon Avenue Corridors

The expanding LGBTQ+ social scene of the 1950s also consisted of businesses along Piedmont and Ponce de Leon Avenues, including the first bar that was opened specifically for a growing LGBTQ+ customer base. The Piedmont Tavern at 1142 Piedmont Avenue NE was originally established in 1944 by Hubert and Vera Phillips, known to patrons as Mr. P and Mrs. P (*Atlanta Constitution* 1944). Located on the west side of Piedmont Park, adjacent to the Active Oval that is home to the park’s sports fields, Piedmont Tavern became a frequent hangout for members of several softball leagues in Atlanta during the 1950s. Teams that regularly visited the bar included the Lorelei Ladies

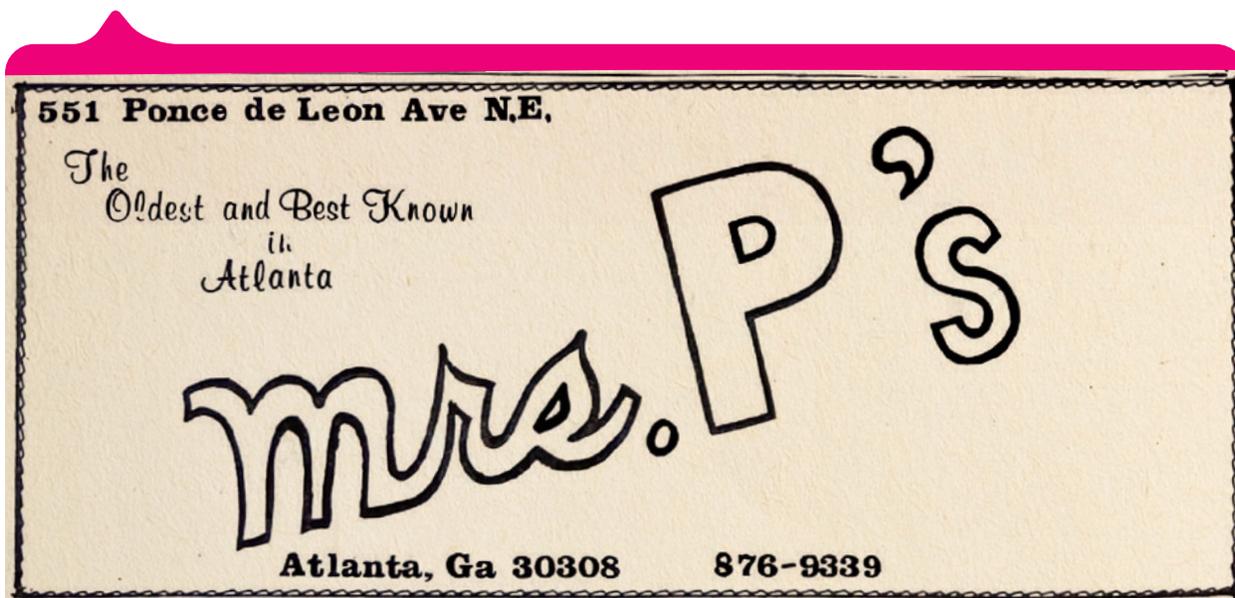


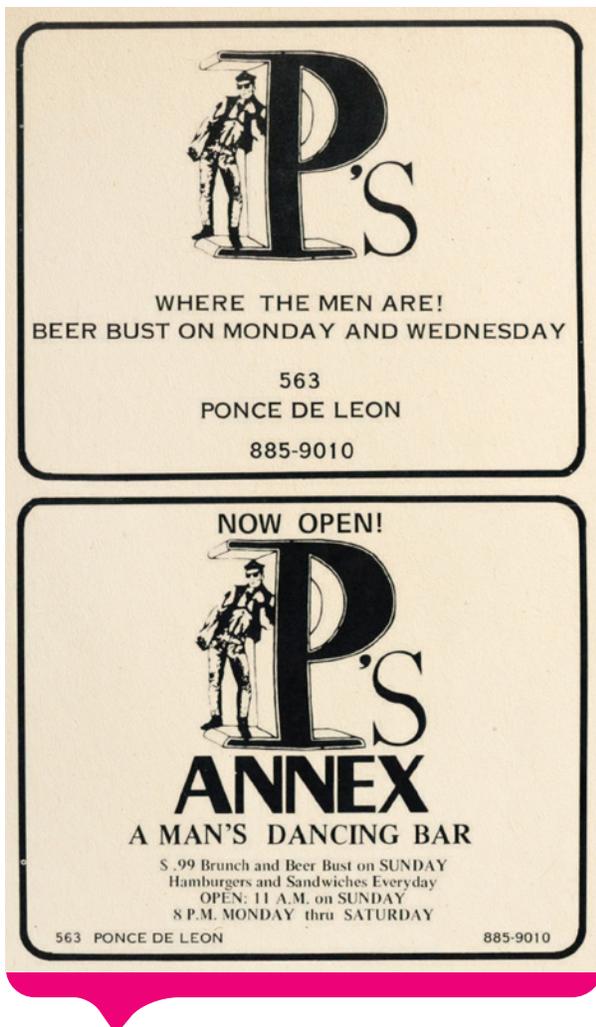
Advertisement for the grand opening of Piedmont Tavern, Vera Phillip's first restaurant and bar before the creation of Mrs. P's (Source: *The Atlanta Constitution*, October 31, 1944, Newspapers.com)

Advertisement for Mrs. P's in the December 1970 edition of *David* (Source: *David*, Volume 1, Number 2, December 1970, HoustonLGBTHistory.org)

and the Tomboys, both of which had multiple lesbian members. As the women began regularly meeting at the tavern after games, more lesbians joined them there, as well as a few gay men.

By the mid-1950s, Piedmont Tavern had transitioned from serving a mixed crowd of straight and gay people into a primarily LGBTQ+ space that was most popular among lesbians (Chenault 2008:112–114). The crowd of customers continued to grow, and Vera Phillips, who had taken over the majority of the responsibility for the restaurant and bar, decided she needed a larger space for her business. In 1956, she opened Mrs. P's, originally a restaurant and lounge, on the lowest level of the Ponce de Leon Hotel at 551 Ponce de Leon Avenue NE. The makeup of the customer base at Mrs. P's was originally similar to that of Piedmont Tavern prior, making Mrs. P's the earliest known social space opened to specifically serve a community of LGBTQ+ people in Atlanta (Chenault 2008:114). In the 1960s, Bill Copeland, a major LGBTQ+ bar and restaurant owner in Atlanta during the early years of Gay Liberation, purchased Mrs. P's. Under his ownership, the bar continued to serve as a safe space for LGBTQ+ people (Voss 1982g). By the





Advertisement for P's and P's Annex in the 1978 edition of *Cruise Book of Maps*, after the bar transitioned to a leather bar and expanded to create a dancing area (Source: *Cruise Book of Maps*, 1978, HoustonLGBTHistory.org)

1970s, Mrs. P's was recognized as Atlanta's oldest gay bar (Killer 1976b).

The area around Mrs. P's on Ponce de Leon Avenue continued to expand with more LGBTQ+ spaces during the late 1950s and early 1960s. Lillian Dupree, a business owner who created spaces for lesbians, operated two supper clubs at 614 Glen Iris Drive NE (no longer extant) in the 1950s, southeast of Mrs. P's. These were the Glen Iris Supper Club and the Clovis Club, and the female impersonator Guy Dobbs managed

a female impersonation supper club called the Queen of Clubs in the same building between the periods of Dupree's two ventures. All three of these businesses were popular with White lesbians in Atlanta. Dupree also operated a restaurant at 640 Glen Iris Drive NE (no longer extant) called Dupree's Grill in the mid-to-late 1950s. Throughout this period, her establishments were targeted by law enforcement due to their reputations as "sex deviant" gathering places, for selling liquor to minors, and for breaking city ordinances (Ashworth 1959; *Atlanta Constitution* 1955; Fulton, Jr. 2020b; Mims 2012:50; *ONE: The Homosexual Magazine* 1965).

By 1965, Lillian Dupree was operating a new bar, 'Dupree's Lounge,' at 715 Ponce de Leon Avenue NE (no longer extant), around the corner from her earlier businesses (Dupree's Lounge 1965). In the 1969 edition of the *International Guild Guide*, Dupree's was listed as a lesbian bar where you entered "at your own risk" (Fulton, Jr. 2019a; *International Guild Guide* 1969). Patrons of the bar also remembered the place as "rough" and somewhere that "you took your life in your hands to go into ... because [the bar was] very, I mean, these girls were tough" (Chenault 2008:141–142; McLamore and Vogel 2005:00:53:00).

By 1967, another LGBTQ+ space opened on Ponce de Leon Avenue, next door to Mrs. P's. The Joy Lounge was a gay bar in a two-story building at 563 Ponce de Leon Avenue NE (no longer extant), and it was owned by Frank Powell, who later operated one of the city's largest collections of gay bars and clubs during the mid-to-late twentieth century (Chenault 2008:144–145; Joy Lounge 1967). Though drag acts had performed in Atlanta prior to the Joy Lounge, it was there, and at the neighboring Mrs. P's, that drag queens began to perform in bars and clubs explicitly

operated for LGBTQ+ people (see Theme: LGBTQ+ Arts in Atlanta). By this time, Mrs. P's was managed by Chuck Cain, another operator of gay bars in Atlanta, and he reached an agreement with police to allow drag performances on Tuesday nights at Mrs. P's. Two of Atlanta's most famous drag personalities, Phyllis Killer (Billy Jones) and Diamond Lil (Phillip Forrester) gave some of their earliest performances in Atlanta at the Joy Lounge and Mrs. P's, respectively, in 1968 (Chenault 2008:144–145; Roberts 1978; Voss 1982g). Phyllis Killer also hosted the first of her annual "Oscars," an awards show for LGBTQ+ entertainment and social life that continued through 1985, at Mrs. P's that year (Roberts 1978). These performances and events helped ignite the drag scene in LGBTQ+ venues across Atlanta. Within a few years of the performances at the Joy Lounge and Mrs. P's, the city had several LGBTQ+ show bars that produced drag shows and hosted drag pageants.

Old Fourth Ward

Though Lillian Dupree's lesbian bars were in Atlanta's Old Fourth Ward neighborhood, all three locations were clustered near the LGBTQ+ nightlife corridor that developed along Ponce de Leon Avenue, along the northern boundary of the neighborhood. The Tower, another working-class bar and restaurant that served LGBTQ+ women, was also established in the Old Fourth Ward during this period, but it was located deeper in the neighborhood, closer to Poncey Highlands and Little Five Points (Sears 2001:178). Charles Denny Gamas opened the Tower at 735 Forrest Avenue NE (now Ralph McGill Boulevard) in 1952 (Gamas 1952). Likely named for the "towering radio antenna" adjacent to the building, the Tower was a neighborhood bar that had pool tables and hosted live music (Sears 2001:178).

Through the 1950s and 1960s, it served a mixture of heterosexual people and LGBTQ+ women. Like the Piedmont Tavern, the Tower was associated with women's softball teams during this period, including the Lorelei Ladies. According to patrons, Gamas actively supported his LGBTQ+ customers, including bailing them out of jail. Charles Gamas, along with his son Denny C. Gamas, continued to operate the bar and advertise to LGBTQ+ women through at least 1968 (*Atlanta Constitution* 1972a; Mims 2012:52; Sears 2001:178).

Downtown

The 1960s were a period of growth for LGBTQ+ social spaces in Atlanta, and with this expansion came a diversification in the types of bars and clubs and the audiences they served. As white flight began and segments of Atlanta's social worlds moved out of downtown and into other neighborhoods or suburbs in the 1960s, more space was made in the southern parts of the city for establishments that served the working class. The two most notable downtown additions to the LGBTQ+ social scene during this period were the Cameo Lounge and the Blue Room, which were both located near the Greyhound Station that stood at 81 Cain Street NW (now Andrew Young International Boulevard; building no longer extant). *Cruise* briefly mentioned both of the bars in an article about LGBTQ+ life in Atlanta in 1977, stating that they "have always drawn working class gays [and] hustlers" (*Cruise* 1977d:17).

The Cameo Lounge was open by 1961 at 182 Spring Street NW (now Ted Turner Drive; building no longer extant), southeast of the bus station, but relocated to 188 Williams Street NW (no longer extant) in the early 1970s. The Blue Room at 86 Cain Street NW (now Andrew Young International Boulevard) was in the same building as the



Exterior of the Cameo Lounge at 182 Spring Street NW in the early 1960s (Source: Lane Brothers Commercial Photographers Photographic Collection, 1920-1976. Photographic Collection, Special Collections and Archives, Georgia State University Library)

Americana Motor Hotel, which was built in 1962. The Blue Room opened by 1964 and was directly south of the bus station. Based on photographs of the hotel and the description in *Directory 43*, the bar likely had an underground entrance on the north side of the building, across from the bus station (Chenault 2008:143–144; *Directory 43* 1964:22; Mapping the Gay Guides 2020). Though it occupied space within a newly built hotel, the Blue Room still maintained a reputation for a rough crowd. According to comments in the YLIGA Facebook group, both the Blue Room and the Cameo Lounge were understood to be mildly dangerous places where people were told “never to sit with [their] back[s] to the door” (YLIGA, 11/01/2021, “Does anyone remember The Cameo

Bar”). Reports of robberies associated with the Cameo Lounge in the *Atlanta Constitution* suggest these perceptions had some merit (*Atlanta Constitution* 1961, 1972b). Though these bars were rarely mentioned in the mainstream LGBTQ+ publications of the period, both the Blue Room and the Cameo Lounge were open through the 1970s, and the latter still occasionally appeared in the *Cruise Weekly* bar listings in 1984 (*Cruise Weekly Arts, Entertainment and Travel Magazine* 1984; Mapping the Gay Guides 2020).

Hunter Street (now Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive)

Black LGBTQ+ Atlantans also created one of their earliest and most well-known public spaces from an existing club during this period. The Marquette, one of Atlanta’s earliest known Black LGBTQ+ social spaces, opened in the late 1960s. Recognized as one of the South’s oldest Black gay clubs, the

Marquette is still operating today, though in a new location at 868 Joseph E. Boone Boulevard NW. The club likely originated as a social space for working-class Black Atlantans, but by the 1970s, it had transitioned into a social space specifically for Black LGBTQ+ people (Washington 2013:85). The earliest known location was at 809 Hunter Street NW (now MLK, Jr. Drive) on the north side of the business strip located along that road (no longer extant). The only known image of the building is a 1980 painting by Freddie Styles titled *The Red Door*. Between the beginning of LGBTQ+ social life at the Marquette and the early-1980s, there were few documented public Black LGBTQ+ spaces in Atlanta. In an interview, Styles noted that there was a gay club popular with Black Atlantans on Forrest Avenue named the Purple Grotto, but its address is not known (status unknown). Through this period, most Black LGBTQ+ social experiences occurred at private parties or gatherings and in areas that LGBTQ+ people carved for themselves in straight bars and clubs, including in another unidentified club mentioned by Styles, the Kongo Club on Simpson Road (status unknown) (Styles 2005).

DEVELOPING FOUNDATIONS OF LGBTQ+ ENCLAVES FROM THE LATE 1960s TO THE MID-1970s

In the early 1970s, several of Atlanta's most well-known gay bars from the twentieth century were established, and these places helped build the foundations of some of the city's major LGBTQ+ enclaves.

"In 1969 we had three [gay bars]. Mrs. P's, Joy Lounge, and Chuck's... Now here we are five years later with 17, plus a bath and a gay theater." – Atlanta LGBTQ+ Activist Bill Smith (Padgett 2021:88)

Midtown

Many of the major LGBTQ+ spaces that solidified Midtown as Atlanta's gayborhood in the late-twentieth century have their roots in businesses that began in the late 1960s and early 1970s. In 1969, Frank Powell and Jim Nally opened the Cove at 586 Worchester Drive NE (no longer extant), immediately east of Piedmont Park and just off of Monroe Drive (*Cruise* 1976g; Killer 1975a; Mapping the Gay Guides 2020). Billed as "Atlanta's friendliest cruise bar," the Cove, or Le Cove as it was known for a short period when it was a membership-only club in the late 1970s and early 1980s, was one of Atlanta's most popular cruise bars for gay men between the late 1960s and the mid-1990s. Its location just off Monroe Drive helped it become a neighborhood bar for gay men that lived in Ansley Park and Midtown, and additions to the building over time expanded its outdoor cruising patio, known as Kudzu Kourt, as well as its dance floor (*Cruise* 1978e:19, 1979a, 1983a). The Cove continued to be one of Midtown's most popular LGBTQ+ cruise bars until it closed in 1994 (*The Cove, Atlanta: Glorious Results of Misspent Youth*, 09/26/2020, "Tonight, 26 years after The Cove...").

Between 1969 and 1970, Chuck Cain opened a gay bar along Monroe Drive, Chuck's Rathskeller. Located at 931 Monroe Drive NE (no longer extant), the Rathskeller, as it was also known, was described in advertising as "the largest gay bar in the U.S.A." and hosted a variety of entertainment options, including drag shows, live bands, and a large dance floor (*David* 1970; Fulton, Jr. 2020c). Utilizing the large space, Cain also opened "the Other Room," a dining space in another part of the building (*David* 1970). Though it was only open for a short period, between 1969 and 1972, Chuck's Rathskeller left an impact on Atlanta's LGBTQ+



'Signs of Good Times' collage from the December 1971 edition of *David*, showing the signs and logos of many of Atlanta's most popular LGBTQ+ spaces from that time (Source: *David*, Volume 2, Number 2, Lesbian, Gay, Bi-Sexual, and Transgender Serial Collection. Kenan Research Center at the Atlanta History Center)

social scene as one of the city's first large dancing bars where people of all races, genders, ages, and sexualities were able to socialize together. As Atlanta's first LGBTQ+ bar complex, it also helped to transition LGBTQ+ social spaces from the small, dark, hidden places into the large, bright, well-known clubs that developed over the following decade (An Ex-Patron of Chuck's 1971:4; Lipshits 1974a:8).

In the continually expanding gayborhood of Midtown, new LGBTQ+ spaces opened southwest

of Piedmont Park during this period, near the existing LGBTQ-friendly restaurant, the Prince George Inn at 115 6th Street NE (no longer extant). Bill Copeland opened the Prince George Inn in 1964 as a neighborhood bar that only served beer (YLIGA, 01/17/2021, "Me left bartender and Bud Bailey waiter..."). During the late-1960s, the bar developed into a popular happy hour hangout for gay men after Copeland acquired a liquor license and built a dining area in the late 1960s (Voss 1982i). In 1970, Copeland purchased the lot east of the bar with plans to expand the building for the creation of a men's boutique. Around this time, the happy hour crowd that gathered at the Prince George Inn's bar, which consisted mostly of gay businessmen, began to outgrow the original building's space. In response, Copeland decided

to use the new land as an overflow location for the bar. He built a large addition along the north side of 6th Street, from the east elevation of the Prince George Inn to Juniper Street (Voss 1982a, 1982i). By May 1971, this space, located between 834 and 838 Juniper Street NE, was operating as a liquor bar under the name the Armory, which was billed as “Atlanta’s living room” (David 1971a). Through the mid-1970s, the Armory operated as a cocktail lounge with a focus on happy hour specials and card games, and during this period, the bar remained mostly popular among gay businessmen (Cruise 1976a:24; Voss 1982a).

On the rear side of 845 Peachtree Street NE (no longer extant), John McBride opened Peaches Back Door in December 1971 (Lipshits 1974b:8). Located in a building adjacent to the Prince George Inn and the Armory, Peaches Back Door was accessed from Juniper Street through the parking lot that extended across the block. The bar shared a building with Funochio’s, a rock music venue that opened in the same month and fronted Peachtree Street (Kijak 2018:0:21:10; *Great Speckled Bird* 1972). Though Funochio’s was not a primarily-LGBTQ+ space, the venue did host drag performances that featured Billy Jones and Neely DeMann, another popular female impersonator in Atlanta during the early 1970s (David 1971d). The bar likely took its name from both its location on the rear of the building and the nickname of a popular bartender in the Atlanta social scene, Jim “Peaches” Brooker (IPAB, 12/19/2013, “In 1972, it was the first nightclub”).

Peaches Back Door was described as a “male-oriented gay bar” that was best known for drag performances, and it was the first place the Grease Sisters, a popular drag act including drag queens Kitty Litter, Lily White, Alvina Laverne Grease, and Apple Love, ever performed (Atlanta Lesbian/

Feminist Alliance 1972:5; Lipshits 1974b:8; Saunders 2014b). *Bob Damron’s Address Book* from 1973 listed the bar as private, likely meaning that membership was required, and noted that it had go-go boys. It was also marked as one of Atlanta’s most popular gay bars at the time (Mapping the Gay Guides 2020). Peaches Back Door closed in September 1972, but McBride continued to operate gay bars in Midtown (Lipshits 1974b:8; Mapping the Gay Guides 2020). Citing a need for more space, he created My House at 774 West Peachtree Street NW (no longer extant) as a replacement for Peaches Back Door in October 1972, and in 1974, he opened Peaches Stardust at 50 5th Street NW (no longer extant), stating in an advertisement that “Peaches’ Backdoor is open again” (David 1972:8; *The Barb* 1974b:9).

Cheshire Bridge Road Corridor

Outside of Midtown, other bars were opening in areas that were beginning to develop into LGBTQ+ neighborhoods, including the Cheshire Bridge Road corridor. The northeastern part of the city, near the intersection of Cheshire Bridge Road and Buford Highway, had been a haven for businesses selling alcohol and sexual materials and experiences since the mid-twentieth century. Due to its proximity to the Fulton County line and I-85, which was constructed in the 1950s, Cheshire Bridge Road transitioned from a residential area to a commercial corridor in the 1960s. Businesses opened along the road to serve northeastern Georgians who were utilizing the new interstate to travel from their alcohol-free home counties to Fulton County, where liquor sales were legal, and over time adult businesses joined the liquor stores and bars. Prior to the creation of LGBTQ+ businesses along the road, there were many businesses that targeted heterosexual customers on Cheshire Bridge Road (Henry 2019).



Drag performance at the Sweet Gum Head with the interior of the show bar visible, 1972 (Source: Drag Show, VIS 101.347.009. Boyd Lewis Photographs. Kenan Research Center at the Atlanta History Center)

One such place was 2284 Cheshire Bridge Road NE, a large business space at the rear of a strip mall southwest of the intersection of Cheshire Bridge and Lavista Roads. This building housed many heterosexual clubs, including the Cheshire Cat, a topless go-go club where Sonny and Cher held a months-long residency in the late 1960s (*Atlanta Constitution* 1968). In November 1971, Frank Powell transformed that space into an LGBTQ+ show bar, where drag queens performed in high-quality acts that included full theatrical performances and musicals. He named the bar the Sweet Gum Head after his hometown, and it quickly grew into one of the most well-known LGBTQ+ spaces in Atlanta (Padgett 2021:29–33). Though most of the patrons were LGBTQ+ people, straight people also attended performances at the show bar. By 1974, Atlanta’s drag scene was being covered in the *Atlanta Constitution*, and the Sweet

Gum Head was described as the city’s “largest drag nightspot” (Gray 1974). The gay-oriented *Atlanta Barb* began labeling the bar as the “Showplace of The South” in 1974, a title the Sweet Gum Head was known by through the early 1980s, and one that later bars took for their own marketing after the Sweet Gum Head closed (Daugherty 2018a:02:07:15; *Atlanta Barb* 1974a).

Powell also opened a private club for LGBTQ+ women known as Ms. Garbo’s on Cheshire Bridge Road in October 1973 (Powell 1973). Prior to Powell’s Ms. Garbo’s, another lesbian bar with the same name operated in the basement of an LGBTQ+ bar complex called King’s Kastle Inn. This early LGBTQ+ bar complex was in the former Brookwood Hotel at 2140 Peachtree Road NW (no longer extant), but it only operated for a few months in early-to-mid-1973 (Allen 1977; David

1973). The Ms. Garbo's at 2206 Cheshire Bridge Road NE was a popular lesbian club that catered to White middle and upper-class women. By 1976, the club was owned by Betty Hutcherson, who upgraded the space through renovations and established a restaurant in the bar. Nell Cofer, who had previously served as the cook at Mrs. P's, oversaw Ms. Garbo's new kitchen (*Cruise* 1976d, 1976j). Ms. Garbo's was one of Atlanta's most popular lesbian bars for professional LGBTQ+ women through the mid-to-late 1970s, and by the end of the decade, its popularity spurred the creation of Atlanta's first LGBTQ+ women's bar complex, the Sports Page at 2069 Cheshire Bridge Road NE (Voss 1982j).

Ansley Park

The neighborhood of Ansley Park, east of Piedmont Park, began developing into an enclave of LGBTQ+ life in the early 1970s. In 1971, El Matador opened in a commercial space at the rear of Ansley Mall at 1544 Piedmont Avenue NE (Jackson 1971; Voss 1982e). It was a small neighborhood bar with a laid back atmosphere that was mostly popular among older gay men. (*Cruise* 1976a:24). By the mid-1970s, El Matador, along with several other businesses in the mall, had helped Ansley Mall become an anchor for

Advertisement for El Matador, 1977 (Source: *Cruise*, Volume 2, Number 8, HoustonLGBTHistory.org)

JULY 4TH
Champagne Brunch
12:30 PM

Monday - T-shirt Night
Tuesday - Jean Night

"HAPPY HOURS"
Monday - Friday
3 till 9 PM

IN A NEW ORDER OF THINGS

El Matador

Now Presents
LIVE ENTERTAINMENT ON WEEKENDS
JULY 1ST AND 2ND
John Tooley - Popular & Show Tunes Singer
Dewey Bedingfield - Piano Entertainer ala "Liberace"

JULY 4TH
"Fireworks" at 10 PM
Special Performance by Terry Maki

Located in Ansley Mall
Corner of Piedmont Avenue
And Monroe Drive
Atlanta, Georgia
876-9147

SATURDAYS
Free Buffet Starts
at 2 PM

WEDNESDAYS
Hors d'Oeuvres
Frank Bee at the Piano

a thriving gayborhood in Ansley Park. In 1976, Howard Walters became a co-owner of El Matador. Shortly after he bought into the bar, El Matador's slogan became "in a new order of things" (*Cruise* 1977e; Voss 1982e).

Walters was a member of the First Tuesday Democratic Association and allowed the group to use the bar for meetings (see Theme: Political Activism in Atlanta's LGBTQ+ Communities). According to Gil Robinson, the older, mostly retired customer base of the bar also helped with packaging and addressing many of the group's mailers (YLIGA, 09/21/2021, "What did the Hideaway at Ansley Mall used to be called?"). In 1979, Walters renamed the bar New Order and converted the rear room to a western bar, which he called Horse Feathers (*Cruise* 1979b; Voss 1982e). By the end of the twentieth century, the entire bar was known as New Order (*David Atlanta* 1998a). As of 2023, the rear section of the space remains open as an LGBTQ+ bar called the Hideaway. It is the oldest continually occupied LGBTQ+ bar venue in the city (*The Georgia Voice* 2022).

Old Fourth Ward/Little Five Points

In 1974, the Tower at 735 Forrest Avenue NE (now Ralph McGill Boulevard), originally founded in the 1950s, was purchased and reopened by two LGBTQ+ women, Betty Irene Collins (known as BC) and Betty Jo Fisher (known as both Jo and Fish) (*Atlanta Barb* 1974a; Collins 1974; Fisher 1974). Collins and Fisher renamed the bar the Tower Lounge, and under their ownership, the bar's customer base shifted from a mixed crowd to mostly LGBTQ+ women. Though it was located in the Old Fourth Ward neighborhood, the Tower Lounge developed a strong association with the Atlanta Lesbian Feminist Alliance (ALFA), which was

headquartered in nearby Little Five Points. Tina Peters, a lesbian author who visited both the Tower Lounge and ALFA house parties during this period, described the bar as, "located in a purposefully chosen part of Atlanta," and "a place where [she] felt safe and well connected as a lesbian in training" (Peters 2008:45). The bar retained its reputation as a working-class bar after the change in ownership, but it also developed a political character as ALFA members began to gather there in the mid-1970s. Even with a more politically conscious customer base, the Tower Lounge continued to serve as a neighborhood bar with a gaming area, live entertainment, and associated softball leagues (*The Barb* 1977a). Members of softball teams sponsored by both ALFA or the Tower Lounge regularly met at the bar, including the ALFA Omegas, the ALFA Amazons, and the Tower Hotshots (Sears 2001:178–179). The Tower Lounge operated under Collins and Fisher through at least the late 1970s. The bar closed by mid-1979 and was reopened later that year as a Black LGBTQ+ women's bar, Club Sheba (*Gaybriel* 1979a).

The Downtown Exception

Though LGBTQ+ nightlife was mostly spreading out of downtown during the early 1970s, one of the city's biggest LGBTQ+ show bars opened there at the start of the decade. In 1970, Jim Nally, co-founder of the Cove, established the Onyx at 341 West Peachtree Street NW (no longer extant) (*Cruise* 1976g; *Cruise Weekly* 1978a). Originally a cruise bar, the Onyx was known for its laid-back and welcoming atmosphere, which remained even after it was transformed into a show bar during the first half of the decade. By the end of the 1970s, the Onyx developed a reputation as "an Atlanta institution" (*Cruise Weekly* 1978a:7). According to *Cruise Weekly*, the Onyx "played a significant part in local gay social history" by helping many of the



Advertisement for the Onyx, 1976 (Source: *Cruise*, Volume 1, Number 5, HoustonLGBTHistory.org)

city's most famous LGBTQ+ performers hone their entertainment skills, including Roski Fernandez, R.C. Cola, and Mickey Day (*Cruise Weekly* 1978a:6). Nally continued operating the Onyx at its downtown location until 1980 (Voss 1982b).

THE 1970s AND 1980s BAR BOOM IN LGBTQ+ ATLANTA

By the mid-1970s, the number of gay and openly gay-friendly bars in Atlanta was rapidly growing. This occurred alongside an increase in the population of openly LGBTQ+ people in the city. The proliferation of bars that openly welcomed LGBTQ+ people in Atlanta during this period meant that there were numerous bars that provided similar services and experiences. The social scene also rapidly changed, with many bars opening and closing within a short period of time. Most of the LGBTQ+ bars operated in enclaves that had been previously established as LGBTQ+ spaces in the early 1970s, but a few bars began operating in new areas throughout the city as well, such as Buckhead and the Virginia-Highland neighborhood. Though many new bars were established between the mid-1970s and mid-1980s, several previously mentioned institutions of Atlanta's LGBTQ+ social scene continued operating through this period as well. These bars included the Armory and the Cove

in Midtown; the Tower Lounge in Old Fourth Ward; the Marquette on the west side of Atlanta; and El Matador/New Order in Ansley Park.

Discotheques and Other Dance Venues

A new form of entertainment spread throughout Atlanta's LGBTQ+ nightlife beginning in the mid-1970s. As in other cities across the United States during this period, discotheques began to open, offering a dance floor with recorded music played by a live disc jockey over a high-tech sound system. Some early Atlanta discos were places that LGBTQ+ people gathered to dance and find community. The two earliest documented LGBTQ+ places to "boogie," as Phyllis Killer called it, were the Bayou Landing at 2110-B Peachtree Road NE and Score One at 1184 West Peachtree Street NW (Score One building is no longer extant), both of which opened in 1974 (YLIGA, 08/27/2020, "Gonna your help on this one! [sic]") (*Cruise* 1976c; Killer 1975b; *Atlanta Barb* 1974b; *The Barb* 1974c).

Between 1974 and 1975, several existing LGBTQ+ bars added discotheques to their spaces, including the Club Three at 1139 West Peachtree Street NW (no longer extant); Smuggler's Inn at 1720 Peachtree Street NE, which became Shelly's Place in 1976; and the previously mentioned club My House (*Cruise* 1976f; Killer 1976a; *Atlanta Barb* 1974c; *The Barb* 1974a). In 1975, at least three new discotheques opened in Atlanta, including Mother's Disco-Bar at 2110-B Peachtree Road NE (in the same building that Bayou Landing had previously occupied), Union Station at 436 Armour Circle NE (billed as the largest disco in the continental United States; no longer extant), and the renowned Backstreet at 845 Peachtree Street NE (no longer extant) (*Cruise* 1976a:4, 13, 19, 25; Killer 1975f).

Always Open

Though Backstreet's slogan became "Always open and pouring," the original iteration of the club in 1975 had a closing time. The complex was not a membership-only club until 1978, and even then, it did not operate for 24 hours. As a private club, it could operate "after hours," but Backstreet

still closed at 4 AM through the mid-1980s (Cook and Collins 2022:00:05:00). The liquor laws also did not permit the sale of alcohol on Sunday mornings, so the club had to close around 4 AM on Saturday nights during this period. In the late 1980s, the law was altered, and Backstreet began operating on its infamous 24-hour schedule.

(Below) Joe Fernandez, the founder of Backstreet and the eponym of Joe's Disco within the bar complex, with female impersonator Mickey Day in the mid-1970s (Source: Mickey Day, approximately 1970-1980, VIS 419.171. Billy Jones visual arts materials. Kenan Research Center at the Atlanta History Center)



(Above) Vicki Vara's Backstreet ID card (Source: Backstreet memorabilia, management records, correspondence, 1980-2005, Folder: 2. Vicki Vara papers, ahc.MSS730f. Kenan Research Center at the Atlanta History Center)

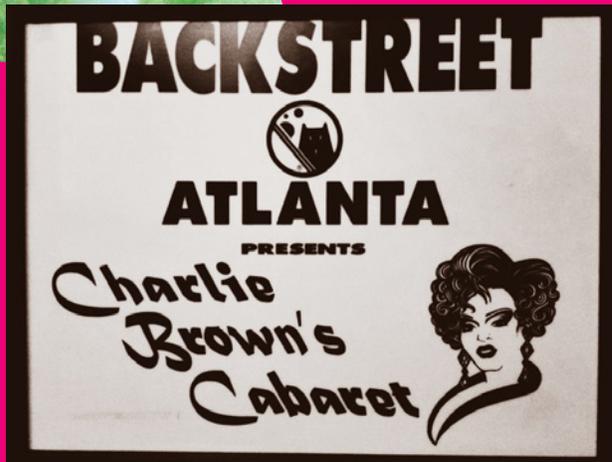
Evolving Door Policies

“During its early years, Backstreet was known for its discriminatory door policies. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, they required Black patrons to show two forms of identification before entering the club (see Theme: Political Activism in Atlanta’s LGBTQ+ Communities). Women were also not allowed to enter without a male escort, which was a policy enacted to keep the crowd mostly male and gay.

Drag queens were not also typically welcome in Backstreet prior to the last decade of the twentieth century. This attitude toward female impersonators changed after Charlie Brown began hosting Charlie Brown’s Cabaret on the third floor of the club in 1990 (Eldredge 2020).”



(Left) Advertisement for Charlie Brown’s X-Rated Cabaret from *Etcetera* (Source: *Etcetera Magazine*, Volume 10, Number 4, January 1994, Atlanta Lesbian and Gay History Thing papers and publications, Kenan Research Center at the Atlanta History Center)



(Above) Sign for Charlie Brown’s Cabaret (Source: “Invisible Histories Project” Facebook page, 11/03/2020)

In September 1975, Joe Fernandez and Mendel Romm opened Backstreet in the space previously occupied by Peaches Back Door (I Partied at Backstreet, “Who Remembers Mendall Rohm,” 04/24/2020). Though the spelling alternated between “Back Street” and “Backstreet” during the 1970s, that latter spelling was most common throughout the late twentieth century and it is used here for consistency. At the time of its opening, Backstreet was billed as “Atlanta’s Newest and most Intimate DISCO” (Killer 1975d). The bar quickly evolved into a complex that housed a cocktail lounge, located near Backstreet’s main entrance on the rear of the building, and a lower-level dance club known as Joe’s Disco. Backstreet opened Joe’s Disco on December 9, 1975, in the old Funochio’s portion of the 845 Peachtree Street NE building (Killer 1975f). Though patrons were originally able to access Joe’s Disco through the Peachtree Street entrance, by February 1976, advertisements were instructing them to enter through Backstreet, on the rear of the building.

Joe’s Disco had high ceilings, a balcony bar, mirrors on its walls, and was described by Phyllis Killer as “unbelievably plush” (*Cruise* 1976a:11; Killer 1975f). Over Memorial Day Weekend in 1976, Backstreet opened a new upstairs private club called the Rhinoceros Room that featured stainless steel walls, tan suede seating, a round bar, and a grand piano (*Cruise* 1976h; *The Barb* 1976a). By August 1976, all three of Backstreet’s spaces were being advertised together as the “Back Street Complex” in the gay monthly magazine *Cruise* (*Cruise* 1976i).



(Above) Encore staff posing in front of the sign on the exterior of the bar, 1977. Encore was the bar complex that operated at 845 Peachtree Street NE for one year between the first and second iterations of Backstreet (Source: *Cruise Weekly Calendar*, Volume 2, Number 28, September 1977. Lesbian, Gay, Bi-Sexual, and Transgender Serial Collection, ahc.MSS991. Kenan Research Center at the Atlanta History Center.)

No advertisements appeared for Backstreet in the December issue of *Cruise* in 1976, and by the end of that month, the club had reopened under the name Encore, seemingly with Fernandez removed from the business (*Cruise* 1976l:44, 1976m:57, 1978b:79). Encore was owned by business partners Frank Cashman and Henry Vara Jr., who started the RCV Corporation to operate the club. They each owned forty percent of the stock in the business and gave the remaining twenty percent to previous Backstreet owner Mendel Romm (Stewart and Lieberman 1977). The name of the central bar was Encore, and the lower-level disco was renamed Together. By February, the upstairs lounge was renamed Mendel's Den and was being used as a show bar with comedy acts (*Cruise* 1976m:57, 1977a:71; Killer 1977a).

(Below) Western Exterior of Backstreet facing Peachtree Street during Pride circa 2002 (Source: Gay pride parades, approximately 2002, undated, VIS 225.02. Backstreet Atlanta Discotheque visual arts collection. Kenan Research Center at the Atlanta History Center)



The complex operated as Encore for a year before reopening as Backstreet at the beginning of 1978, with Joe Fernandez returning to the club (*Cruise Weekly* Calendar 1977, 1978). This time, Backstreet was a private club that required a membership to enter (*Cruise* 1978b). Henry Vara bought out Cashman in 1978 and made his brother Carmine Vara, who lived in Atlanta while Henry remained in Boston, the treasurer and secretary of the RCV Corporation (*Atlanta Constitution* 1978; *The Atlanta Constitution* 1984). Carmine was responsible for operating the club, and he eventually received ownership of it and passed it down to his children Henry and Vicki Vara. The Vara family remained the owners of the club until it closed in 2004 (Eldredge 2020).

Discos remained popular in LGBTQ+ social circles through the early 1980s, and many other LGBTQ+ bar owners built disco or dance floor additions on their bars to attract more people to their businesses. Another popular stand-alone LGBTQ+ disco in Atlanta during this period was the Magic Garden at 1888 Cheshire Bridge Road NE. It first opened as Mama's Best in November 1976, but closed by the end of the year, and then reopened as the Magic Garden in late August 1977 (*Cruise* 1976k, 1976l; *The Barb* 1977c). It was renamed Numbers in December 1978, and the space became another disco, the Saint, by 1983 (*Cruise* 1978g:85, 1978h:83, 1983a:48). The building was adjacent to Frank Powell's Western bar, the County Seat at 1888-B Cheshire Bridge Road NE, which opened in August 1976 (no longer extant) (Killer 1976d). Nearby there was another popular disco, the Sports Page, at 2069 Cheshire Bridge Road NE. The Sports Page was a "women's bar" complex, meaning it was intended for lesbians, but they also welcomed gay men (Voss 1982j). Betty Collins, co-owner of the Tower Lounge, and Jane Knight opened the Sports Page in 1979 (*Gaybriel*

1979d). According to Collins, she established the Sports Page after recognizing the need for a larger women's bar after the usual crowds of the nearby lesbian bar Ms. Garbo's grew too large for that space. The Sports Page had a bar, a restaurant, a large seating area with booths, and a disco (*Cruise* 1979c). By 1982, it was recognized as "one of the largest gay women's entertainment complexes in the United States" (Voss 1982j). The Sports Page was one of the most popular LGBTQ+ women's bars through the 1980s, and it closed in late 1990 (*Etcetera* 1990a, 1991a).

During the 1980s, several other discotheques and dance clubs opened in Atlanta, and though many of these venues served a variety of communities in the city, several were popular among LGBTQ+ people. The Limelight was a well-known discotheque in Atlanta, and it opened at 3330 Piedmont Road NE in early 1980 (*Cruise Weekly* 1982g). Though the customer base was mixed, meaning it included both heterosexual, gender conforming people and LGBTQ+ people, the Limelight hosted many events that were advertised directly to Atlanta's gay population through the gay publication *Cruise Weekly*. These events included bringing in artists popular among LGBTQ+ people such as Grace Jones and Divine, hosting a benefit for the Atlanta Gay Center, and holding Sunday T-dances (*Cruise Weekly* 1980b, 1980f, 1981a, 1981b). As the popularity of disco waned in the mid-1980s, most of the LGBTQ+ bars that built large dance floors kept them, and the DJs continued to play new dance hits. Dance clubs that played other genres of music also opened after the popularity of disco began to wane, including the popular mid-1980s club Weekends at 1022 Peachtree Street. Weekends mostly played new wave music, though they also hosted performances by local musicians. One of Weekends' most popular acts was RuPaul, who

worked as a go-go dancer and performed to taped recordings of his music at the club (Richards 1986, Sullivan n.d.). Dance-oriented nightclubs continued to provide a safe space for LGBTQ+ people to gather through the end of the twentieth century.

Evolution of Show Bars

In the mid-1970s, the Sweet Gum Head remained the “Show Place of the South” and the Onyx still had a strong cast of female impersonators, but other popular show bars began to open in Atlanta. Elizabeth “Mama Dee” DeBoard and her gay son, Robbie Llewellyn, opened the Locker Room at 2325 Cheshire Bridge Road NE as a bathhouse in early 1975 (*Cruise* 1976b; Killer 1975b). They had previously operated two LGBTQ+ bars in Atlanta, the Yum Yum Tree at 2359 Peachtree Road NE (status unknown) and Union Station, mentioned above (*The Barb* 1975a). In April 1976, DeBoard and Llewellyn purchased the commercial space next to the Locker Room, which had previously been occupied by a straight bar known as the Brave Falcon (Killer 1976c). In that space they expanded the Locker Room and created Hollywood Hot, a new show bar that hired several former members of the cast at the Sweet Gum Head. The cast, known as the Hollywood Hots, initially included Hot Chocolate and Lily White, who were both well-known female impersonators in Atlanta. Lily White continued on as the headliner after Hot Chocolate returned to the Sweet Gum Head later that year (Farmer 2020; Padgett 2021:140). To direct their shows, DeBoard and Llewellyn hired Roski Fernandez, who had won the Director of the Year award at the Phyllis Killer Oscars the year prior (Padgett 2021:140; *The Barb* 1975b). In November 1976, they moved the Hollywood Hots show to the old Union Station building and renamed the Hollywood Hot club the Locker Room Disco (*Cruise* 1976k). By the following month,

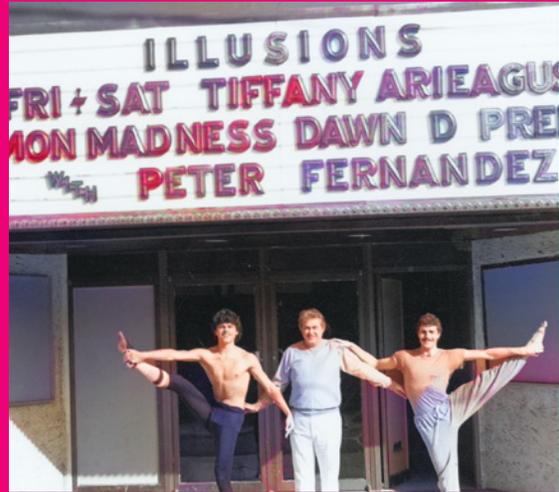
the Hollywood Hots had returned to perform shows at the Locker Room Disco, but the space was now used for both drag shows and dancing (*Cruise* 1976l). The Hollywood Hots and the Locker Room Disco were considered one of the biggest competitors of both the Sweet Gum Head and Backstreet during the late 1970s (Farmer 2020). The show bar portion of the complex closed between 1980 and 1982 (Voss 1982b).

In the early 1980s, Atlanta’s two oldest show bars, the Onyx and the Sweet Gum Head, closed. As the number of LGBTQ+ spaces multiplied in Atlanta and patrons began spending more of their time and money at discos and other types of bars, show bars suffered due to their high production cost (Padgett 2021:304–306). Unlike the Locker Room, the Onyx and Sweet Gum Head were not bar complexes and did not have large spaces in their bars that brought in income through dance floors or bathhouses. Both the Onyx and Sweet Gum Head had direct predecessors though, which hired many of the cast members and staff that had lost their jobs through the closings. The Onyx closed in March 1980 due to the construction of the new MARTA line under West Peachtree Street, but they quickly “found the answer,” as their first advertisements stated, by opening a new show bar on Midtown’s growing “Gay Strip” (*Cruise* 1980a; *Cruise Weekly* 1980a, 1980c, 1980g, 1982h). The Answer opened at 1055 Peachtree Street NE (no longer extant) in July 1980 (*Cruise Weekly* 1980h).

The Sweet Gum Head closed in August 1981, devastating many LGBTQ+ Atlantans, including Ray Ferris and Ted Binkley, the owners of Crazy Ray’z, an LGBTQ+ neighborhood bar at 1492-B Piedmont Avenue NE in Ansley Square (*Cruise Weekly* 1982e, 1982i; Padgett 2021:306–312). Using funds he had originally set aside for a planned steakhouse, Ferris bought the building at 1021 Peachtree Street NE

The Impact of Atlanta's Twentieth Century Drag Entertainers on Twenty-First Century LGBTQ+ Culture

Atlanta's influence on RuPaul extended beyond his experiences with music and television (see Theme: LGBTQ+ Arts in Atlanta). Many of RuPaul's earliest interactions with drag occurred in Atlanta. This is of note because of his impact on modern LGBTQ+ culture through the popular drag reality competition television show, *RuPaul's Drag Race*. The first drag show RuPaul ever watched was at Numbers (1888 Cheshire Bridge Road NE) in 1978 (Charles 1992, 54). Though his drag style at the time was more inspired by punk and new wave, RuPaul, along with his close friend Lady Bunny (John Ingle), "revered" the "traditional" drag queens of Atlanta. RuPaul saw Atlanta as the mecca of drag in the late 1970s and early 1980s, and during that time he looked up to many Atlanta drag queens, including Erica Adams, Yetiva Antoinette, Chena Black, Charlie Brown, Hot Chocolate, Tina Devore, Dina Jacobs, Apple Love, Lena Lust, Ashley Nicole and Lily White. In the early 1980s, he and Lady Bunny lived at 10th and Juniper and often attended Illusions' Monday Night Madness



Exterior of Illusions, 1980s (Source: Illusions, Peachtree Street, Atlanta, Georgia, approximately 1970-1980, VIS 419.109. Billy Jones visual arts materials, Kenan Research Center at the Atlanta History Center)

“ [ILLUSIONS] PROBABLY HAS A HUGE INFLUENCE, A LARGER-THAN-LIFE INFLUENCE ON CONTEMPORARY DRAG BECAUSE ... BUNNY AND RU ... DID THEIR STUDYING THERE. THAT WAS THEIR COLLEGE OF DRAG ”

– Larry Tee, DJ and former member of the Now Explosion (Tee 2021)

show (1021 Peachtree Street NE) (Charles and Visage 2018). There, RuPaul got his “dragucation” by watching female impersonators present the form of drag that he later incorporated into his own style in the early 1990s (Charles 1992, 54, 74-75). Beyond serving as the foundation to RuPaul's understanding of drag, Atlanta's drag scene also provided him with one of his most notable quotes. Though he is unable to remember her name, a performer at the Sweet Gum Head (2284 Cheshire Bridge Road NE) originated the phrase, “*you're born naked, and the rest is drag,*” and when RuPaul heard it, he thought “*I love that! I'm gonna use that! I'm gonna use that forever!*” (Charles and Visage 2018)

in September 1981 to open a new show bar. The two men named the new show bar Illusions and hired many of the former employees of Sweet Gum Head, including director and choreographer Marc Jones, DJ Alan Orton (who also had a locally famous drag persona named Lavita Allen), and the female impersonators Charlie Brown, Bertha Butt, Satyn DeVille, and Lily White (*Cruise Weekly* 1982i; Padgett 2021:306–312). Illusions held their grand opening on March 18th, 1982, performing to “one of this city’s largest opening night crowds in history” (*Cruise Weekly* 1982a, 1982b). Both the Answer and Illusions remained anchors of the “Gay Strip” until the mid-1980s.

Growth of LGBTQ+ Subculture Bars

As the number of LGBTQ+ bars in Atlanta grew, the types of bars in the city also diversified. Subcultures formed within the larger LGBTQ+ communities in Atlanta, and these groups of people either gathered at existing bars or established their own spaces. One of the first subcultures to establish an association with an Atlanta bar outside of the cruise and show bar scenes was the leather community, which was initially associated with motorcycle clubs that gathered at Mrs. P’s at 551 Ponce de Leon Avenue NE (Pyszka 1976). Bill Norton and Bernice Bright purchased Mrs. P’s in 1971 and rebranded the space, changing it from a restaurant and lounge to a laid back cruise bar (*Cruise Weekly* 1978b; Voss 1982g). After the Atlantis Motorcycle Club, Atlanta’s first LGBTQ+ motorcycle club, formed in 1972, they began regularly meeting at Mrs. P’s. Through the first part of the decade, the atmosphere of the bar began to change to better serve the new customer base (Pyszka 1976; T. C. President AMC 1974). According to *Cruise Weekly*, “down went the chandeliers, lace curtains and red wallpaper,” and in their place Norton and Bright

added barrels, wooden stools, rough cut lumber walls, and exposed the poured concrete floor (Voss 1982g:58). By the mid-1970s, the bar was known simply as “P’s,” dropping the title in the original name to better reflect the masculine atmosphere (*Cruise* 1978f). In 1978, Norton and Bright established P’s Annex in the building previously occupied by the Joy Lounge at 563 Ponce de Leon Avenue. P’s Annex, later known simply as the Annex, served as a dance club and show bar addition to P’s, and it operated until at least 1981 (*Cruise Weekly* 1978b, 1981e). P’s closed in the late summer of 1983, and the space was reopened as an LGBTQ+ show bar, 551 Downstairs, in 1984 (*Cruise* 1983a:48, 1983b:58–60; *Cruise Weekly Arts & Entertainment Magazine* 1984a).

Through the 1970s, bars that served several overlapping masculine subcultures were some of the most prominent LGBTQ+ nightlife spaces in Atlanta outside of the more general cruise bars, discos, and show bars. The leather subculture often intersected with a western aesthetic that included cowboy hats, chaps, boots, and jeans, which were often referred to by the brand name Levi’s. Bars regularly advertised themselves as a combination of the leather, Levi, and western categories, such as P’s, which was billed as “P’s Leather & Western Bar” (*Cruise* 1977f, 1978f).

Another major bar that served these overlapping LGBTQ+ subcultures in Atlanta was Tex’s at 1026-B North Highland Avenue NE, which opened in September 1977 (*Cruise* 1977f, 1978f). Though Tex’s was initially located upstairs at that address, the owner, Jay Evans, relocated the bar downstairs in 1980 and renamed it Texas Drilling Company. In 1982, *Cruise Weekly* stated that though Texas Drilling Company was a Levi and western bar, it was also known as inclusive space that was a regular gathering space for both LGBTQ+ men and women



(Above) A leatherman standing in front of the entrance to Tex's, circa 1978 (Source: *Cruise*, Volume 3, Number 12, HoustonLGBTHistory.org)

(Below) Rear entrance to Bulldog & Co. circa 1979, with elements of the trucker theme visible on the exterior (Source: *Cruise*, Volume 4, Number 2, HoustonLGBTHistory.org)



(Voss 1982k). Another bar that was established during this period with a masculine aesthetic is Bulldogs at 893 Peachtree Street NE, which is the oldest remaining LGBTQ+ bar to continually operate in its original location in Atlanta. Michael Clutter and Jerry Psyzka opened the bar as Bulldog & Company in 1978, and it originally had a trucker theme that was targeted toward the city's masculine Levi/leather/western LGBTQ+ subcultures (*Cruise* 1978f; Voss 1982d). Shortly after it opened, Bulldog & Company was recognized by *Cruise* as "one of the most unique bars in the country" (*Cruise* 1978f:27). As part of the theme, the bar was decorated with the logos of trucking and gas companies, as well as truck tires, wheel rims, and road maps. It also had a large truck cab attached to the exterior of the building, and the owners had a living bulldog mascot named Winston (*Cruise* 1978f). Bulldog & Company remained popular with the mostly-White Levi/leather/western LGBTQ+ subculture in Atlanta through the 1980s and early 1990s. By the turn of the twenty-first century, the bar had changed its name to Bulldogs and was one of the city's most popular Black LGBTQ+ spaces (*Clique Magazine* 2000a).

The Armory and Armorettes

In the late 1970s, the Armory began hosting viewings of football games on a TV at their bar on Sundays during football season. In 1979, the Armory's bartenders began dressing in drag as cheerleaders to support the Atlanta Falcons, calling themselves "the Armorettes." As this developed into a regular event at the Armory, the bar started hosting "Falcon Fever" Sundays, named for the 1979 song by Steve Carlisle. By the early 1980s, the Armorettes were a formal drag troupe that performed campy shows and inducted new members each year through a pageant hosted by the Armory (Voss 1982a). As the AIDS epidemic began in the 1980s, the Armorettes also began raising money through their performances for HIV/AIDS research and to cover the cost of medical, living, and funeral expenses for Atlantans who had been impacted. By the mid-1980s, the Armory had grown into a neighborhood bar for Midtown's LGBTQ+ community, hosting several popular events throughout the year. In 1981, they established the Easter Drag Races, an annual event where men dress in drag and participate in field day-like sporting events. Though the Armory closed in 2003, the impact of this Atlanta LGBTQ+ institution can still be seen through the performances of the Armorettes. As of 2023, they continue to hold benefit performances at the Heretic at 2069 Cheshire Bridge Road NE.

(Below) Armory Easter Drag Race (Source: VIS 419.222.021. Billy Jones visual arts materials. Kenan Research Center at the Atlanta History Center)



Other subcultures within the LGBTQ+ population of Atlanta existed during this period, but few bars in the city had themes and décor that reflected an LGBTQ+ subculture in the same way as P's, Texas Drilling Company, and Bulldog and Company. One exception was the Pharr Library at 550 Pharr Road NE, which was a library/reading room themed disco and bar that opened in 1975. Though the Pharr Library was originally a mostly-straight disco, the owners transformed the bar into an LGBTQ+ space in 1979. Shortly after the “big switch” from straight to gay, as it was referred to in *Cruise Weekly*, the Pharr Library quickly developed an association with upper middle class preppy LGBTQ+ Atlantans (Peel 2022:11:50; Voss 1982h; YLIGA, 03/09/2023, “Check out this piece of history...”). Though the bar’s staff claimed in an interview with *Cruise Weekly* that there was no dress code at the Pharr Library, most of the bar’s advertisements included depictions of men in suits or other attire that reflected a preppy aesthetic, such as polo shirts and tucked in button down shirts (*Cruise* 1980b; Voss 1982h). They also acknowledged in the interview that the regular patrons “basically dictated the acceptable IZOD or Polo look” at the bar (Voss 1982h). The bar itself reinforced this association by hosting preppy-themed events, such as an IZOD night, and sponsoring the Gators softball team, which took its name from the IZOD logo (*Cruise Weekly* 1982d; *Gayzette* 1980a). The Pharr Library operated as a mostly preppy, young professional’s LGBTQ+ bar through the 1980s and closed in September 1989 (YLIGA, 05/08/2020, “Anyone remember the Pharr Library?”) (*Etcetera* 1989c, 1989d).

Women’s LGBTQ+ Spaces in the late 1970s and early 1980s

Several new LGBTQ+ women’s bars opened in the late 1970s and early 1980s, including the previously mentioned Sports Page bar complex. Institutions of



Advertisement for the opening of the Tower Lounge after Betty Irene Collins and Betty Jo Fisher purchased the business in 1974 (Source: *Atlanta Barb* Newspaper, Volume 1, Number 2, 1974. Atlanta Lesbian and Gay History Thing papers and publications. Kenan Research Center at the Atlanta History Center)

LGBTQ+ women’s nightlife in Atlanta also remained in operation, such as the Tower Lounge. Like the show bars and male-oriented LGBTQ+ spaces, women’s bars also experienced rapid change in ownership, locations, and names during this period. The Tower Lounge briefly closed in 1979 and was replaced for one year by the Club Sheba, the earliest known Black LGBTQ+ women’s bar in Atlanta (*Gaybriel* 1979a). Club Sheba operated at 735 Forrest Avenue NE (now Ralph McGill Boulevard) for less than a year though, and by early 1980, the space reopened as the Tower Lounge. It continued operating as “the oldest ladies club” in Atlanta through the decade, and the space

remained a lesbian bar into the twenty-first century (Daugherty 1985; *Gaybriel* 1980).

The newly established LGBTQ+ women's bars in Atlanta during this period regularly billed themselves as welcoming spaces for both women and men. Both advertisements for and editorials about these bars often discussed the need for such integrated spaces (*Cruise Weekly* 1982c; Voss

Advertisement for the Tower, 1989 (Source: *Etcetera Magazine*, Volume 5, Number 24, 1989. Atlanta Lesbian and Gay History Thing papers and publications. Kenan Research Center at the Atlanta History Center)

**Tuesdays – Cool Jazz
and Hot Wings**
with Terry Leach

**Wed. Nights are Pizza
and Pool Nights!**
FREE PIZZA
Pool Tournament – 8 pm
\$5 entry fee – Bar Matches Pot
Winner take-all!

Coming Soon –
Mad Hatters with Pride!

"ALWAYS OUR USUAL FUN"

Open to all
members of
the gay and
lesbian
community.

THE
Tower

735 Ralph McGill Blvd.
Atlanta • 404 688-5463

1982c). In 1981, Arlene Bianco opened Arney's, a neighborhood LGBTQ+ women's bar, at 2345 Cheshire Bridge Road NE "with the intention of attracting both Gay men and Gay women" (Jones 1981; Voss 1982c). Based on descriptions and photographs from *Cruise Weekly*, both the customer base and staff of Arney's included a mixture of women and men. Arney's had a laid-back atmosphere and catered mostly to professional LGBTQ+ Atlantans. The bar hosted television program viewing nights for shows such as *Dynasty* and served as a gathering place for LGBTQ+ people who enjoyed playing board games (Voss 1982c). A similar, contemporary LGBTQ+ women's bar was Toolulahs, which was established by Dot Elliot in 1983 at 3041 Piedmont Road NE in Buckhead (*Cruise Weekly* 1983).

One of the most well-known LGBTQ+ women's bar owners from this period was Deana Collins, who actively promoted LGBTQ+ spaces that catered to and supported both women and men. Collins, who was known as "Disco Granny" in the early 1980s, began working to create spaces that would unite the LGBTQ+ nightlife of the city while she was employed at the Sports Page (*Cruise Weekly* 1981d). Shortly after the Sports Page opened, she wrote to the editors of *Gaybriel* to express concern after a group of women were mistreated at the nearby disco Numbers. She stated, "come on fellows, lets all be fair, and when we get together treat each other decently. Gay women and men should think of each other as brothers and sisters" (*Gaybriel* 1979c). In 1981, she opened her own LGBTQ+ women's bar at 2293 Peachtree Road NE known as the Uptown, which included the phrase, "Our Brothers are always welcome" in its advertisements (*Cruise Weekly* 1981d). Between 1984 and 1985, she opened another bar, the Rose, in the space previously occupied by Arney's at 2345 Cheshire Bridge Road NE (Atlanta

After Dark 1985c). The Rose regularly hosted live entertainment, and the bar also participated in the AID Atlanta fundraiser 54 Hours of Care in 1985 (Atlanta After Dark 1985g). Though the Rose closed in the mid-1980s, Collins continued creating inclusive LGBTQ+ spaces through the end of the twentieth century, which are discussed in more detail in the following section.

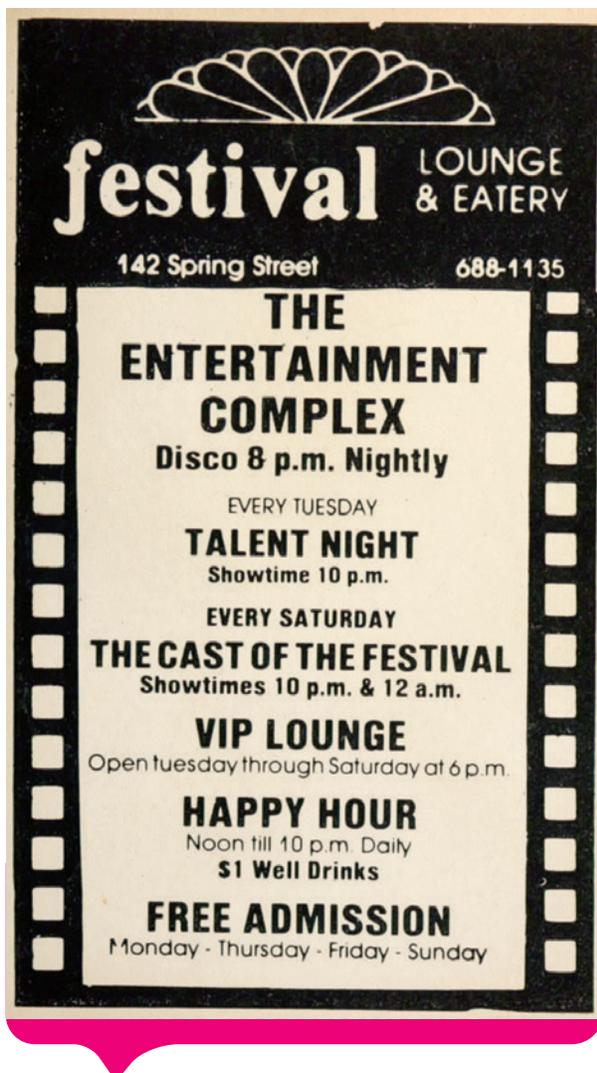
Expanding Black LGBTQ+ Social Spaces

Through the late 1970s and early 1980s, Atlanta's LGBTQ+ publications began covering several new LGBTQ+ bars and clubs that were popular with Black Atlantans, including the previously mentioned Club Sheba. Though these LGBTQ+ publications, including *Gaybriel* and *Cruise Weekly*, repeatedly suggested that Black LGBTQ+ spaces were open to everyone, available photographs suggest that many LGBTQ+ bars remained largely segregated by race during this period (Atlanta After Dark 1985a; *Gaybriel* 1979b). According to Bill Martin, a Black gay man who was co-owner of the *Metropolitan Gazette*, openly LGBTQ+ Black Atlantans mostly lived in Midtown during the early 1980s (Street 1982:10). Though there were a few Black LGBTQ+ spaces in Midtown during this period, by the early 1980s, these spaces began to shift toward downtown, where the majority of Black LGBTQ+ nightlife remained through the end of the twentieth century.

At least two Black LGBTQ+ bars operated on the Gay Strip in Midtown during this period, including Jocks at 887 Peachtree Street NE and Foster's Lounge at 980 Peachtree Street NE (both places are no longer extant). Jocks opened in August 1980 and was known as "Atlanta's only gay Black disco" (*Cruise Weekly* 1981f; Voss 1982f). Few details are known about Jocks, and the bar closed less than a year after it opened. In 1982, the

space was reopened as In-Between, a disco that was meant to be "attractive to all types," with no focus on catering to people based on race, sex, or subcultural preferences (Voss 1982f). By 1985, the bar was renamed Zebra's Lounge, but it remained a dance club and bar (Atlanta After Dark 1985d). Though the ownership and name of the bar changed multiple times through the early 1980s, the space remained popular with Black LGBTQ+ Atlantans through this entire period. In 1984, David Foster and Loretta Young opened Foster's Lounge two blocks north of Jocks/In-Between/Zebra's Lounge on the Gay Strip. Similar to Jocks, the media coverage of Foster's Lounge in Atlanta's LGBTQ+ publications was minimal. Though no descriptions of the bar have been uncovered, it is known to have been a popular bar among Black LGBTQ+ men. In 1987, Young closed Foster's Lounge and transferred the bar's liquor license to her new bar, Loretta's, at 708 Spring Street NW (now Ted Turner Drive) (Fulton, Jr. 2019b).

As mentioned above, Black LGBTQ+ bars and clubs also began opening in downtown Atlanta during the early 1980s, and this area remained an important nightlife destination for Black LGBTQ+ Atlantans through the end of the twentieth century. By the time these new Black LGBTQ+ spaces began to open in downtown, the majority of Atlanta's LGBTQ+ social life had relocated to other parts of the city. The Cameo Lounge was the only remaining early LGBTQ+ social space in downtown, and though the bar continued catering to "rough trade," it was also listed as a popular space for Black LGBTQ+ men in the 1980 edition of *Bob Damron's Address Book* (*Cruise Weekly Arts & Entertainment Magazine* 1984d; Mapping the Gay Guides 2020). The first new Black LGBTQ+ space to open during this new period of LGBTQ+ social life in downtown was the Festival Lounge, which was located in the former



Advertisement for the Festival Lounge & Eatery, 1984 (Source: *Cruise Weekly*, Volume 9, Number 50, December 1984, HoustonLGBTHistory.org)

Festival Theater at 142 Spring Street NW (now Ted Turner Drive) in 1983 (*Atlanta After Dark* 1985b). The Festival Lounge was one of the first Black LGBTQ+ bar complexes in Atlanta. It initially opened as only a show bar and lounge, but the owners added a disco in 1984 (*Cruise Weekly Arts & Entertainment Magazine* 1983, 1984e). The Festival Lounge served as an important gathering space for Black LGBTQ+ organizations in Atlanta as well. According to an interview with Dave Hayward and Maria Helena Dolan, the Gay

Atlanta Minorities Association (GAMA) regularly held their meetings at the Festival Lounge under the direction of GAMA leaders Melvin Ross, Gene Holloway, and Greg Worthy (Dolan and Hayward 2018:00:09:15). The bar also hosted benefits for GAMA and other LGBTQ+ organizations that focused on Black experiences, including Black and White Men Together (BWMT) (*After Dark* 1985e, 1985f). The Festival Lounge closed in late 1987 (*Etcetera* 1987g).

MID-1980S – 1990S: FEWER SPACES BUT MORE INCLUSION

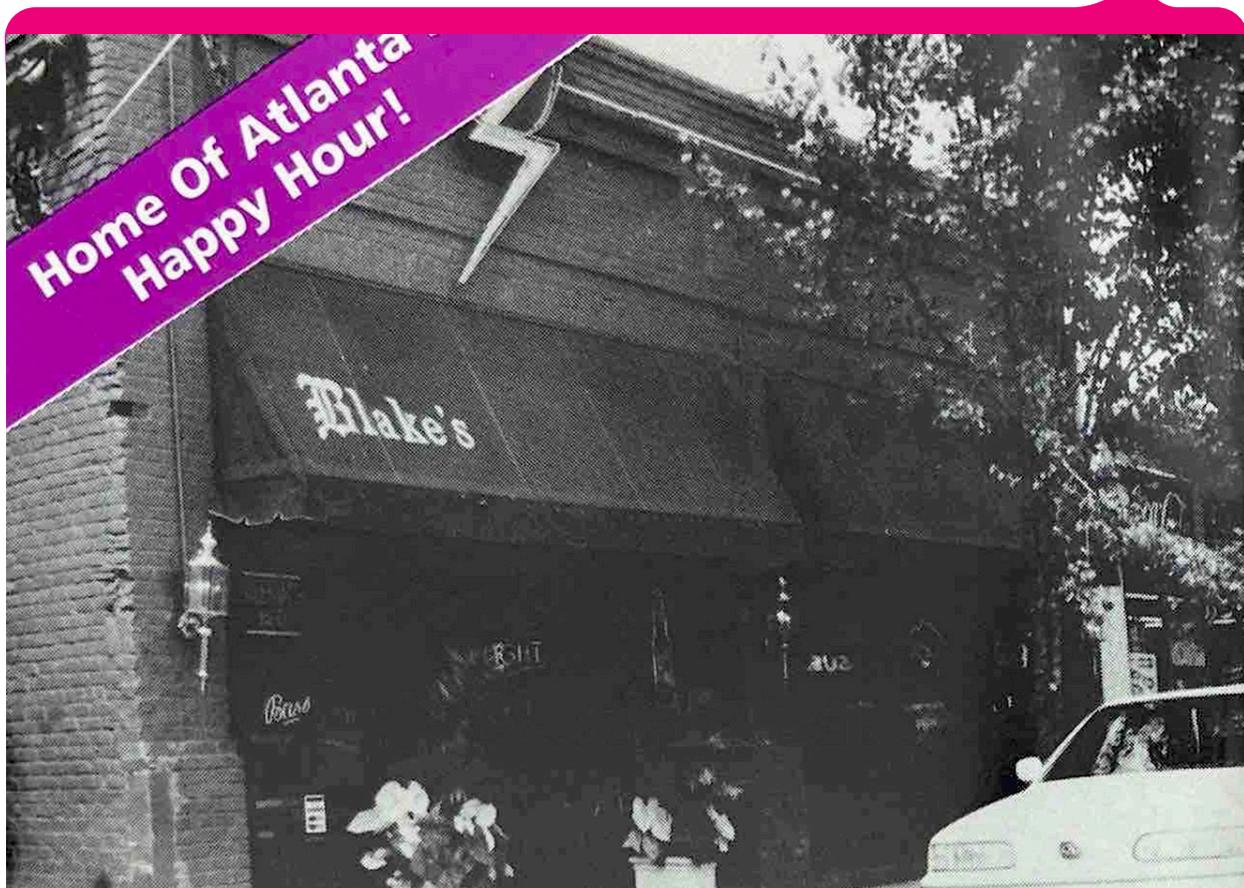
Through the last decade of the twentieth century, Atlanta’s LGBTQ+ social scene became more diverse, but the number of bars also decreased during this time. Several of the previously common bar types, such as show bars and leather bars, either fully disappeared or were reduced to a single location, rather than having multiple bars throughout the city as in earlier periods. By the mid-1990s, neighborhood bars, dance clubs, and bar complexes were the most common types of LGBTQ+ social spaces, and many of these bar types began hosting events for LGBTQ+ subcultures that previously had their own bars, particularly the drag and LGBTQ+ entertainment community. Bars also began hosting weekly events in the 1990s that made space for Black and Latino LGBTQ+ Atlantans. These events were typically held one or two nights a week and were known as “R&B nights” and “Latin nights”, the latter creating the earliest documented public social spaces specifically for Latino LGBTQ+ Atlantans. New LGBTQ+ bars and clubs also opened between the late 1980s and 2000, many of which survived into the twenty-first century. A few of these bars remain open as of 2023, including Blake’s on the Park at 227 10th Street NE and the Heretic at 2069 Cheshire Bridge Road NE.

During the last decade and a half of the twentieth century, LGBTQ+ communities continued to thrive in many of the areas of Atlanta that had been previously established as LGBTQ+ enclaves in the preceding decades. Institutions of LGBTQ+ social life in Atlanta remained in these neighborhoods as well, including the Armory, Backstreet, Bulldogs, the Cove, the Marquette, the New Order, and the Tower. Midtown continued to serve as Atlanta's LGBTQ+ cultural center through this period, though the concentration of LGBTQ+ spaces in this neighborhood began to weaken in the late 1980s and 1990s. The city's renewal efforts in Midtown, combined with gentrification of both the historic neighborhood and the Peachtree Street commercial corridor led to the decay of the Gay Strip. By the late 1980s, many of the LGBTQ+ businesses and bars along Peachtree Street were closed, including Illusions, the Bar on Peachtree, and the Answer.

Neighborhood Bars

As both the number of bars and the variety of bar types were reduced in this period, LGBTQ+ neighborhood bars began to subsume some of other bar type's roles by offering a larger array of entertainment options. Though these bars continued to serve as a general gathering and socializing places, many of them also added more areas for dancing and hosted reoccurring themed nights for subcultures within Atlanta's larger LGBTQ+ population, including drag performance nights, country dancing nights, and nights with entertainment that catered to Black and Latino LGBTQ+ Atlantans. Neighborhood bars remained

Exterior of Blakes at 227 10th Street NE, 1992 (Source: *Etcetera Magazine* - Volume 8, Number 1, January 1992. Atlanta Lesbian and Gay History Thing papers and publications. Kenan Research Center at the Atlanta History Center)



popular through the late 1980s and 1990s, and it continued to be one of the most common LGBTQ+ bar types in Atlanta into the twenty-first century.

Several new neighborhood bars were created during this period, including Blake's Bar & Grill, which was established by Mark Ramey at 112 10th Street NE in early 1987 (*Etcetera* 1987a). In 1988, Ramey was forced to close the bar, but it relocated to 227 10th Street NE in mid-1989, where it became known simply as Blake's (YLIGA, 08/01/2020, "Who knows how "Blake's" got its name...") (*Etcetera* 1989b). Through the 1990s, Blake's expanded their facilities to include an upstairs game room, and the bar also began hosting drag performances (*Etcetera* 1992a). Dancing was common at Blake's on weekends by the end of the decade as well (*David Atlanta* 1998b). By 1997, the bar was known as Blake's on the Park, and as of 2023, it remains in operation at 227 10th Street NE (*Atlanta Constitution* 1997; Blake's on the Park 2023). Other significant LGBTQ+ neighborhood bars created during this period include Burkhardt's, which was established at 1492 Piedmont Avenue NE in late 1987, and Buddies at 2345 Cheshire Bridge Road NE in Cheshire Square, which was established in 1988 in the space previously occupied by Arney's and the Rose Room (*Etcetera* 1988c).

From Discos to Nightclubs

In the mid-to-late 1980s, the terminology for dance venues shifted as disco and its immediate musical successors were replaced with new forms of dance music, but the purpose of these bars remained the same. Referred to as nightclubs rather than discos, these places continued to provide LGBTQ+ people with spaces to gather, dance, and enjoy live entertainment. Earlier dance venues remained in operation during this period, including Backstreet

and Weekends, though the latter relocated to 688 Spring Street in the late 1980s. New nightclubs also opened, including Traxx, a major Black LGBTQ+ nightclub discussed in more detail below; Fusion, a LGBTQ+ club at 550 Amsterdam Avenue NE that opened in the mid-1990s; and the Metro, a dance and show bar that opened in 1991 at 48 6th Street NE and later relocated to 1080 Peachtree Street NE in the late 1990s. By the late 1990s, the Metro was advertised as being popular among Latino LGBTQ+ people, making it one of the earliest known Latino LGBTQ+ social spaces in Atlanta (*Clique Magazine* 1998; *Etcetera* 1992b).

In the early 1990s, Bev Cook established 2069, an LGBTQ+ dance club, in the space previously occupied by the Sports Page at 2069 Cheshire Bridge Road NE. The club was known as 2069 for approximately a year and was initially popular with LGBTQ+ women (Cook and Collins 2022:00:11:45). Cook rebranded the club in 1992 as the Heretic and shifted the target audience toward LGBTQ+ men (*Etcetera* 1992e). Through the 1990s, the Heretic had a dark and cruisy atmosphere, and the bar often hosted weekly themed nights (Cook and Collins 2022:00:17:25). As of 2022, the Heretic is still operating as an LGBTQ+ dance club that is mostly popular with men, though it has also developed into a gathering space for many segments Atlanta's LGBTQ+ communities. These include LGBTQ+ Atlantans that are interested in leather, country music and dancing, circuit, and drag entertainment. It is the current home of the Armorettes, an Atlanta-based drag troupe (The Heretic 2022a).

Shifting Physical Space of Drag Performances and LGBTQ+ Live Entertainment

Between the late 1980s and the mid-1990s, drag and other live LGBTQ+ entertainment transitioned from show bars to a variety of other bar types,

either as special entertainment on certain nights of the week or with their own space inside a bar complex. Atlanta's last LGBTQ+ show bars of the twentieth century were 551 Downstairs, Lavita's, and Lipstix. As mentioned above, 551 Downstairs opened in the space previously occupied by Mrs. P's at 551 Ponce de Leon Avenue NE in 1984 (*Cruise Weekly Arts & Entertainment Magazine* 1984b). The shows at 551 Downstairs included a mixture of male entertainers and drag performers, and the cast included drag artists such as Lena Lust and Ziggy Stardust (*Etcetera* 1987d). 551 Downstairs closed in 1991 (*Etcetera* 1987e, 1987f, 1991b). Lavita's, named for drag performer Lavita Allen, opened at 2329 Cheshire Bridge Road NE in 1986, following the closing of the city's premiere show bar, Illusions (*Etcetera* 1986a, 1986b). Located in the space previously occupied by the Locker Room Bathhouse and Disco, Lavita's retained elements of the earlier bathhouse, including the large swimming pool (YLIGA, 04/25/2020, "What was the name of the club..."). The show bar was known as "the home of legends and entertainment," and many of the cast members were long-time drag performers in Atlanta, including Charlie Brown, Mickey Day, Tina Devore, Dina Jacobs, and Lisa King (*Etcetera* 1986c, 1987b, 1987c, 1987f). Lavita's closed in early 1988 and was replaced by Lipstix in the same venue in 1989, which had similar shows and operated through the mid-1990s (*Etcetera* 1987j, 1988a, 1989a). After Lipstix closed, drag entertainment in Atlanta was primarily found in neighborhood bars, clubs, and bar complexes.

Through the early 1990s, drag entertainers began to perform in neighborhood bars and nightclubs, and they would often appear at multiple venues throughout the week. By the end of the decade, most of the city's drag entertainers were cast members at bars such as the Armory, Backstreet, Blake's on the Park, the Otherside Lounge, and the

Metro (*David Atlanta* 1999). A significant example of this transition is the creation of Charlie Brown's Cabaret on the Roof/X-Rated Cabaret on the top floor of Backstreet. In 1990, Charlie Brown was already working as an entertainer at the LGBTQ+ women's neighborhood bar Toolulah's. When Toolulah's closed later that year, Bev Cook, who was a manager at Backstreet at the time, invited Charlie Brown to perform on the then-struggling third level of the bar complex. Though Henry Vara, co-owner of Backstreet, was initially hesitant to the idea, Charlie Brown's Cabaret was an immediate success (Eldredge 2020). The cabaret featured lip syncing performances, comedy routines, and Charlie Brown's famous new talent showcase. Entertainers in the cast, beyond the eponym and emcee of the show, included Shawanna Brooks, Heather Daniels, Ramona Dugger, The Lady Jonel, Ashley Kruiuz, Lauren LaMasters Lena Lust, Mokha Montresse, Ziggy Stardust, and Lily White. The show often ran through the night, from 11pm until morning. Between 1990 and 2004, Charlie Brown's Cabaret was one of Atlanta's most popular LGBTQ+ nightlife activities, reflecting the transition of Atlanta's leading drag entertainment from stand-alone show bars, such as the Sweet Gum Head and Illusions, to physical spaces within other bars (Eldredge 2020).

During this period, drag also shifted to the streets of Atlanta through the annual Wigwood festival. In the early 1990s, the drag and arts culture that originally formed alongside Funtone USA and weekly public access television program *The American Music Show* developed an association with the club and show bar the Metro (see Theme: LGBTQ+ Arts in Atlanta). By 1993, several entertainers and artists who utilized drag in their works began hosting and participating in an annual drag street festival known as Wigwood, which was held over a weekend outside the Metro along 6th Street. Similar to the contemporaneous drag festival Wigstock, hosted by

Lady Bunny in New York City, Wigwood celebrated drag artistry and made space for many people to experience dressing up in drag for the first time. The festival also served as a fundraiser for the HIV/AIDS advocacy group ACT UP (Jon Arge via Facebook, 10/19/2016, "Wigwood 1994 Ad."). The festival was sponsored by the Atlanta-based LGBTQ+ magazine *Etcetera*, and hosted by Rosser Shamanski (also known as DeAundra Peek), Trina Saxxon, and Mona Love. Though the Metro relocated to 1080 Peachtree Street NE in the mid-to-late 1990s, Wigwood continued to be held annually at a location near the bar into the twenty-first century.

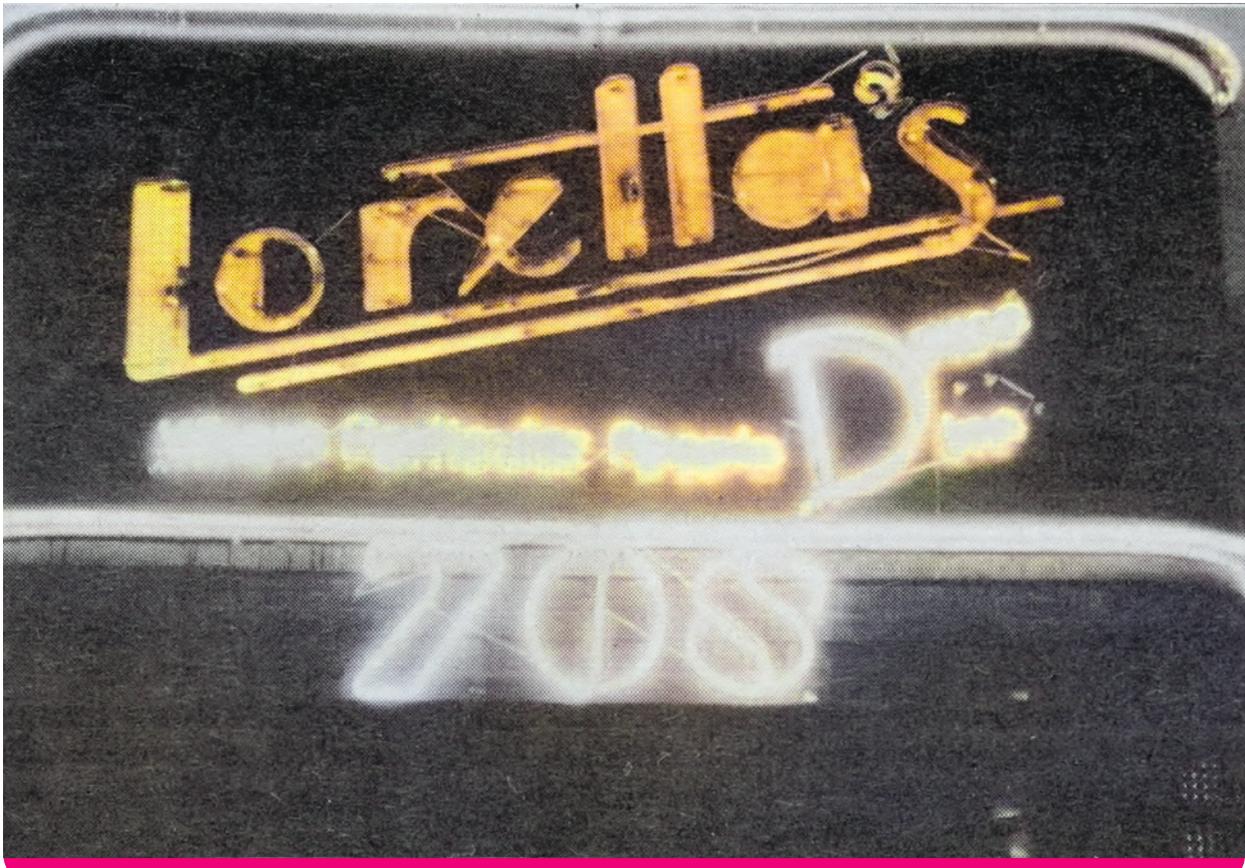
Atlanta's LGBTQ+ Women's Bars in the Late-Twentieth Century

The number of LGBTQ+ women's bars remained stable through the end of the twentieth century, though many of the bars that were established in the 1970s and 1980s closed before 1990. One exception was the Tower Lounge, which continued operating into the twenty-first century, though the name of the bar was changed to the Tower II in the late 1990s. New LGBTQ+ women's bars opened in Atlanta in the early-to-mid-1990s. In 1996, Susan Musselwhite established My Sister's Room at 931 Monroe Drive NE in the Midtown Promenade shopping center. In its original location, My Sister's Room was a small neighborhood bar, and its only amenity beyond the bar was a game room. Due to increasing rent, My Sister's Room was forced to relocate to Decatur in 1998. The bar has relocated several times since the turn of the twenty-first century, first to East Atlanta Village in 2008 and then back to Midtown in 2015. As of 2023, My Sister's Room is still operating as the only LGBTQ+ women's bar in Atlanta, and it is also one of only 24 lesbian bars that remain open in the United States (Richards and Spencer 2022).

Like many other LGBTQ+ social spaces in Atlanta, LGBTQ+ women's bars became more integrated, in terms of both race and gender, in the 1990s. One of the most diverse LGBTQ+ women's bars was the Otherside Lounge at 1924 Piedmont Road NE (no longer extant), which was established by Dana Ford and Beverly McMahon in 1990 (*Etcetera* 1990b). Located in a converted steakhouse, the Otherside Lounge was a bar complex that included a dance floor, multiple bars, a gaming area with pool tables, a lounge for live entertainment, and a rear patio (Abid-Kons 2022; Duncan 2017). Though the bar had "predominately lesbian clientele," it was popular among many LGBTQ+ people and was listed as "a favorite of many [trans] folks" in a circa-1995 guide to trans-inclusive spaces in Atlanta (Lola Cola, n.d.). The bar's slogan was "Atlanta's Finest Mixed Nightclub" (CNN 1997; *The Midtown Times* 1991). The Otherside Lounge hosted themed nights each week, including R&B and Hip-Hop nights that were popular with Black LGBTQ+ Atlantans. On February 21, 1997, the Otherside Lounge was bombed in an act of anti-LGBTQ+ violence by Eric Rudolph, who had previously detonated a bomb in Atlanta's Centennial Olympic Park in 1996. Five people were injured by the bombing at the Otherside Lounge, and the bar itself sustained serious damage near the patio entrance (Duncan 2017). A combination of decreased business due to anxiety within the LGBTQ+ community and an increase in cost tied to renovations required after the explosion forced Ford and McMahon to close the bar shortly after the turn of the new millennium (Abid-Kons 2022; *Clique Magazine* 2000b).

Expanding Black LGBTQ+ Social Spaces in the Late 1980s and 1990s

In the late 1980s, as the population of openly LGBTQ+ Black Atlantans grew larger and more visible, several new Black LGBTQ+ bars and clubs



Neon sign on the exterior of Loretta's, 1989 (Source: Photograph by Evett Bennett in *Southern Voice*, September 14, 1989)

opened near downtown. In 1986, a Chinese restaurant known as the Pear Garden was established at 111 Luckie Street NW on the first floor of the Atlantan Hotel (*Atlanta Constitution* 1986; Berry 1988). Located one block south of the Festival Lounge, the restaurant's bar quickly became a gathering space for Black LGBTQ+ Atlantans. The Pear Garden was a neighborhood bar, and like contemporary LGBTQ+ bars of the same type, it hosted a variety of events, including themed nights and live entertainment (Fulton, Jr. 2019c; *Venus Magazine* 1995b). It also sponsored an LGBTQ+ softball team, the Pear Garden Sluggers, which was the first Black team to play in the Gay World Series. An associated Black LGBTQ+ club known as Water Works was located next door to the Pear Garden in the early-to-mid-1990s,

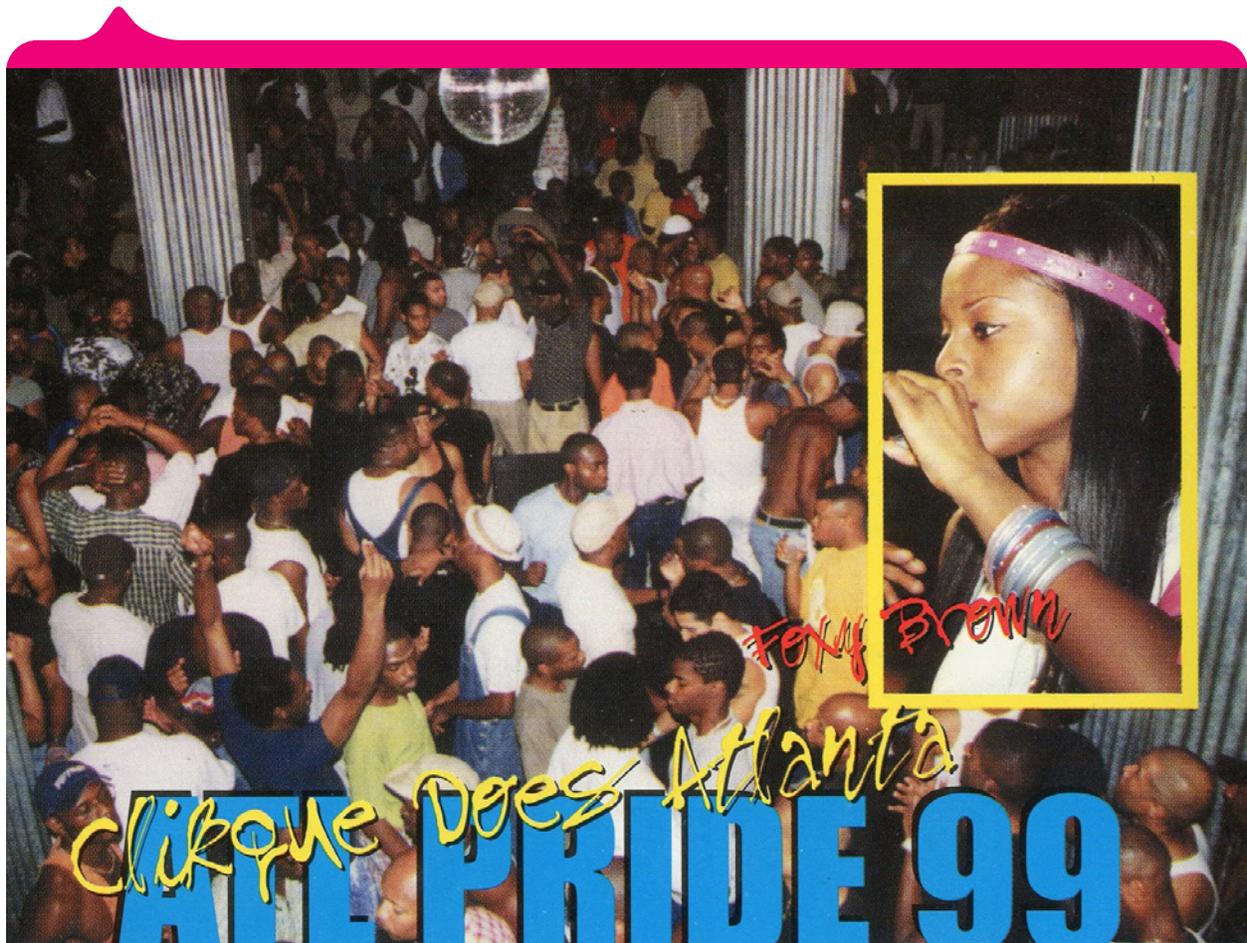
and the two businesses shared the 111 Luckie Street NW address during this time (Blake 1993; *Venus Magazine* 1995a). Through the 1990s, the bar was also known as the Pearl Garden and the Palace, and in late 1995, it relocated to 15 Simpson Street NW (Fulton, Jr. 2019c; *Venus Magazine* 1995c). By 1999, the bar had relocated again, to 91 Broad Street SW, and it continued operating at this location into the twenty-first century (*Clique Magazine* 1999a, 2000a).

Two of Atlanta's most well-known Black LGBTQ+ nightclubs also opened in the late 1980s, and both quickly developed reputations that rivaled Atlanta's oldest and most well-known Black LGBTQ+ club, the Marquette. The first of these was Loretta's, the nightclub established in 1987

by Loretta Young after she transferred the liquor license from Foster's Lounge to 708 Spring Street NW (now Ted Turner Drive) (Fulton, Jr. 2019b). Located in a "cavernous warehouse," Loretta's was a two-story bar complex with several bars and dance floors (Brown 1989). Though it was primarily a dance club, Loretta's also hosted drag shows during the week through the 1990s (*Atlanta Constitution* 1995). Loretta's was no longer listed in *Clikque Magazine's* guide to nightclubs beginning in October 1999, and by January 2000, it had been replaced by another LGBTQ+ club, the Sequel (*Clikque Magazine* 1999b, 2000a).

Dance floor of Traxx, 1999 (Source: *Clikque Magazine for Him & for Her*, Volume 3, Number 6, African American Lesbian and Gay Print Culture Collection, Archives Division, Auburn Avenue Research Library on African American Culture and History, Atlanta-Fulton Public Library System)

The other major Black LGBTQ+ nightclub established during this period was Traxx, which was the largest Black LGBTQ+ bar or club in Atlanta during the twentieth century. Though the physical location of the club was established in 1989 by Phillip Boone and David Hampton, Traxx originated as a series of house parties that began in 1983 (Washington 2022). In response to discriminatory door policies at several of the major LGBTQ+ bars and clubs in the early 1980s, Boone and Hampton, along with their friends Durand Robinson and Homer Smith, began hosting parties at Boone and Robinson's residence, apartment K-11 in the Atlanta Overlook apartment complex at 180 Jackson Street NE (no longer extant). The parties were popular among Black LGBTQ+ Atlantans and quickly outgrew the apartment. The four men, who were collectively known as the Ritz Boyz,



expanded their parties to rented venues across the city during the mid-1980s.

In 1989, while hosting parties at a venue at 61 Poplar Street NW, the Ritz Boyz's events officially became known as Traxx (Saunders 2014a). By the end of that year, Hampton began working as the manager of the Warehouse, a 16,000-square foot nightclub in a two-story warehouse at 306 Luckie Street NW (no longer extant). Hampton convinced the owner to allow him to begin hosting Traxx parties at the club, and by the end of the year, the club was running advertisements under the name Traxx (*Etcetera* 1989e; Traxx Columbus 2011). The sprawling club had a large dance floor that was overlooked by a balcony level with bars. It was known for its elevated style and décor when compared to the other Black LGBTQ+ bars and clubs in Atlanta (Washington 2022). In 1993, Boone and Hampton purchased Traxx, and it continued operating at this location as Atlanta's largest Black LGBTQ+ club into the twenty-first century (*Clique Magazine* 2000a; Traxx Columbus 2011). Though no physical location of Traxx remains in the city as of 2023, the club's legacy continues through the Traxx Girls, a Black LGBTQ+ entertainment company in Atlanta (Washington 2022).

Changes in Atlanta's LGBTQ+ Subculture Bars

As Atlanta's LGBTQ+ social scene began to consolidate into fewer bars, one new type of LGBTQ+ bar appeared in the city – country bars. Though these bars were similar to the earlier western/leather bars, such as Texas Drilling Company, they did not incorporate as much of the leather subculture, and instead had an atmosphere that reflected a western/country dancehall. The two subcultures began to occupy different physical spaces in 1987, after Jay Evans, the owner of Texas Drilling Company, established Renegades Saloon

and Café at 306 Ponce de Leon Avenue NE (*Etcetera* 1987h). Advertisements in *Etcetera* from 1987 suggest that Evans shifted Texas Drilling Company toward more of a leather aesthetic after Renegades Saloon and Café opened, making the latter bar the primary space in Atlanta for LGBTQ+ people who liked a country/western atmosphere (*Etcetera* 1987i). Renegades Saloon and Café was short lived, and by early 1988, both it and Texas Drilling Company had closed. In April 1988, Evans opened a new leather bar, the Eagle, at the 306 Ponce de Leon Avenue NE location (previously the Celebrity Club; see Theme: LGBTQ+ Arts in Atlanta) (*Etcetera* 1988b; Historic Atlanta 2020; Medwed 2017).

Since the early 1970s, LGBTQ+ leather bars throughout the United States and across the world have operated under the name “the Eagle,” taking the name from a famous leather bar in New York City, the Eagle's Nest. Reflecting the bar's name change, Evans' new bar specifically catered to the leather subculture within Atlanta's LGBTQ+ communities. As Atlanta's other leather bars closed or shifted toward other aesthetics in the 1980s, the Eagle provided members of Atlanta's LGBTQ+ leather subculture with a place to socialize (Historic Atlanta 2020). After Evans passed away in 1997, Robby Kelley and Richard Ramey purchased the Eagle to save it from closure. Under their ownership, the bar became a more inclusive space, and in the late 1990s, the Eagle was opened to women for the first time (Richards and Spencer 2022). The Eagle continued operating at 306 Ponce de Leon Avenue NE into the twenty-first century. In 2009, the bar was raided by the Red Dog drug investigation unit of the Atlanta Police Department, which led to political fallout in the city and federal lawsuits by patrons (see Theme: LGBTQ+ Atlantans and Harassment). In 2022, the Eagle relocated to 1492 Piedmont Avenue NE, in the space previously occupied by Burkhart's,

where it continues to serve as a gathering space for members of Atlanta's LGBTQ+ leather subculture (Richards and Spencer 2022).

After Evans established the Eagle in 1988, the country/western community shifted toward other bars, such as the Phoenix at 567 Ponce de Leon Avenue NE, which opened in 1989 (*Etcetera* 1989c). Atlanta's most well-known country bars were Deana's One Mo' Time and Hoedowns, both owned by Deana Collins. She established Deana's One Mo' Time at 1890 Cheshire Bridge Road NE (no longer extant) in February 1987 (Saunders 2014c). Like Collins' earlier bars, Deana's One Mo' Time was originally a LGBTQ+ women's bar, but it welcomed all LGBTQ+ people. An article in the *Atlanta Constitution* in 1988 described it as, "a stylish bar with a stage and pool tables" (Sverdlik 1988). According to members of the YLIGA Facebook group, patrons of Deana's One Mo' Time two-stepped to country music at the bar in the late 1980s and early 1990s (YLIGA, 08/26/2020, "Who remembers DEANA'S ONE MO TIME?"). In the early 1992, Deana's One Mo' Time closed, and later that year, Collins reopened the space as Hoedowns, Atlanta's "only full time country and western dance bar" for LGBTQ+ people (GayBarchives, 03/04/2021, "YOU CANT KEEP A GOOD HOE DOWN!"; *Etcetera* 1992c, 1992d). Hoedowns was popular with LGBTQ+ men and women who enjoyed line dancing and country music.

Beyond its importance as a space for members of Atlanta's LGBTQ+ Country subculture, Deana's One Mo' Time/Hoedowns served as a "headquarters" for Collins' support of Atlanta's LGBTQ+ communities. The bar hosted benefits for LGBTQ+ rights organizations and AIDS groups, including the local effort to purchase residences for people with AIDS (PWA) (Blizzard 1989). Collins also allowed the AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power

(ACT UP), an AIDS advocacy organization, to use the bar for meetings (YLIGA, 08/26/2020, "Who remembers DEANA'S ONE MO TIME?"). In the mid-to-late-1990s, the bar relocated to 931 Monroe Drive NE in the Midtown Promenade shopping center (David Atlanta 1998a). In the twenty-first century, another country bar owned by Collins, the Three-Legged Cowboy, replaced Hoedowns at 931 Monroe Drive NE, but it closed in 2011. As of 2023, the legacy of Collins' country-themed LGBTQ+ bars continues at the Heretic as their "country dance nights," which she helped establish after the Three-Legged Cowboy closed (Hennie 2011; The Heretic 2022b).

COFFEEHOUSES AS ALTERNATIVE SOCIAL SPACES TO BARS

Coffeehouses and cafes provided an alternative gathering space for LGBTQ+ people searching for community outside of the bar and club scene in Atlanta. Young LGBTQ+ people who were not able to access bars where alcohol was served due to their age utilized coffeehouses for this purpose. During the early 1960s, young gay men frequently gathered at Charlie's, a café that was located at the southwest corner of the intersection of 10th Street and West Peachtree Street (no longer extant). Charlie's was well known among gay teenagers, even bringing in boys from cities and towns outside of Atlanta. According to patrons, the café operated into the night, mirroring the business hours of the city's bars and clubs (YLIGA, 03/05/2020, "This goes way way back!"; YLIGA, 11/01/2021, "Does anyone remember The Cameo Bar").

Coffeehouses were also established within LGBTQ+ community centers and other businesses to provide drug and alcohol-free spaces for socializing. In 1980, the Atlanta Gay Center (AGC)

opened a coffeehouse on the second floor of its 931 Ponce de Leon Avenue NE location (Atlanta Gay Central 1980; Gayzette 1980b). Known as The Gathering Place, the AGC's coffeehouse was open each Friday evening through at least 1982. The Gathering Place often booked live entertainment for their customers, including popular Atlanta-based comedians, theater troupes, and musicians (Atlanta Gay Central 1982; Gazette 1981). By the early 1990s, there were no LGBTQ+ coffeehouses in Atlanta. Recognizing the need for an LGBTQ+ literary and social space near Midtown, Philip Rafshoon opened Outwrite, a bookstore and coffeehouse, in 1993 (Fitch 1993). Between 1996 and its closure in 2012, Outwrite operated at 991 Piedmont Avenue NE, at the intersection of Piedmont Avenue and 10th Street. During this time, Outwrite served as one of Atlanta's most prominent LGBTQ+ social spaces (Washington 2018). Though there were fewer LGBTQ+ coffeeshops than bars in Atlanta, these spaces created an important alcohol-free space for queer socialization and community building.

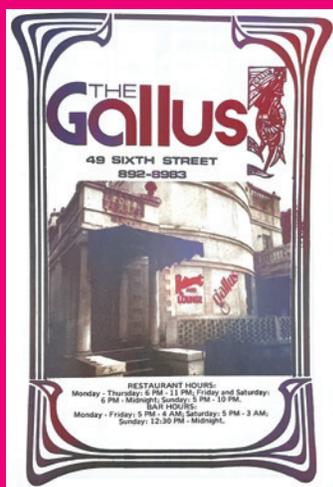
LGBTQ+-FRIENDLY DINING IN ATLANTA

Restaurants were also public spaces that provided an environment for LGBTQ+ people to gather and socialize with others like them. In the mid-twentieth century, LGBTQ+ dining experiences mirrored the bar scene, where LGBTQ+ people created spaces for themselves in mostly-heterosexual, cis-gendered places. The earliest documented places where LGBTQ+ dined together in Atlanta were cafeterias and drug store counters in downtown, including Lucy Wood Cafeteria at 64 Marietta Street NW and Lane Drug Store at 177 Peachtree Street NE (both no longer extant). According to George Hyde, founder of the Eucharistic Catholic Church, Lane

Drug Store was a popular place for gay men to gather and eat on Saturday nights in the late 1940s (Chenault 2008:61–62). By the late 1950s, the most popular place for LGBTQ+ people to gather and dine was Mama Mia, an Italian restaurant at 1139 Peachtree Street NE (no longer extant). An attached piano bar known as the Piccolo Lounge was located within Mama Mia during this period as well, and both places remained popular LGBTQ+ hangouts through the 1960s (County 1995:21; Phillips 2005:01:16:12).

LGBTQ+ bars in Atlanta also operated dining areas, and several had dedicated restaurants within them. As discussed above, the Prince George Inn opened at 115 6th Street NE in 1964 as a neighborhood bar, and the owner, Bill Copeland, did not add a kitchen until 1966. During the late-1960s, the Prince George Inn developed into a restaurant, though the bar also remained, and the clientele included a mixture of heterosexual, cis-gender people and gay men. As the Armory, originally owned by and attached to the Prince George Inn, and Backstreet opened and quickly grew popular with gay men in the 1970s, the restaurant also remained a frequent gathering space for LGBTQ+ people. The Apollo Club, Atlanta's underground social club for gay men, met and dined at the Prince George Inn during the 1970s, in a room between the Prince George Inn's dining area and the Armory (see Theme: Atlanta's LGBTQ+ Community Organizations) (Phillips 2005:00:47:00; Stevens 2015:01:32:10). By the 1980s, the Prince George Inn was recognized as "one of Atlanta's oldest and most successful gay restaurants" (Voss 1982i). The restaurant and bar combination business model was found in other gay establishments in Atlanta during the late 1970s and 1980s as well, including at the Gallus at 49 6th Street NE (no longer extant), well known for its elegant dining combined with a downstairs cruise bar; Shelly's Place at 1720 Peachtree Street NE,

Gallus One of Atlanta's most notable and unique LGBTQ+ restaurants of the twentieth century was the Gallus Restaurant and Bar at 49 6th Street NE, which opened in March 1975 (Killer 1975c). Located in an old house on Cypress Street, one of the city's major male prostitution districts during the twentieth century, the Gallus combined a fine dining atmosphere with spaces for cruising. The main floor of the converted house served as an upscale restaurant with elegant décor, and in the early 1980s, the second floor was opened as a piano bar. The Gallus' cruise bar was on the lower level and had a dive bar atmosphere (Anon 1984a; *Etcetera Magazine* 1986). According to Ashley Nicole Dawson, an Atlanta-based drag performer and long-time employee of the Gallus, the restaurant closed in the early 1990s after it caught fire (YLIGA, 08/09/2020, "Who remembers brunch and dinner at the Gallus?").

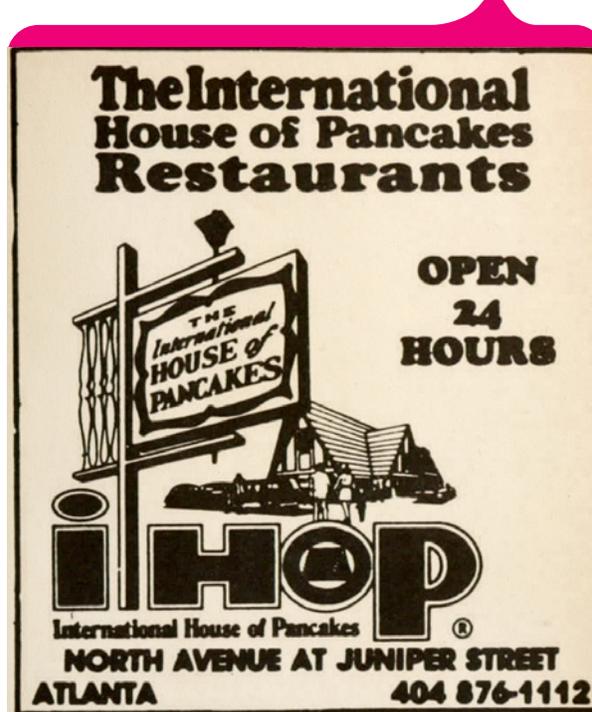


(Source: *Cruise Weekly*, Volume 3, Number 20, July 1978. Lesbian, Gay, Bi-Sexual, and Transgender Serial Collection, ahc.MSS991. Kenan Research Center at the Atlanta History Center)

which mixed its restaurant environment with a disco in the late 1970s; and Crazy Ray'z, a neighborhood bar with an attached restaurant (*Cruise* 1978d; *Cruise Weekly* 1982e; YLIGA, 08/09/2020, "Who remembers brunch and dinner at the Gallus?").

As LGBTQ+ enclaves began to grow in the city during the second half of the twentieth century, several restaurants in proximity to these neighborhoods developed LGBTQ+ customer bases. Over time, these restaurants became well known among Atlanta's LGBTQ+ communities as safe places to gather and dine. In areas of LGBTQ+ nightlife, twenty-four-hour restaurants, such as the Dunk 'N Dine at 2277 Cheshire Bridge Road NE, provided a post-bar gathering space for LGBTQ+ people. The

(Below) Advertisement for the International House of Pancakes at the intersection of Piedmont and North Avenues. This I-HOP was a regular advertiser in Atlanta's LGBTQ+ publications, was listed as one of the welcoming restaurants in the official Pride planning materials from 1981, and served as a late night gathering space for LGBTQ+ people after leaving the bars and clubs in Midtown (Source: *Cruise Weekly Arts and Entertainment Magazine*, Volume 9, Number 27, HoustonLGBTHistory.org)"



Dunk 'N Dine originally opened in the early 1960s, but it was not until the early-to-mid 1970s that it developed an association with LGBTQ+ people who lived on or regularly visited the Cheshire Bridge Road corridor (*Cruise* 1978b; *The Atlanta Constitution* 1962). Through the 1970s and 1980s, the Dunk 'N Dine was “a popular after-the-bar eating spot for gays,” where LGBTQ+ people would gather to eat and continue socializing after leaving nearby bars, including the Sweet Gum Head and Magic Garden (YLIGA, 07/09/2021, “This post is about Scotty”; *Cruise* 1978b).

Restaurants in or near neighborhoods where concentrations of LGBTQ+ people lived also became popular. The Silver Grill at 900 Monroe Drive NE (no longer extant) opened in 1945 along the eastern edge of Atlanta’s Midtown neighborhood. According to Peggy Hubbard, a waitress at the Silver Grill and an ally of LGBTQ+ Atlantans, gay men were eating at the restaurant as early as the late 1950s. By the mid-1980s, the Silver Grill was one of the most popular restaurants among gay men in Atlanta, largely due to employees like Hubbard (*Impulse Video Digest* 1984b). She was a major figure in the LGBTQ+ community of Midtown during the 1980s, participating in AIDS benefits and delivering food to AIDS patients (Bostock 2010; *Cruise Weekly Arts & Entertainment Magazine* 1984c; *Legacy.com* 2010). Reflecting the restaurant’s popularity among LGBTQ+ people in Atlanta, one of Atlanta drag musician Diamond Lil’s most popular songs was “The Silver Grill Blues,” which was based on the diner (Harrison 2016).

Along Atlanta’s “great gay way” of the late 1970s, Cheshire Bridge Road, the Colonnade served homestyle food that appealed to LGBTQ+ Atlantans similarly to the Silver Grill (*Cruise* 1979, 116). Located at 1879 Cheshire Bridge Road NE, the

restaurant was nearby several late 1970s and early 1980s LGBTQ+ nightlife spaces, including the Magic Garden/Numbers/the Saint and the Sports Page, as well as the apartments along Woodland Avenue that were popular among LGBTQ+ people (see Theme: Atlanta’s LGBTQ+ Neighborhoods and Enclaves). The Colonnade was, and continues to be, known for its mixed crowd of LGBTQ+ persons and older, straight people. Though the restaurant was rarely advertised in LGBTQ+ media in the city, the Colonnade was popular among LGBTQ+ Atlantans by the late 1970s and remains a well-known LGBTQ+ dining location as of 2023 (Bostock 2023).

There were also several restaurants with mostly LGBTQ+ staffs in Atlanta during the late twentieth century. The Pleasant Peasant was established in 1973 by Dick Dailey and Steve Nygren. The original Pleasant Peasant was at 555 Peachtree Street NE, and though *Cruise* described the dining crowd as “mostly straight,” the restaurant was known for its large number of gay employees (*Cruise* 1978c:83; Mackle 2001). Dailey and Nygren established several other restaurants throughout the city as well, including both the Peasant Uptown in Phipps Plaza at 3500 Peachtree Road NE and the Country Place in Colony Square at 1197 Peachtree Street NE, both of which also had largely-LGBTQ+ staffs (Bostock 2017). According to a member of the YLIGA Facebook group, “every gay waiter in Atlanta worked at one of the Peasant restaurants sooner or later” (YLIGA, 07/07/2020, “Remember the Pleasant Pheasant?” [sic]).

SHOPPING SPACES THAT WELCOMED LGBTQ+ PEOPLE IN ATLANTA

As Atlanta’s LGBTQ+ population became more visible in the second half of the twentieth century, businesses opened that catered to them by

creating welcoming spaces to shop and carrying goods that LGBTQ+ people wanted but were not available at most retailers. LGBTQ+ people also opened their own businesses to serve Atlanta's LGBTQ+ communities. The most popular LGBTQ+-friendly retail stores were gift shops that sold paper goods, t-shirts, and small household items.

The earliest documented retail store to be popular among LGBTQ+ people in Atlanta is the Poster Hut, which was established in 1967 at 1964 Cheshire Bridge Road NE (*Atlanta Constitution* 1971; *The Georgia Voice* 2011). Initially, the Poster Hut carried mostly records and posters that featured musical acts, movies, or art. In 1974, Gary Goldberg bought the Poster Hut from the original owner and began offering more products, many of which were targeted toward the LGBTQ+ community. Goldberg stocked the store with clothes, jewelry, home goods, smoking pipes and

paraphernalia, incense, and sex toys, as well as the original offerings of music and posters (*The Barb* 1977b; *The Georgia Voice* 2011). The Poster Hut was most well-known for its greeting card collection, which included one of the earliest selections of LGBTQ+-inclusive greeting cards in Atlanta (YLIGA, 12/28/2021, "One of my favorite shops"). By 1977, the Poster Hut had relocated to 2175 Cheshire Bridge Road NE, where the store operated until it closed in 2011 (*The Georgia Voice* 2011).

Retail collectives with stores that were owned by or popular among LGBTQ+ people also began

The front of Ansley Mall in 1985. The area to the left of the large sign was the previous location of the Ides of March, and the business visible on the right, Atlanta Ballooney, was also popular with LGBTQ+ Atlantans (Source: *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* Photographic Archives. Special Collections and Archives, Georgia State University Library)



to open in Atlanta as the population of openly LGBTQ+ people grew larger in the city. The first documented mini mall that advertised to and was popular with LGBTQ+ Atlantans was the Ides of March, which opened in 1977 (*CruiseNews* 1983). Located on the north side of Ansley Mall at 1544 Piedmont Avenue NE, advertisements described the Ides of March as an “exciting bazaar of retail stores,” and Phyllis Killer promoted it in her gossip column in *The Barb*, stating that it was “one of the most unique shopping mini-malls ever” (Killer 1977b; *Atlanta Constitution* 1977). Shops within the Ides of March included Regalos, a gay-owned home goods and gift store operated by Bob Williams; Ruffled Feathers, an exotic bird store operated by John Keene; 4th Avenue, a clothing boutique; Body Bizarre, a body care store; and Lady L, a smoke shop (Killer 1977b). The Ides of March continued operating until at least 1983, when one of the most well-known LGBTQ+-owned and friendly stores in the mini mall, Regalos, was forced to relocate. The owner of Ansley Mall, Selig Enterprises, altered the main lease for Ides of March, restricting the tenants from selling adult materials, which included Regalos’ adult greeting cards. Coverage of the event suggests that the Ides of March, who sub-leased store space to the shops, sold the main lease for the mini mall back to Selig Enterprises in 1983 as well (YLIGA, 10/11/2020, “Any one remember the gift and balloons...”) (*CruiseNews* 1983). LGBTQ+-friendly businesses continued to operate in Ansley Mall through the turn of the twenty-first century, and it remains a popular LGBTQ+ shopping destination in Atlanta as of 2023 (*The Georgia Voice* 2022).

As with Atlanta’s LGBTQ+ bar and club scene, the number of LGBTQ+-friendly retail stores rapidly grew in the early 1980s. Part of the development of the Gay Strip along Peachtree Street between

6th and 12th Streets during this period was the addition of several LGBTQ+-owned and/or friendly businesses. In 1982, the gay-owned gift store T’s & Things opened at 896 Peachtree Street NE, selling t-shirts, greeting cards, and small gift items (*Cruise Weekly* 1982f, 1982j). That summer, several businesses on the 800 block of Peachtree Street, including T’s & Things, began advertising together as a collective of shops called the “Peachtree 800,” billing themselves as “the block that caters to the gay community” (*Cruise Weekly* 1982k). According to Gregg Daugherty, most of the businesses along Peachtree from North Avenue to 14th Street were either LGBTQ+-friendly or gay owned during the early-to-mid 1980s, meaning LGBTQ+ people living in Midtown could easily access groceries, clothes, and other necessary items while also reinvesting in their own community (Daugherty 2018b:00:09:23). In early December 1982, James (Jim) Heverly, the editor of *Cruise Weekly*, encouraged readers to shop at these businesses by stating, “gay businesses have sprung up all over Midtown and the surrounding areas, and they are more than ready for Christmas,” and “shopping gay is good business” (Heverly 1982).

Clothing stores that mostly served the LGBTQ+ community also opened in other areas of Atlanta around this time, including P. Street at 1400 Peachtree Street NE in 1981 and the Boy Next Door at 1449 Piedmont Avenue NE in 1983 (the P. Street building is no longer extant) (*Cruise Weekly* 1981c; Wallace 1985). Though both stores carried many items that could be found in department stores, their selections were curated for styles that were popular among gay men in the 1980s, including Levi jeans, brand name polo shirts, and a variety of tank tops, t-shirts, button-downs, and pants. In January 2023, the Boy Next Door relocated from their Piedmont Avenue location

to 1000 Piedmont Avenue NE, Suite B, near the intersection of 10th Street and Piedmont Avenue (Burkholder 2022; *The Georgia Voice* 2022). No similar stores established specifically for LGBTQ+ women in Atlanta have been found in the available documentation from the late-twentieth century.

By the end of the 1990s, many Atlanta-area store owners were welcoming LGBTQ+ people to their stores. Advertisements printed in *Southern Voice* reveal an array of businesses that accepted LGBTQ+ people, though many were not LGBTQ+ owned. These include car dealerships, pet stores, furniture outlets, home décor shops, clothing stores, and many service businesses such as contractors and landscapers (*Southern Voice* 1994). As Atlanta became more accepting of LGBTQ+ people in the late twentieth century, the need for LGBTQ+-specific businesses decreased. Several stores that carried LGBTQ+-oriented goods remained open in Atlanta during this period though, including the previously discussed Poster Hut and Boy Next Door, as well as Brushstrokes, a LGBTQ+ owned gift shop that originally opened at 780 North Highland Avenue NE in 1989 (*Southern Voice* 1989). In the early 1990s, Brushstrokes relocated to 1510 Piedmont Avenue NE in Ansley Square, and as of 2023, it remains open (*The Georgia Voice* 2022; Yelp 2022). All three of these businesses continued operating into the twenty-first century.

LEATHER STORES

An important type of LGBTQ+ commercial space in the twentieth century was the leather store, which supplied clothing and other goods for LGBTQ+ people in the leather community. Leather stores have operated in the city since shortly after the first leather bar, Mrs. P's, developed. Prior

to physical stores opening in the city, leather goods were purchased through advertisements in regional or national LGBTQ+ magazines. Through the late twentieth century, shops with leather goods were often found within Atlanta's leather bars. By 1976, the earliest known LGBTQ+ leather store in Atlanta was operating inside Mrs. P's (Killer 1976). According to members of YLIGA, Larry Dooley and Joe "Taz" Tasieo were the two main leatherworkers Atlantans turned to for custom leather pieces in the twentieth century (YLIGA, 01/04/2022, "I bought my first pair of chaps..."). Between 1979 and 1980, Taz operated his own store, Tasieo's Leather Post, at 925 Peachtree Street NE (Roberts 1980; Tasieo 1979). By 1985, he named his business Club Leather and was billing himself as "the oldest name in leather for Atlanta" (Tasieo 1985). Club Leather was located inside Bulldog and Company. Another LGBTQ+ leather goods store in the 1980s was Sacs, which operated within Texas Drilling Company (*Cruise Weekly* 1982).

LGBTQ+ BOOKSTORES

Through the mid-to-late twentieth century, Atlanta was home to several bookstores that provided LGBTQ+ people with access to written materials that reflected their experiences and identities. Prior to this time, the only stores in Atlanta that maintained sections of print materials that contained anything that might have been considered LGBTQ+ content were newsstands and bookstores that sold pornographic magazines. LGBTQ+ bookstores not only offered materials that reflected the lives of LGBTQ+ people, but they also created social spaces and hosted programming for the LGBTQ+ communities of the city. In these ways, the city's LGBTQ+ bookstores served as a type of community center for LGBTQ+ people in Atlanta (Washington 2018).

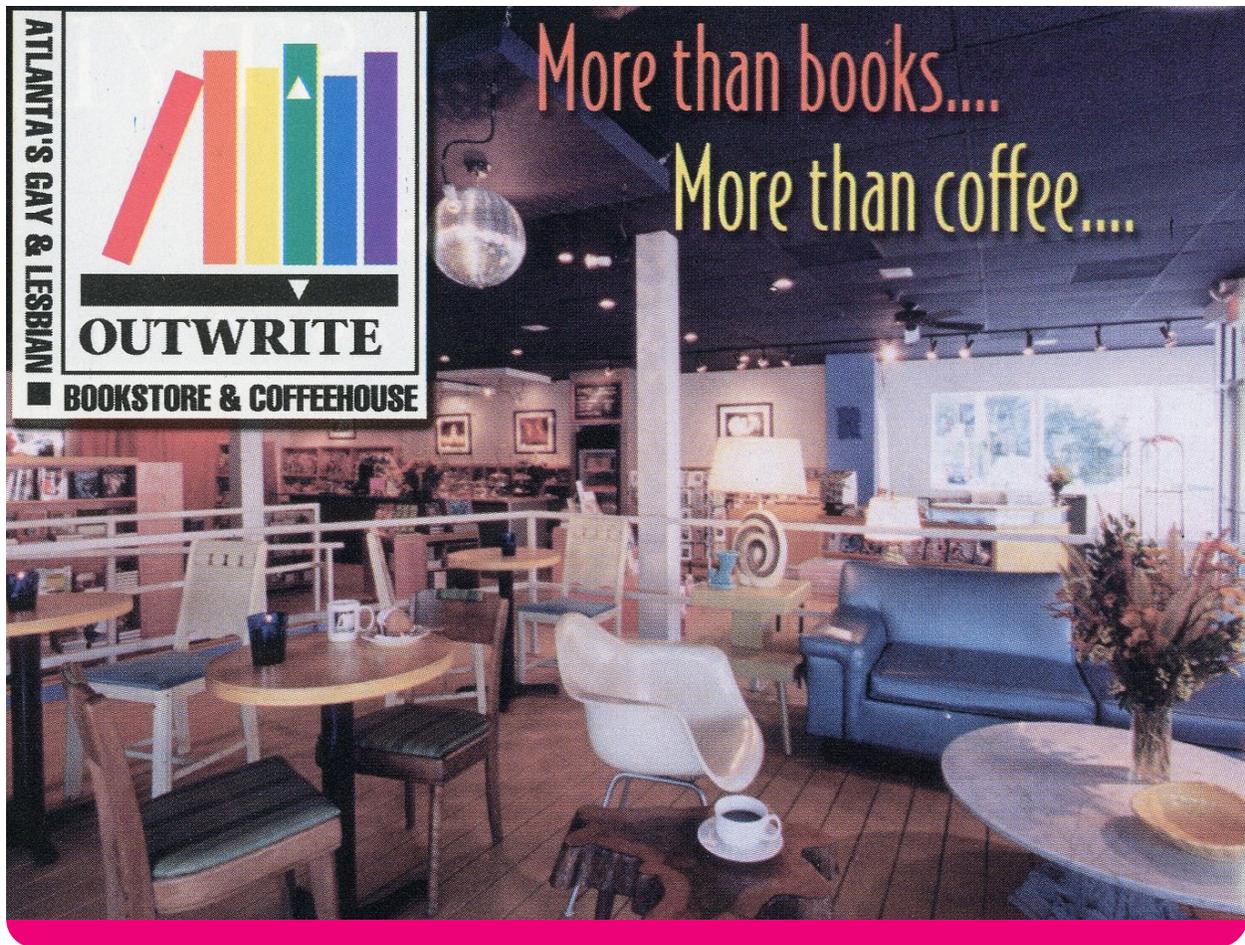
CHARIS BOOKS AND MORE

The first bookstore in Atlanta to openly carry literary materials with LGBTQ+ content was Charis Books and More. Opened in 1974 at 419 Moreland Avenue NE in the Little Five Points neighborhood of Atlanta, Charis Books was the first feminist bookstore in the southeastern United States (Bryant 2009; Georgia State University Library 2020a). The store's founders, Linda Bryant and Barbara Borgman, opened Charis Books to serve the growing Little Five Points community and provide Atlantans with books written by and about women, books for children that were antiracist and antisexist, as well as books covering topics related to spirituality and LGBTQ+ experiences. Though the store has

never been identified as a lesbian bookstore, was a popular shopping and gathering space for lesbians who lived in the neighborhoods surrounding Little Five Points, and many of the previous and current staff and volunteers have been and are people who identify as LGBTQ+. Since the mid-1970s, Charis Books has hosted readings and discussions, author events, and education and activism opportunities. Charis Books has also opened their store to LGBTQ+ organizations, such as ZAMI, allowing them to use it as a meeting and event space (see Theme: Atlanta's LGBTQ+ Community Organizations) (Bryant 2009). In 1994, Charis Books moved mere steps away from its original location to a house at 1189 Euclid Avenue NE. They created a non-profit branch of the store in 1996 called Charis Circle, which took over

Entrance to Charis Books at 419 Moreland Avenue NE on August 22, 1987 (Source: *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* Photographic Archives. Special Collections and Archives, Georgia State University Library)





Advertisement for Outwrite showing the seating area at their 10th Street and Piedmont Location, from *Clikque*, November 2000 (Source: *Clikque Magazine for Him & for Her*, Volume 3, Number 16, African American Lesbian and Gay Print Culture Collection, Archives Division, Auburn Avenue Research Library on African American Culture and History, Atlanta-Fulton Public Library System)

the community events hosted by Charis Books and aided with the funding of the store. Charis has since relocated to 184 South Candler Street in Decatur. They moved to this location in 2019 (Ward 2019).

CHRISTOPHER'S KIND

In 1980, Atlanta's first LGBTQ+ literary bookstore, Christopher's Kind, opened on the second floor of the Atlanta Gay Center at 931 Ponce de Leon Avenue NE (The Atlanta Gay Center, Inc. 1980a,

1980b). The store operated in the Atlanta Gay Center until 1982 when it relocated to a house at 70 13th Street NE (no longer extant) (Voss 1982). Billed as a bookstore "for the lesbian and gay community," Christopher's Kind was established by Gene Loring as a space for LGBTQ+ Atlantans to easily find books and other print materials that contained homosexual content or were written by gay authors (The Atlanta Gay Center, Inc. 1980b). The types of books carried included novels, informative and self-help guides, scripts for plays, and edited collections of visual art. Christopher Loring also stocked vinyl records, cards, and other media or paper goods (Voss 1982).

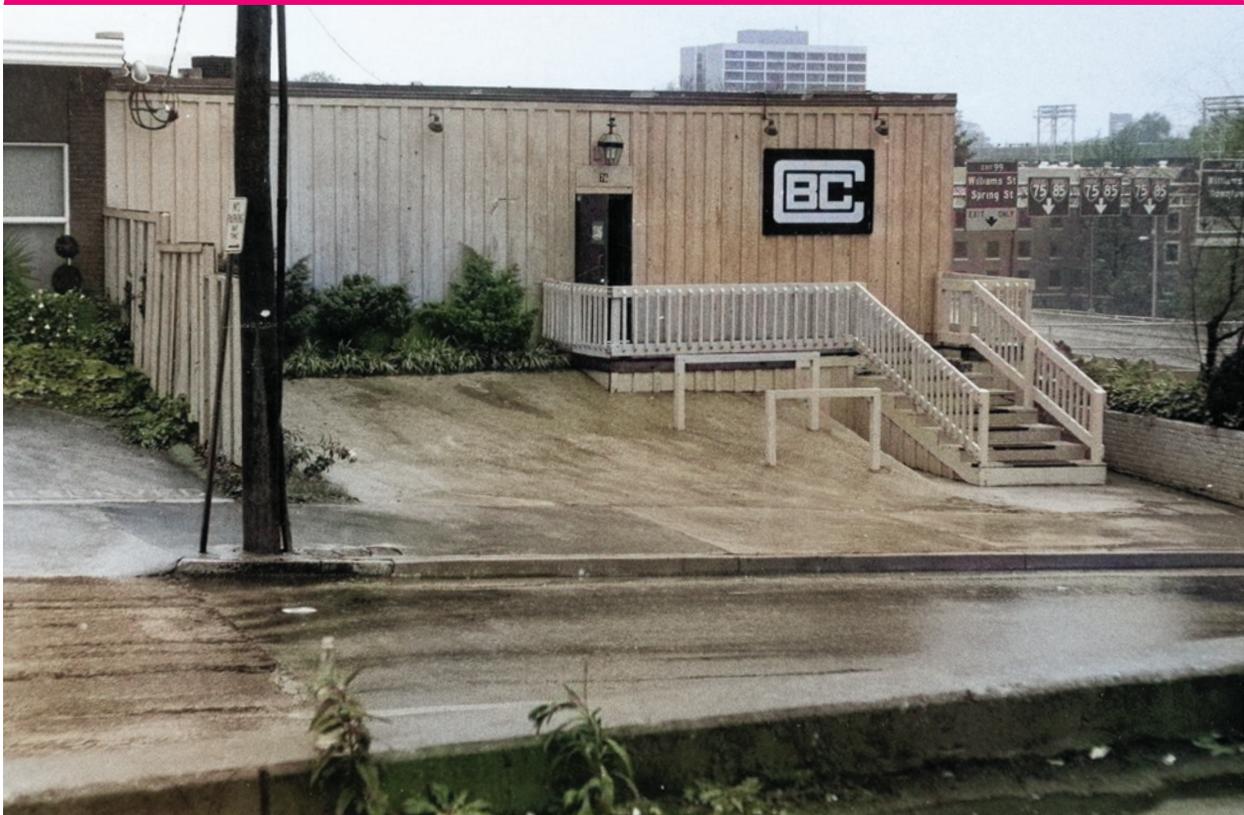
Though there were earlier gay bookstores in Atlanta, such as After Dark and Down Under, those

focused on providing pornographic content rather than written works. Christopher's Kind did not carry hardcore pornographic materials, but they did keep erotic coffee table books that contained nude photographs of men in stock. In the mid-1980s, law enforcement raided the bookstore on multiple occasions and arrested both Loring and his assistant, Charlie St. John, for distribution of obscene materials (see more about Charlie St. John in *Theme: Political Activism in Atlanta's LGBTQ+ Communities*) (Dolan 2004; Voss 1982). Due to the store's focus on homosexual literature, the Yellow Pages refused to print an advertisement in their directory for Christopher's Kind and Loring sued in 1984. Still, he lost the case, with the ruling judge citing the Yellow Page's right to freedom of the press (Vardeman 1984). The bookstore continued to operate for two years but closed in 1986 (Georgia State University Library 2020a).

OUTWRITE BOOKS

One of Midtown's most prominent LGBTQ+ gathering spaces during the last decade of the twentieth century was also an LGBTQ+ bookstore. Outwrite, known as "Atlanta's gay and lesbian bookstore and coffeehouse," was established in mid-November 1993 by Philip Rafshoon (Fitch 1993; *Southern Voice* 1994). Originally located at 931 Monroe Drive NE in the Midtown Promenade shopping center, Outwrite aimed to serve a similar purpose as Christopher's Kind, by providing LGBTQ+ Atlantans with a central location for "literature by, for, and about gays and lesbians, in addition to subjects of interest to the community" (Fitch 1993; *Southern Voice* 1994).

The entrance to Club Atlanta, 1985 (Source: *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* Photographic Archives. Special Collections and Archives, Georgia State University Library)



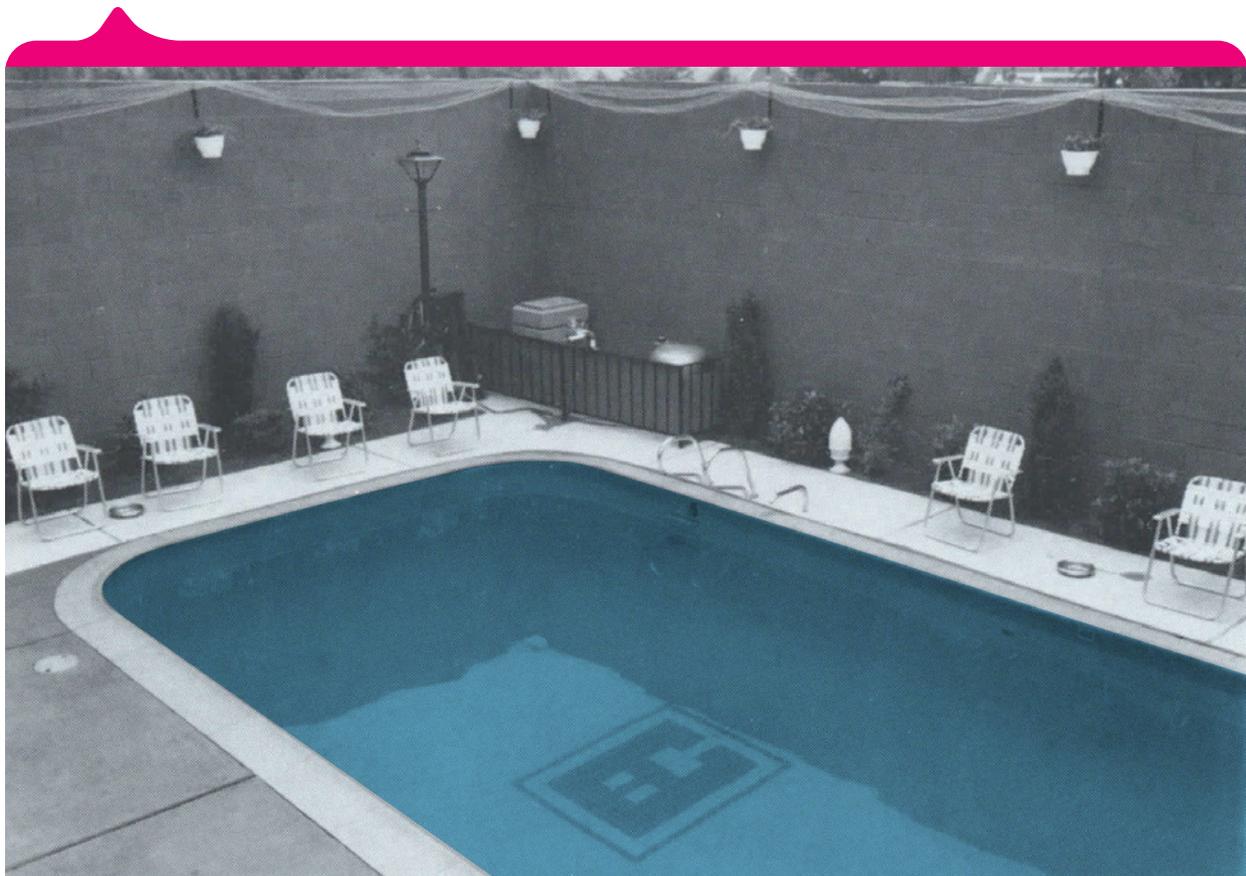
The bookstore operated as an LGBTQ+ gathering space from the outset, with a coffeehouse originally built into the space and author events and other programming that began during their grand opening (Fitch 1993). In 1996, Rafshoon relocated Outwrite to its most well-known location at the southeast corner of the intersection of 10th Street and Piedmont Avenue, and it quickly became an anchor for one of the most prominent LGBTQ+ enclaves in Atlanta. It remained an important place for LGBTQ+ people to access relevant materials, join others in discussion of LGBTQ+ written works, meet queer authors, and gather with other members of Atlanta's LGBTQ+ communities until it closed in 2012. As bookstores moved online and social media began to replace physical spaces for meeting and communicating in the first decade

The pool area at Club Atlanta bathhouse, 1976 (Source: *Cruise*, Volume 1, Number 12, HoustonLGBTHistory.org)

of the twenty-first century, brick and mortar bookstores, such as Outwrite, began to suffer financially and few were able to continue operating physical locations (Washington 2018). Charis Books and More is one of the few, if not the only, bookstores remaining in Atlanta that has offered LGBTQ+ print materials since the twentieth century.

LGBTQ+ CRUISING AND ADULT ENTERTAINMENT SPACES IN ATLANTA

Some of the earliest LGBTQ+-friendly spaces in Atlanta were adult businesses such as bookstores, bathhouses, and theaters. Though adult businesses provided LGBTQ+ people with goods and services, they were often utilized primarily as a social space for meeting other LGBTQ+ people seeking sexual partners, a practice that is known as cruising. Cruising is not an activity exclusive to



LGBTQ+ people, but it was one of the only avenues available to LGBTQ+ searching for sexual partners in the twentieth century. When discussing the necessity of these spaces with a reporter from the *Atlanta Constitution*, activist Bill Smith stated,

“In a heterosexual environment, you can meet people to go out with, to have dates with, go dancing with. It’s perfectly natural for a man to ask a woman in the office, or in church, etc., to go out. But gay people, you know, can’t do that. If they do that in their office they may lose their job. So you have to have a way so you can meet somebody that you actually know is gay without fear of repercussions. So you have to congregate in certain areas.” (Brown 1976)

Prior to adult businesses opening in the city, other public spaces were used for cruising, including the bathrooms, known as tea rooms, of the Greyhound Bus Station, the Atlanta Public Library, and Rich’s Department Store (see Theme: LGBTQ+ Atlantans and Harassment). Even after LGBTQ+ bars and adult businesses were established in Atlanta, cruising in public spaces continued to serve as a discrete way for LGBTQ+ people to meet sexual partners. Places such as public restrooms, green spaces, and parking areas remained popular cruising locations through the second half of the twentieth century. Examples of these types of spaces include the bathrooms of Rich’s Department Store at 3393 Peachtree Road NE in Lenox Mall and Woolworth’s at 1544 Piedmont Avenue NE in Ansley Mall, and the parking lot of the Tara Theater at 2345 Cheshire Bridge Road NE in the Cheshire Square shopping center (YLIGA, 08/08/2020, “What was the very first place you went cruising?”).

Several city parks were used for this purpose as well throughout the twentieth century. These included Winn Park in the Ansley Park neighborhood and Piedmont Park, which had a section of paths on its north side known as the “tree trails” that were used for cruising. The area of Piedmont Park that contained the tree trails was bounded on the east by the Atlanta Belt Line Railway, on the north by Westminster Drive, on the west by Piedmont Avenue, and on the south by both the Park Drive bridge and the modern location of the Atlanta Botanical Gardens’ Dorothy Chapman Fuqua Conservatory, which is located on a slightly elevated section of land that was known as gay hill in the 1970s.

BATHHOUSES

The earliest documented LGBTQ+-friendly business in operation is the Club South Baths at 76 4th Street NW, which opened in 1969 (Guild Press, Ltd. 1969). It is also the oldest continually operating LGBTQ+ space in Atlanta, and as of 2023, it is known as FLEXspas. Though bathhouses were originally built to promote hygiene, their purpose shifted to serving as cruising venues in the 1960s. Bathhouses like Club South Baths provided LGBTQ+ men in Atlanta with a space to meet other men for public, typically anonymous sex (Lee 2017). According to *Cruise*, Club South was built specifically as a public sex venue, and the original owners did not even install facilities beyond private rooms. In 1976, the owner of the bathhouse chain Club Baths, Chuck Fleck, purchased Club South Baths and renamed it Club Atlanta. Fleck also added several new amenities that year, including a swimming pool, a whirlpool, a sauna, and a TV projector (*Cruise* 1976n). Between the late 1980s and the 1990s, Club Atlanta was renamed Flex Baths.

As discussed earlier, the Locker Room at 2325 Cheshire Bridge Road NE opened in 1975 as a bathhouse but was quickly transformed into a LGBTQ+ bar complex. Though the focus of the business shifted to drag performances and large dance floors, the elements of the bathhouse remained operational throughout the life of the Locker Room. These facilities included a steam room, whirlpool, sauna, gym, and private rooms (*Cruise* 1977b). The combination of social environments allowed gay men to cruise at both the bar and bathhouse, and a member of the YLIGA Facebook group remembered that “it was not unusual for men wearing only towels to come out to see the show” at Hollywood Hots. Even into the 1980s, features of the bathhouse were still visible in the later LGBTQ+ clubs at the location, Lavita’s and Lipstix, though neither of the clubs utilized the bathhouse facilities as a cruising business (YLIGA, 04/25/2020, “What was the name of the club...”).

ADULT BOOKSTORES, ARCADES, AND FILM GALLERIES

Since at least the early 1970s, LGBTQ+-friendly adult bookstores have operated in Atlanta, providing LGBTQ+ people with both pornographic material and a space to meet potential sexual partners. *David*, one of the southeast’s first LGBTQ+ magazines, advertised the earliest known bookstores to carry LGBTQ+ material in Atlanta, including the Buckhead Book Mart at 3105 Peachtree Road NE, Climax Book Mart at 1845 Piedmont Road NE, and the Pershing Point Book Mart at 24 17th Street NE (all are no longer extant) (*David* 1971b). All three of these businesses were advertised together in the *Atlanta Constitution* in 1971, but the advertisement did not specify the type of adult content, suggesting they carried heterosexual and homosexual materials (*Atlanta Constitution* 1971b). Other similar bookstores

were popular with LGBTQ+ Atlantans through the early-to-mid 1970s, including Eros Book Mart at 777 Ponce de Leon Avenue NE and the Plaza Adult Book Store at 1051 Ponce de Leon Avenue NE (*Atlanta Barb* 1974b; *Cruise* 1976k). Though these stores catered to both LGBTQ+ and heterosexual people, their sections of non-heterosexual materials created spaces for LGBTQ+ people with mutual sexual interests to interact. These stores were also the earliest known businesses in Atlanta to carry products that affirmed the sexual identities of LGBTQ+ people. Most bookstores offered more than just books and magazines, stocking items such as sex toys and providing access to pornographic films as well (*Atlanta Constitution* 1971a).

In 1974, Ron Beasley opened Atlanta’s first gay-owned, all-LGBTQ+ adult bookstore, After Dark Bookshop and Film Gallery at 1067 Peachtree Street NE (no longer extant) (*Cruise* 1977g; *Killer* 1975e). After Dark had a section of gay books and magazines, as well as several other amenities, including a gaming area with pool tables and pinball machines (*Cruise* 1976e). When asked about what the store provided to Atlantans, Beasley stated, “you could call it an Atlanta institution, a gathering place, a socializing and information center, or a dirty book store” (Brown 1976). Though the police and many non-LGBTQ+ Atlantans viewed the store as a haven for vice, it provided a relatively safe sexual and social environment for LGBTQ+ men in the city, particularly when compared to other, more public cruising locations (*Cruise* 1977g).

Like the mixed heterosexual-homosexual bookstores discussed above, the magazine racks at After Dark served as a cruising area where gay men could meet other men looking for sex. As its full name suggests, After Dark also had film



After Dark Bookshop and Film Gallery after an arsonist lit it on fire on December 4, 1980 (Source: *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* Photographic Archives. Special Collections and Archives, Georgia State University Library)

booths for rent, where patrons watched adult films in private, as well as multiple film galleries, which were large rooms with several peep show machines (*Cruise* 1977g). According to members of the YLIGA Facebook group, the staff would flicker the lights to alert people in the film booths and galleries that the police were entering the building to check IDs (YLIGA, 06/09/2020, “Who remembers the Down Under bookstore?”). This served as a warning to patrons to get dressed and stop touching, since they could be arrested

for sodomy or other sex crimes at the time. In the late 1970s, After Dark was targeted by Fulton County Solicitor General Hinson McAuliffe during his anti-obscenity campaign (see Theme: LGBTQ+ Atlantans and Harassment). As part of the police’s effort to control adult material in Atlanta, a judge ordered multiple stores, including After Dark, to close their film booths in June 1980 (*Cruise Weekly* 1980d). After Dark continued operating its bookstore and gaming area for a few months but was forced to fully close after an arsonist burned the store “beyond repair” on August 25th (After Dark Management 1980; *Cruise Weekly* 1980i). Though the building was vacant for the remainder of the year, it was targeted by an arsonist again

on December 4th and completely destroyed (Schwartz 1980).

Atlanta's only other all-LGBTQ+ bookstore during this period was also the target of police harassment and other forms of intimidation. Down Under at 45 8th Street NE (no longer extant) opened in January 1977 and offered similar services as After Dark, including racks of gay publications, a game room, and a film gallery (*The Barb* 1976b). They also sold leather items and had at least 25 private movie booths in the rear of the building (*Cruise* 1977c, 1977h). Like After Dark, Down Under was also targeted by McAuliffe for selling obscene material, and the store was raided by police in 1978 (see Theme: LGBTQ+ Atlantans and Harassment). Down Under was also potentially a target of anti-LGBTQ+ violence. In the early morning hours of April 28th, 1980, an explosion destroyed a large portion of the exterior wall of the bookstore and a fire started inside (*Atlanta Constitution* 1980). Though the cause of the explosion was never officially released, members of Atlanta's LGBTQ+ communities viewed it as an intentional attack on an LGBTQ+ sexual space (Dolan and Hayward 2018:00:31:40). Advertisements for Down Under stopped appearing in publications in the early summer of 1980, suggesting the store was forced to close after the attack (*Cruise Weekly* 1980e). By the end of the summer, both of Atlanta's LGBTQ+ adult bookstores had been forced to close through acts of violence. In the years following, the number of LGBTQ+-friendly adult bookstores decreased in the city, but cruising continued at the bars, in the streets, and along the trails in the parks.

ADULT THEATERS

Prior to the mid-1970s, most adult bookstores only offered LGBTQ+ adult films through peep

show machines, and in Atlanta, the selection was usually limited to a few low-quality films. The peep show machines rarely allowed you to sit, and the films in them were short and could not be watched by two people at once (*Cruise* 1977g). Full length pornographic or erotic films were typically found in theaters during this period, where patrons could sit and watch the film alongside others. Like bathhouses and bookstores, these sexualized spaces allowed LGBTQ+ people to socialize and meet other LGBTQ+ people looking for sex (*Cruise* 1977i). Atlanta only had one all-LGBTQ+ adult theater during the mid-to-late twentieth century, but several adult movie houses exhibited LGBTQ+ films alongside heterosexual, cis-gender movies. The earliest documented adult theater in Atlanta that advertised LGBTQ+ films was the Cozy Cinema at 433 Moreland Avenue NE, which was "showing X-rated gay films" by May 1971 (*David* 1971c).

Atlanta's only documented majority-LGBTQ+ adult theater, the Gay Patee Cinema, opened in the summer of 1971 (*Advocate* 1971). Its first location was in the former Walton Street Art Theater at 90 Walton Street NW (no longer extant) (Fulton, Jr. 2019d). The venue seated 100 people but lacked many of the other cruising facilities found in bathhouses or bookstores (*Cruise* 1977i; Hopkins 1973). Shortly after it opened, the Gay Patee Cinema ran advertisements in the *Atlanta Constitution*, billing itself as "Atlanta's original gay film festival" and "Atlanta's only gay theater" (*Atlanta Constitution* 1971d, 1971f). These advertisements placed the theater in the sights of Fulton County Solicitor General McAuliffe. Within two weeks of the first documented advertisement for the theater, McAuliffe's office raided the Gay Patee Cinema. During the raid, they seized two films and arrested both the manager and projectionist (*Atlanta Constitution* 1971c, 1971e).

In 1973, McAuliffe's office conducted a series of raids the Gay Patee Cinema again, though this time for the popular heterosexual adult film *Deep Throat*. The theater's owner, Arthur Sanders, likely used the film to taunt McAuliffe and test his obscenity campaign. Sanders promoted the showings for the controversial film in the *Atlanta Constitution* and obtained multiple copies the movie (Fulton, Jr. 2019d; Hopkins 1973). Within hours of each raid, the theater began showing *Deep Throat* again, and patrons continued to line up to purchase tickets for the film (McCash 1971). Sanders was eventually arrested and convicted on obscenity charges for showing *Deep Throat*, but the Gay Patee Cinema survived the raids and continued operating through the late 1970s (Willis 1975).

In 1977, the Gay Patee Cinema relocated to 17 Houston Street NE (now John Wesley Dobbs Avenue NE; no longer extant). The new location had more facilities for cruising, including a lounge, an arcade, and a room with several mini films similar to the bookstore peep show areas (*Cruise* 1977i). The main feature of the cinema continued to be its large theater for showing LGBTQ+ adult films, which was billed as the "Ultra Room" and had "plenty of room and plenty of rows in which to play 'musical chairs'" (*Cruise* 1978a). By May 1980, the theater was no longer listed in *Cruise* magazine's guides for Atlanta. Though it was not listed as one of the businesses that was forced to stop showing adult films in the early summer of 1980, which included After Dark, the Gay Patee Cinema's disappearance from LGBTQ+ publications overlapped with this event.

Advertisement for the Gay Patee Cinema, 1971
(Source: David, Volume 2, Number 2, December 1971. Lesbian, Gay, Bi-Sexual, and Transgender Serial Collection. Kenan Research Center at the Atlanta History Center)



**GAY PATEE
CINEMA**

90 WALTON STREET N.W.
DOWNTOWN ATLANTA

**ALL MALE ATTRACTIONS
new show every monday**

THE ONLY GAY THEATER
IN THE SOUTHEAST

YOUR HOSTS: JIM PAINTER & JIM SMITH

CONCLUSION

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, the number of social spaces that openly catered to Atlanta's sizable LGBTQ+ population began to flourish in the city. By the 1980s and 1990s, these businesses, most of which were concentrated in Midtown, along the Cheshire Bridge Road and Ponce de Leon Avenue corridors, and in the commercial nodes of some eastside and southwest neighborhoods, fully reflected the breadth and depth of Atlanta's diverse

LGBTQ+ communities and subcultures. However, Atlanta has witnessed a diffusion and general decline in the number and variety of LGBTQ+ social spaces during the early twenty-first century—due in large part to a combination of evolving generational preferences, redevelopment of Midtown's commercial sector, and more acceptance of LGBTQ+ people, businesses, and organizations in most other parts of the city and in the greater metropolitan area.

NRHP ELIGIBILITY STANDARDS

THEME: ATLANTA'S LGBTQ+ SOCIAL SPACES

Associated Property Functions/Uses: The table below is intended to provide guidance on the types of properties that are expected to be associated with the theme Atlanta's LGBTQ+ Social Spaces. This list is not to be considered comprehensive, as it was developed in tandem with the research conducted for the development of the theme's history. This list does not preclude other properties with differing functions and uses that could have associations with the theme, pending future research.

Property Description: Associated property types may include commercial buildings or residential buildings that function commercially and serve as bars, nightclubs/lounges, restaurants, coffee shops, bookstores, bathhouses, theaters, or hotels/motels. Residential buildings that are not necessarily functioning as commercial spaces or are commercially zoned may also be included if they have a documented association as an important gathering space for LGBTQ+ people in Atlanta in the past. Research of these buildings shows LGBTQ+ people in Atlanta commonly used any available spaces to create safe social spaces, and not necessarily in the traditional sense of establishing up a business. Additionally, groupings or nodes of LGBTQ+ Social Spaces that exist in the city may form a historic district, particularly in the Midtown area, or along the Cheshire Bridge Road and Ponce de Leon Avenue corridors.

Property Function or Use	Common Subcategories
Building: Commercial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bar Bookstore Cabaret Club Coffeeshop Complex Cruise Bar Disco Levi/Leather/Western Lounge Night Club Piano Bar Pub Show Bar Hotel/Motel Restaurant Retail
District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commercial Landscape Residential

Property Significance: Properties that have significance as an Atlanta LGBTQ+ Social Space must have an important and documented association with the Atlanta LGBTQ+ social scene. Or they may have an association with recognized individuals who were prominent in the development or establishment of LGBTQ+ social places, either as community leaders or as entrepreneurs. Generally, eligible spaces will have a well-documented history with serving Atlanta’s LGBTQ+ communities and some may be considered landmarks and centers for LGBTQ+ social life. Additionally, those properties with a longer operation in a space are more rare and may be more likely to have significance.

Geographic Locations: Within the city limits of Atlanta, particularly along major road corridors and in areas documented by this study as having been entertainment districts, including Midtown, Cheshire Bridge Road, and Ponce de Leon Avenue between Peachtree Street and Briarcliff Road.

Areas of Significance:

- Commerce
- Community Planning and Development
- Performing Arts
- Education
- Entertainment/Recreation
- Ethnic Heritage: Black
- Ethnic Heritage: Hispanic
- Social History: LGBTQ+ History
- Social History: Women’s History

Levels of Significance: Most properties demonstrating a direct association with the theme would likely be eligible at the local (city) level of

significance unless a property has significance with events or individual(s) that made a noted impact to LGBTQ+ social history that resonated at the state, or even national levels.

Criteria: NRHP Criteria A and B, Criteria Consideration G

For a resource to have significance associated with important individuals under Criterion B, the property must be directly associated with the individual’s productive life during the period in which they achieved significance and must be representative of their important contributions to this theme.

For National Register eligibility, properties associated with this theme that are less than 50 years of age must possess exceptional importance and meet the requirements of Criteria Consideration G. Criteria Consideration G will apply even to properties that are more than 50 years of age but did not attain significance until a period less than 50 years ago. Properties achieving exceptional significance should demonstrate a direct association with a notable LGBTQ+ social space and retain recognizable features from its period of significance.

Period of Significance: ca. 1945-2000

Period of Significance Justification: The Cotton Blossom, a hotel bar/lounge, was located in the Winecoff Hotel in downtown Atlanta sometime in the 1940s until the building caught fire in 1946. It is the earliest known social space associated with LGBTQ+ social life for which the building remains extant. Additional research may reveal earlier extant properties with direct associations with this theme. The end of the period of significance is 2000, the end of the study period for the thematic

context. In general, if the period of significance continues to the present, the end of the study period is the recommended end date.

Eligibility Standards:

- Resources should have a documented association with a business that catered to or harbored a significant safe space for social interaction, gathering, or socialization of LGBTQ+ people in Atlanta, OR
- Resources should have a documented association with an individual or individuals who were important community or business leaders, and who played an important role in the social life of Atlanta's LGBTQ+ community.

Character Defining Features

- Documented association with the historic theme.
- A resource associated with LGBTQ+ Social Spaces may be the first of its kind, or a long-time location of an important business or venue.
- A resource may be located in a building used for multiple purposes or other purposes originally.
- The associated business or organization must have occupied the property during the period of time in which it gained significance.
- The resource must retain most of the essential character defining physical features from the period in which the business occupied the property or in which the individual was directly associated with the property.

Integrity Considerations

- Overall integrity should be assessed within the time frame when the resource gained significance.
- The most important aspects of integrity for this theme are Location, Design, Feeling, and Association. A significant LGBTQ+ social space resource should be in its original location. It should retain recognizable exterior and interior features from its period of significance that contribute to its integrity of design, feeling, and association. Property specific research should aim to identify important interior features that may have divided spaces and how they were used, especially for bars.
- Integrity of Materials and Workmanship, while important, may not be crucial for meeting the Integrity threshold for this theme. Many buildings in the Inventory have experienced alterations and may no longer retain all of their original materials. Research and firsthand accounts of people using the space during the period of significance can provide greater detail on what important features existed for the property, and which features are most important to be intact for consideration for eligibility.
- In most cases, integrity of setting should be considered in terms of an urban versus suburban setting and whether surrounding infill is in keeping with the historic period of development.



CASE STUDY

RESOURCE: BULLDOGS/ BULLDOG & COMPANY, 893 PEACHTREE STREET NE

Note: This case study is a starting point for National Register eligibility analysis for this and related resources. Interiors of case study properties were not accessed during the creation of this context document, however, a thorough analysis of interior integrity would be required as part of any formal assessment of this property's eligibility for the National Register of Historic Places. Furthermore, these are not the official opinions of HPD and are provided here as starting points and models for additional analysis. Formal eligibility would need to be determined via in-depth analysis at the time of nomination.

Bulldogs, also known as Bulldog & Company, is located in Midtown Atlanta and by the 1990s became one of the more prominent spaces in Atlanta for Black gay men to gather. It is unique as the oldest remaining LGBTQ+ bar still operating in its original location. Michael Clutter and Jerry Pyszka opened the bar as Bulldog & Company in 1978. The business originally had a trucker theme that was targeted toward the city's masculine Levi/

leather/western LGBTQ+ subcultures. Shortly after it opened, Bulldog & Company was recognized by *Cruise* as "one of the most unique bars in the country." As part of the theme, the bar was decorated with the logos of trucking and gas companies, as well as truck tires, wheel rims, and road maps. It also had a large truck cab attached to the exterior of the building (no longer extant), and the owners housed a living bulldog mascot named Winston. Bulldog & Company remained popular with the mostly white Levi/leather/western LGBTQ+ subculture in Atlanta through the 1980s and early 1990s. By the turn of the twenty-first century, the bar had changed its name to Bulldogs and was one of the city's most popular Black LGBTQ+ spaces.

Originally built as a commercial building of unknown use in 1956, Bulldogs is a one-story, single-retail, concrete block commercial building. It has a flat roof with a parged parapet. Save for the non-historic stone veneer and replacement stucco exterior finish, the façade has not been significantly altered. It retains what appear to be the original front entrance, awnings, and circular window. The covered rear entrance that provides access from the associated surrounding parking lot was added in 1986, according to the Fulton County tax assessor.

The property is significant at the local level under Criterion A in the area of Social History: LGBTQ+ History and Ethnic Heritage: Black under the theme of Atlanta's LGBTQ+ Social Spaces because it has been a prominent bar in Midtown Atlanta that first catered specifically to white gay men, then during the 1990s, to Black gay men. As the oldest documented remaining LGBTQ+ bar still operating in its original location, this resource is representative of LGBTQ+ social history in the City of Atlanta. Because, at the time of this study, the resource's period of significance is less than 50 years of age, it must also meet Criteria Consideration G. Bulldogs meets Criteria Consideration G because it is one of the most prominent and longest operating bars for gay men in the city, and one of the few gay bars that evolved to serve a predominantly African American clientele.

National Register Criteria: Criterion A, Criteria Consideration G

Area(s) of Significance: Social History: LGBTQ+ History and Ethnic Heritage: Black

Period of Significance: 1978-2000 (Beginning with the opening of the bar until the end of the study period as the evolution of the bar to serve a primarily African American clientele took place during the 1990s).

Integrity: Bulldogs occupies the original site of its construction and retains integrity of location. Although non-historic infill is located in the immediate area surrounding the building, the historic commercial building directly across the street remains, occupying most of the opposing block. Further, the infill is in keeping with the dense and urban commercial character of the Midtown area. Therefore, the building retains its integrity of setting. The building has not been enlarged and the historic rectangular footprint and one-story

height remains intact. With the historic entry and fenestration pattern with small openings to ensure patron privacy, the building facade retains integrity. Although the building facade has received some changes in materials on the facade with the addition of non-historic stone, it still features concrete block construction and the integrity of its original materials and workmanship are still apparent. Bulldogs has a high level of integrity of association and feeling as the property continues to operate as an LGBTQ+ bar and has the feeling of a late twentieth century commercial building.

Character Defining Features:

- Direct association with the theme Atlanta's LGBTQ+ Social Spaces as it has served as a prominent gay men's bar from its opening in 1978 until the end of the study period, 2000.
- Long-time location of Bulldog & Company/Bulldogs.
- Bulldog & Company/Bulldogs began occupying a commercial building constructed in 1956 and had other unidentified uses up until 1978.
- Bulldog & Company/Bulldogs has occupied the building during the period of significance.
- Bulldog & Company/Bulldogs retains its essential character defining features from its period of significance, including: it is a one-story, single-retail commercial building with minimal exterior fenestration.
- Bulldog & Company/Bulldogs meets Criteria Consideration G because it is one of the most prominent and longest operating bars for gay men in the city, and one of the few gay bars that evolved to serve a predominantly African American clientele.



"First Mounted Patrolman in Piedmont Park" (Source: *The Atlanta Constitution*, October 1971)

LGBTQ+ ATLANTANS AND HARASSMENT: LAWS AND POLICING

The State of Georgia first criminalized homosexuality in the late eighteenth century. In the following two centuries, the state and City of Atlanta wielded an evolving array of laws and police actions to harass, prosecute, and sometimes kill LGBTQ+ people as a means of controlling and suppressing gay lives and lifestyles. These laws and enforcement methods often took the forms of targeted police raids and mass arrests, workplace discrimination, and social stigmatization campaigns that loomed as constant threats over LGBTQ+ residents of Atlanta. They would also shape the protest methods and landmark legal challenges used by LGBTQ+ people and their allies to put an end to anti-LGBTQ+ laws and harassment.

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF ANTI-LGBTQ+ LAWS IN GEORGIA AND ATLANTA

Georgia did not have a codified sodomy law until the nineteenth century, and sodomy only became illegal when the General Assembly adopted English common law as the basis of the state's legal system in 1784. Though there were no sodomy laws in Georgia before 1784, at least two people were accused of the crime during the colonial period, but it is unclear what legal basis was used to charge them. Between 1784 and 1816, there were no known recorded charges of sodomy in Georgia (Painter 2004; Smith 2000; State of Georgia 1822:310).

The Penal Code of 1816 made sodomy a codified crime in Georgia and established the punishment as life imprisonment at hard labor, but it did not describe what constituted sodomy (State of Georgia 1822:350). In 1833, Georgia amended its penal code and created a definition for "sodomy," describing it as "the carnal knowledge and connection against the order of nature by man with man, or in the same unnatural manner with woman" (State of Georgia 1837:625).

The Georgia General Assembly added the act of attempting to commit sodomy to the penal code in 1850, with a punishment of two to four years imprisonment at hard labor (State of Georgia 1850:85). In 1894, *Hodges v State* became Georgia's first known sodomy case to be prosecuted in court. The state charged the defendant, a boy under the age of 14, with committing sodomy on another boy. The jury found the child guilty but the decision was appealed and later overturned (Painter 2004).

EVOLUTION OF GEORGIA'S SODOMY LAW

Through the first half of the twentieth century, Georgia's sodomy law remained untouched by the state legislature, but decisions in court cases began to impact its interpretation. In 1905, the Georgia Supreme Court decided in *Pavesich v. New England Life Insurance Company* that the public had a right to privacy. Yet the judiciary also allowed investigations as to whether actions committed in private could interfere with the rights of the public or others. Though the importance of privacy, in this case, was later used to undermine the state's sodomy law, it also gave law enforcement permission to investigate private spaces in the interest of upholding the rights of the public (Supreme Court of Georgia 1905).

A series of rulings issued by the Georgia Supreme Court between 1904 and 1916 expanded the definition of sodomy in the state, first increasing the acts covered under the law to include fellatio in 1904 and then further expanding it to include all activities defined as “deviant sexual acts” in 1916. The Georgia Court of Appeals reaffirmed the 1916 statute in 1917 when it ruled that cunnilingus by a male was considered sodomy under the law (Smith 2000:988–989). This broad interpretation of the sodomy law remained in place for the next twenty years. Court rulings also impacted ways in which the sodomy law could be enforced in the early twentieth century.

In 1938, the Georgia Court of Appeals reinterpreted and narrowed the extent of acts covered under the sodomy law in *Wharton v. State* with its ruling that oral or anal penetration by the penis was required for a sodomy conviction. The Georgia Supreme Court reaffirmed this interpretation of the law the following year with a reversal of a lower court’s ruling in *Thompson v. Aldredge*, a case where two women in Fulton County were previously convicted of cunnilingus (Smith 2000:989–990). Though the judges still included statements of disgust in their ruling, the verdict technically legalized lesbian sexual actions in Georgia for over 20 years. The Georgia General Assembly lessened the punishment for sodomy in 1949, reducing the sentence to between one and 10 years in prison. Seven years later, the state legislature passed a law that required psychiatric examinations prior to the parole of people convicted of sodomy (Painter 2004).

In 1968, the Georgia General Assembly amended the state’s sodomy code once again. Though the Georgia Supreme Court had reversed their 1917 decision on cunnilingus in 1963, the updated law expanded the definition of sodomy to include

cunnilingus performed by either men or women. The new code also increased the penalty for conviction from one to 10 years in prison to a new sentencing standard that ranged from one to 20 years (Painter 2004). The Georgia Court of Appeals’ ruling for *Carter v. State* in 1970, updated the interpretation of the law by removing the requirement for penetration in cases of sodomy. The court also ruled that minimal physical contact could count as sodomy under the revised code (Painter 2004; Smith 2000:991). A year before this ruling, the Georgia Court of Appeals decided in *Mitchell v. State* that in cases of sodomy, the arresting police officer’s testimony did not need to be corroborated because they were not an accomplice to the crime, which made it easier for law enforcement to harass gay people in the state using sodomy charges (Court of Appeals of Georgia 1969).

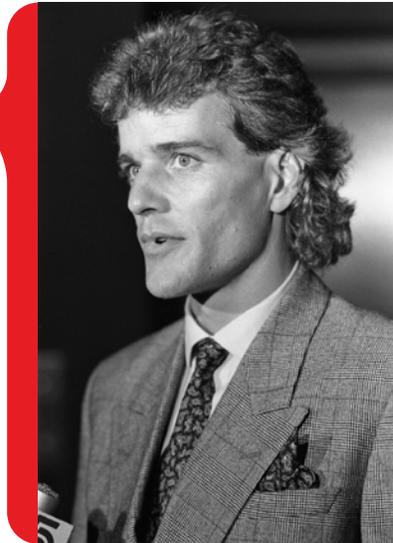
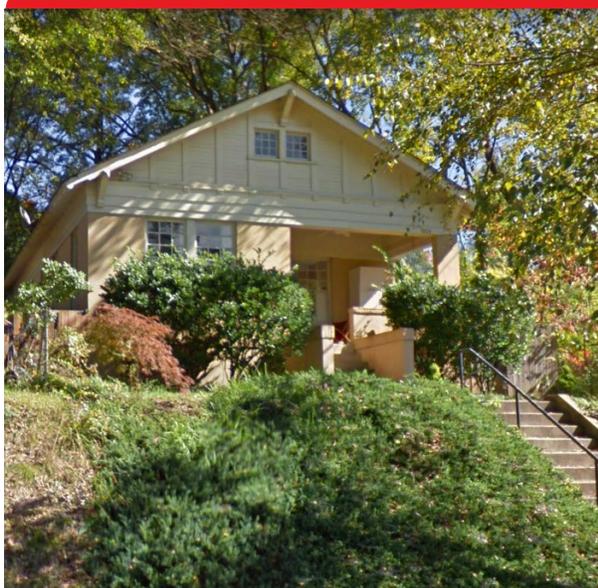
MICHAEL HARDWICK AND THE TEST CASE AGAINST GEORGIA’S SODOMY LAWS

Between the early 1970s and the mid-1980s, there were no changes to Georgia’s sodomy code. Still, in 1982, police made an arrest for sodomy in Atlanta, which led to one of the twentieth century’s most important decisions regarding sodomy laws across the United States. In the early morning hours of July 5, 1982, Michael Hardwick, a bartender at the Cove, headed home from the bar after working through the night. On his way out, he was served a beer but decided to leave and threw the bottle away in a trashcan near the front of the building. Atlanta Police Officer Keith Torick witnessed Hardwick outside the bar with the beer and stopped him as he was walking home to ticket him for drinking in public (Eskridge 2008:232; Torges 2005:17–18). On the ticket, Torick wrote the court date for the citation as Wednesday, July 13, but

Michael Hardwick, speaking to the Atlanta Business and Professional Guild, Colony Square, Atlanta, Georgia, September 7, 1986 (Source: Atlanta Journal-Constitution Photographic Archives. Special Collections and Archives, Georgia State University Library)

July 13, 1982, was on a Tuesday. Due to this discrepancy, Hardwick missed his court date, and Torick processed an immediate arrest warrant for Hardwick, skipping the typical 48-hour processing period for warrants by completing it himself. Torick attempted to deliver the warrant at Hardwick's rented Virginia-Highland home at 811 Ponce de Leon Place NE that afternoon, but Hardwick was not there. After Hardwick's roommates informed him that Torick had come with the warrant, Hardwick went to the courthouse, explained the ticket dating issue, and paid the \$50 fine for public drinking (Eskridge 2008:232; Torges 2005:18).

2014 Photograph of Michael Hardwick's Apartment, 811 Ponce de Leon Place NE (Source: Google)



Though the ticket had been paid, Torick never checked and decided to return to serve the warrant three weeks later. On the morning of August 3, 1982, Hardwick was in his bedroom with a male friend, Dwight Sawyer of Mobile, Alabama, when Torick approached the house with the arrest warrant. Though it is debated whether Torick let himself inside, because the door was ajar, or another person visiting the house invited Torick in, the officer entered the home and made his way to Hardwick's bedroom. When he opened the door, he found Hardwick and Sawyer having oral sex. Torick told Hardwick he was under arrest for not appearing in court, but the shocked and angered Hardwick explained that he had already paid the ticket (Eskridge 2008:233; Torges 2005:20–21). According to Torick, Hardwick, “rant[ed] and rave[d] about how I had no right to be in his house, how he’d have my job...,” and then Torick decided to arrest both men on charges of sodomy (Harris 1986). In his own words, Torick “would never ha[d] made the case if [Hardwick] hadn’t had an attitude problem” (Harris 1986). By the 1980s, the Fulton County Superior Court did not commonly prosecute adults for sodomy who were accused of having consensual sex. However, the Atlanta Police Department (APD) was still enforcing laws – in this case the state’s sodomy law – to target and punish the city’s gay population (Torges 2005:27–28).

The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) reached out to Hardwick to see if the organization could represent him at trial and use his case to challenge the legality of the state’s sodomy laws.

When the time came for the grand jury hearing, Fulton County District Attorney Lewis Slaton decided not to present the case to the grand jury. The reasons behind the decision to dismiss the case are unclear. Either Slaton began to suspect that Hardwick's lawyers were attempting to create a test case for the sodomy law or his office had low confidence in a successful prosecution to the questionable circumstances in which the police made the arrest. (Eskridge 2008:233–234; Torges 2005:22–28).

After Slaton's dismissal of the case, the ACLU, with Kathleen Wilde as the lead attorney, filed a declaratory judgment in the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Georgia in February 1983 that named District Attorney Lewis Slaton, Atlanta Public Safety Commissioner George Napper, and Georgia Attorney General Michael Bowers as defendants. The complaint argued that the Georgia sodomy law was unconstitutional and violated Hardwick's right to privacy, and that of an unnamed straight married couple, as provided by the Fourteenth Amendment's Due Process Clause. The complaint also asserted the law violated their right to free expression and association as guaranteed under the First Amendment.

In Wilde's brief for the case, Hardwick was described as "a practicing homosexual who regularly engages in homosexual acts and will do so in the future," which helped to highlight the laws used against gay people, while also representing the law's effects on straight people through the inclusion of the straight couple in the case (Eskridge 2008:234; Torges 2005:28–30). Georgia filed a motion to dismiss the case and Federal District Judge Robert Hall granted their motion. In his decision, Hall stated the straight couple did not have standing since they were not arrested for the crime while Hardwick's claim was invalidated

by the U.S. Supreme Court's 1976 ruling in *Doe v. Commonwealth's Attorney for the City of Richmond*, which upheld the constitutionality of Virginia's sodomy law (Torges 2005:30).

Following the federal district court's dismissal of the case, the ACLU appealed the decision to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit. In May 1985, two years after the case was appealed, the court ruled to reverse the district court's decision in Hardwick's case but not that of the straight couple. The author of the majority opinion, Circuit Judge Frank Johnson, argued that the Georgia Supreme Court's lack of explanation in their ruling for Doe, along with Hardwick's constitutional right to privacy, particularly in his home, meant they could not uphold the dismissal of the lower court (Eskridge 2008:236; Torges 2005:30–36). Though Hardwick and gay people throughout Georgia appeared to secure a victory with Johnson's ruling, it was short-lived. On May 30, 1985, Michael Bowers filed for a rehearing en banc at the Court of Appeals level. After this appeal was denied on June 13, 1985, Michael Hobbs, one of the state's lawyers, filed for a writ of certiorari, or a review of a lower court's ruling, with the United States Supreme Court on July 25, 1985 (Torges 2005:36–37).

The U.S. Supreme Court took the *Bowers v. Hardwick* case and heard oral arguments on March 31, 1986. Harvard Law Professor Laurence Tribe presented for Hardwick. Unlike in the federal district court, Hardwick's lawyers downplayed homosexuality's role in the case and highlighted the infringement of the law on individual privacy. But the representation for Georgia focused on the state's right to create laws based on morals that promoted healthy sex. The state's brief included multiple references to stereotypes of LGBTQ+ people (Eskridge 2008:238–242).

On June 30, 1986, the U.S. Supreme Court issued a 5-4 ruling in favor of reversing the U.S. Court of Appeals' decision. Writing for the majority, Justice Byron White made their ruling clear: consensual homosexual sex was not protected as a right by the U.S. Constitution, and any state could create laws against homosexual sexual acts if the majority of the electorate found them immoral (Eskridge 2008:248; Painter 2004). This ruling affirmed the constitutionality of state-level sodomy laws that made consensual sex illegal but only when applied to homosexual relationships, thus giving Georgia and the City of Atlanta the legal enforcement to target LGBTQ+ people.

SUBSEQUENT LEGAL CHALLENGES TO THE GEORGIA SODOMY LAWS

Georgia's sodomy law remained in place for twelve years following the U.S. Supreme Court's validation. In *Christensen v. State* in 1996, the Georgia Supreme Court reviewed a case where the defendant was convicted of solicitation of sodomy but argued before the Court that the state's sodomy law infringed on the privacy of consensual adults. The Court denied reconsideration of the case and stated in their ruling that the "exercise of state police power in furtherance of the moral welfare of the public" was valid, again endorsing the use of law enforcement in monitoring of the sex lives of gay people in Georgia (Supreme Court of Georgia 1986).

Two years later, the Georgia Supreme Court heard another sodomy case, *Powell v. State*, where the defendant had been previously convicted of consensual sodomy. In their ruling, the Court heavily referenced *Pavesich v. New England Life Insurance Co.* as the foundation for the right to privacy in Georgia. The Court noted in its ruling that the *Pavesich* decision did not reference sexual

activity, but stated it could not "think of any other activity that reasonable persons would rank as more private and more deserving of protection from governmental interference than unforced, private, adult sexual activity" (Smith 2000:993–995; Supreme Court of Georgia 1998). With this decision, homosexual sexual acts finally became legal in Georgia. However, the U.S. Supreme Court did not reverse its decision from *Bowers v. Hardwick*, and sodomy laws remained active in other states until the Supreme Court's 2003 decision in *Lawrence v. Texas*, which also relied on the right to privacy (Torges 2005:477–478).

EARLY CITY ORDINANCES AND ENFORCEMENT OF ANTI-LGBTQ+ LAWS IN ATLANTA

Though Georgia's sodomy law was the only code that directly targeted the sex lives of LGBTQ+ people in Atlanta, other state laws and local ordinances were created or utilized to control sexual and gender nonconformity. Some of the state's earliest codes, including laws created to maintain public order and control prostitution, were later used by local police departments, including Atlanta, to punish homosexuals for gathering in residences or bars and cruising for public sex. These include the assault, battery, and disorderly house laws from the 1816 Penal Code and the lewdness, or prostitution, law from the 1833 code (State of Georgia 1822:350, 365, 1837:646).

The oldest city ordinances in Atlanta that targeted LGBTQ+ people date to 1873, when the Atlanta Board of Aldermen (later changed to the Atlanta City Council following the 1974 Amendment to the Atlanta City Charter) adopted an indecent dress ordinance that made it illegal to appear in public in "indecent or lewd dress" or commit any "indecent or lewd act or behavior" (City of Atlanta 1873).



Additionally, the ordinance outlawed “obscene” artwork, including books, plays, and visual art such as paintings or photographs. These laws prohibited cross-dressing and permitted law enforcement to target LGBTQ+ books, magazines, newspapers, guides, and later, films. The 1873 city code also included Atlanta’s first disorderly conduct, or “public indecency,” ordinance, which police later commonly used to charged gay men during raids of both public and private spaces in the twentieth century (City of Atlanta 1873:109; Hebert 1966a).

In 1910, the Atlanta Board of Aldermen passed another city ordinance that prohibited loitering. The police department widely applied the anti-loitering ordinance, which was adopted in wake of the 1906 Atlanta Race Massacre, as a tool to enforce white supremacy and control the free movement of the city’s Black male population, many of whom were falsely convicted under the law and sentenced to physical labor on the chain gangs. After World War II, the law would become a favored tool among city politicians and police leadership as a way to shut down cruising locations and target known areas of male prostitution (City of Atlanta 1910:503; Crowe 1968:246–247; Hebert 1966b).

ANTHONY AURIEMMA’S CHALLENGE OF ATLANTA’S ANTI-CROSS-DRESSING LAW, 1913

The earliest known discussion with Atlanta police about how the city’s ordinances impacted gender non-conforming people, or any LGBTQ+ behavior, occurred in July 1913. Born in Naples, Italy, Anthony (“Antonio”) Auriemma (1893-1955) was an American actor, female impersonator, and fashion designer who later took the stage name Francis

(Opposite) Anthony Auriemma, a.k.a. Francis Renault, 1907 (Source: University of Washington Libraries, Special Collections)

Renault. Described by one Atlanta newspaper writer as person, who “in poise and general appearance...appeals as a particularly good looking young woman,” Auriemma first contested the city ordinance that made public cross-dressing illegal while visiting Atlanta for a string of performances at a downtown theater (*Atlanta Constitution* 1917:12; University of Washington Libraries 2022).

Auriemma contacted the Atlanta police to ensure he would not be arrested if he walked through the streets in his costumes to promote his upcoming theater appearances. According to an article in the *Atlanta Constitution*, the law stated that it was illegal for a woman to appear in public dressed in men’s clothing, possibly referring to the city’s ordinance against indecent or lewd attire. Though Captain Lamar Poole visited Auriemma to review his wardrobe and was unable to find anything indecent or immodest, Chief James Beavers told the *Atlanta Constitution* that he could not guarantee that Auriemma would not be arrested because “he couldn’t permit a man to do a thing that was against the law” (*Atlanta Constitution* 1913b). It is unknown if Auriemma decided to test whether he would be arrested. But the actor returned to Atlanta later that winter as part of a Christmas benefit and again several times over the following years (*Atlanta Constitution* 1921:4, 1924:4C; Chenault and Braukman 2008:15).

ATLANTA POLICE ENFORCEMENT OF THE STATE SODOMY LAWS IN THE EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY

Under Police Chief W.P. Manley, the city created the first vice unit within the Detective Department in 1897. This “secret squad” of plainclothes detectives originally focused on reducing prostitution, enforcing gambling and liquor laws,

and deterring theft (*Atlanta Constitution* 1897, 1913a). By the 1910s and 1920s, vice officers were routinely assisted in their duties by women within the department's "Women's Bureau," who were responsible for "making periodical investigations of hotels and rooming houses...rest rooms and other places frequented by questionable characters, and other work of similar nature." These female investigators also monitored the city's theaters and nickelodeons to report cases of obscene content and "to observe the patrons for evidences of misconduct" (Atlanta Police Department 1929).

ANATOMY OF A POLICE RAID

Vice detectives usually employed the same procedures and tactics when conducting police raids of people believed to be engaged in behavior deemed illegal by the city or state. One or two undercover male or female vice detectives would enter a business or loiter in public parks and along streets where the suspected illegal activity was taking place. Later the police began to actively monitor private residences and public spaces occupied by, or commonly frequented, by gay men. Once the undercover officer witnessed or suspected the offending conduct, they would give an audible or visual signal to nearby waiting officers who would enter en masse and begin arresting the those accused of breaking the law. Gay men arrested for homosexual acts would typically be bound over by the Atlanta Municipal to a Fulton County grand jury for an indictment on sodomy charges and their full names, addresses, and sometimes employer's information was later published in the local newspapers (*Atlanta Journal* 1953:4; Atlanta Police Department 1914, 1929).

Review of accessible APD annual reports provide glimpses into the vice squad's expanded

operations during the early twentieth century under Police Chief James L. Beavers and his successors to include arrests and prosecutions of the city's LGBTQ+ population. Specified sodomy cases first begin to appear in the police department's annual reports in the 1910s. The inclusion of this information was likely influenced by the growing moral panic about same-sex relationships at the local and national levels during the Progressive Era— a fear that was also reflected the Georgia Supreme Court's broadening interpretation of the act of sodomy during the same period (Cocks 2006:112–113; Smith 2000:988–989). According to the 1914 annual report, Atlanta police arrested five individuals for sodomy in the previous calendar year and bound the cases over to the Fulton County State Court for trial. The 1922 report shows law enforcement arrested six people on similar charges in 1921 but the courts convicted just one of this number (Atlanta Police Department 1914:34, 1922:16,19). The 1929 annual report listed a pair of individuals that police had arrested and charged with "attempted sodomy." One of the two arrestees was ultimately found guilty in the state court system (Atlanta Police Department 1929).

By the early 1940s, APD annual reports did not specifically classify sodomy or attempted sodomy as chargeable offenses. However, they did provide numbers of those arrested and charged for "sex offenses" that did not include rape or prostitution and commercialized vice (i.e., distribution of obscene materials). According to the report, 17 people were arrested under the general "sex offenses" classification in 1940, while 23 were charged with the same crime in 1941 (Atlanta Police Department 1941).

Among those charged by Atlanta police in 1941, was a man who was arrested and convicted of

sodomy in the public restroom of the Atlanta Municipal Auditorium at 30 Courtland Street SE (partially extant) in downtown (Fulton County Superior Court 1941). That summer, the Grand Jury of the Fulton County Superior Court heard the sodomy case described above and published the results of several investigations they completed during the early summer term. One of the issues described was a prevalence of “obscene literature,” which they argued had led to an increase in cases of “sodomy and other forms of perversion,” with a focus on protecting youth from the materials (Humphries 1941). Law enforcement’s attention toward both public gay interactions and sexual publications increased throughout the 1940s and by the latter part of the decade, an unprecedented amount of resources were being used by Atlanta police to punish and control gay people (Eskridge 1999:64).

THE LAVENDER SCARE AND ATLANTA’S POLICING OF SEXUALITY AFTER WORLD WAR II

At the onset of the Cold War in the late 1940s, persecution of homosexual men and women by the government increased as the United States became concerned about threats to internal security. This period was known as the Lavender Scare, and similar to the overlapping and related second Red Scare, the suspicion of gay men and women within the government during this time led to their firing from governmental positions. Though perceptions of immorality, perversion, and Communist connections likely played a major role in this purge, the typical argument for removing gay people from governmental positions was founded on the belief that because they kept their sexualities secret, gay people

were more likely to be blackmailed by foreign governments, which posed a risk to national security (Johnson 2009:1–40). One of the most notorious Lavender Scare campaigns, the Florida Legislative Investigation Committee, more commonly known as the Johns Committee after chairmen Charley Johns, resulted in the firing and forced removal of over 200 suspected LGBTQ+ students and teachers from the state’s public colleges and universities between 1956 and 1965 (Schnur 1997). Since Atlanta was both the state’s largest city and the seat of government for both the county and the state, it was home to over 100 governmental agencies, employing over 20,000 people. With so many people employed by the government, similar but lesser-known Lavender Scare period governmental actions and reactionary policies also negatively affected the lives of many LGBTQ+ Atlantans.

One known example is Jack W. Strouss, Jr. (1923–1916), an Atlanta native and World War II veteran who worked for the U.S. Civil Service Commission in downtown Atlanta (SCI Shared Resources, LLC 2022). One day in early 1950s, two federal agents pulled Mr. Strouss aside at work and ushered him into a dark room. There, they questioned him about frequenting The Lounge, a bar formerly located at 79 Forsyth Street NW (no longer extant - now Margaret Mitchell Square) that was known at the time to also be popular with gay men in the city. The agents finally asked Strouss about his sexual orientation to which he told them he was homosexual, leading to his immediate firing. When one of Strouss’ gay male friends, who worked at the downtown post office, heard the news of Strouss’ firing, he removed himself from their friend group and stopped communicating with Strouss for many years out of fear that he also may lose his job (Chenault 2008:86–91; Ingram 2013).

THE BLACK EASTER RAID

As governmental agencies began monitoring their employees to uncover homosexual people within their ranks, APD also increased their supervision of LGBTQ+ spaces in the city. Even before the Lavender Scare, city and county police monitored gathering places and cruising locations utilized by gay men in the city, and many of their operations were initiated or supported by the Grand Jury of the Fulton County Superior Court. According

Cox-Carlton Hotel, 1950 (Source: Tracy O'Neal Photographic Collection. Special Collections and Archives, Georgia State University Library)



to Bishop George A. Hyde, a major police raid of a private party of white gay men occurred in the Cox-Carlton Hotel (now Hotel Indigo Atlanta Midtown) at 683 Peachtree Street NE over Easter weekend in 1947 or 1948. Known as “Black Easter” among some in the city’s gay community, the raid cost the jobs and homes of many of those arrested for disorderly conduct after the police posted their names, addresses, and places of employment in the local Sunday newspapers. In response, about 12 congregants with the Eucharistic Catholic Church, including George Hyde, held a silent protest a few days later outside Mayor William Hartsfield’s house in Grant Park – likely making it the first LGBTQ+ civil rights demonstration in the city’s history (Hyde 1975:6).

THE ATLANTA PUBLIC LIBRARY PERVERSION CASE, 1953

By the 1950s, police in Atlanta began to develop official operational procedures to catch gay people breaking state laws and municipal ordinances with officers assigned to the vice squad that operated within the Detective Division and served as the main arm of law enforcement that sought to control the city’s gay residents (*Atlanta Constitution* 1943). The city’s first, widely-publicized police operation against LGBTQ+ people is known as the Atlanta Public Library Perversion Case, a name coined by the *Atlanta Constitution* during the newspaper’s extensive coverage. In 1953, officials from the Atlanta Public Library (Carnegie Library building at 126 Carnegie Way NW; no longer extant) requested that the Atlanta police monitor their men’s restroom to help eliminate the use of it as a cruising location by gay men. Using a two-way mirror, the police arrested and charged 20 men for sodomy across eight days in early September.

From the period of arrests until the scheduled court dates in December, the *Atlanta Constitution* and *Atlanta Journal* published information about the case, which included the names and addresses of the 20 charged individuals. The Fulton County Superior Court used its power to maximize the punishment and humiliation of the men by imposing fines and two to three-year prison sentences on them (all of which were probated or suspended), banning them from the city’s libraries, and contacting their families and religious leaders. The majority of the men were forced to leave the city, and all but one lost their jobs (Chenault 2008:83–85; Howard 1997:109–114). Other isolated cases of police monitoring of public bathrooms are known to have occurred during the decade, including a case where a man was arrested for sodomy for having consensual sex in the bathroom of the former Greyhound Bus Station (no longer extant) at 81 Cain Street NW (Now Andrew Young International Boulevard) in downtown Atlanta (Painter 2004).

CITY AND COUNTY HARASSMENT OF THE LGBTQ+ COMMUNITY IN THE LATE 1950s

In the months after the Atlanta Public Library arrests, a period of moral panic over homosexuality in Atlanta took hold among the city’s church leaders, media, and politicians. The Atlanta Board of Aldermen responded to the growing public outcry by granting broadened enforcement powers to the police to curtail LGBTQ+ sexual and social behavior (Howard 1997:114–115). A review of APD annual reports from 1954 through 1956, illustrates this increased level of law enforcement operations against LGBTQ+ residents during the mid-1950s, with the largest spike in arrests occurring in 1955 (see Table 1).

Table 1. Totals of People Arrested, Charged, and Dismissed For Sex Offenses, Not Including Rape and Prostitution, 1954-1956

Year	Total Arrests	Bound Over to Fulton County Courts	Charges Dismissed
1954	16	8	1
1955	54	39	1
1956	22	0	No Data

(Atlanta Police Department 1954:16, 1955:15, 19, 1956:19)

The Atlanta and Fulton County governments also extended their social control into non-sexual parts of LGBTQ+ life with the active targeting of some private businesses and events. Early in the decade, police raided a party attended by gay men at a private residence, arresting the men on charges of disorderly conduct (Talley 2006:55). In 1955, the Grand Jury of the Fulton County Superior Court asked APD to more closely monitor those “certain night spots where known sex perverts gather,” and to regularly check their alcohol licenses (*Atlanta Constitution* 1955). By 1956, the police had revoked the beer and wine license of the Glen Iris Supper Club at 614 Glen Iris Drive NE (no longer extant) and Louise “Lou” Allen, the owner of the Tick Tock Grill at 1935 Peachtree Road NE, was forced to surrender the license for her business. Both establishments had become popular with white lesbians in Atlanta during the mid-1950s and shuttered shortly after the city revoked their alcohol licenses (Fulton, Jr. 2020a, 2020b; *ONE: The Homosexual Magazine* 1965). Collectively, these events reflected the changing methods used by politicians and the police in Atlanta to target the city’s gay community. In the following decades, the Atlanta police would continue to expand the types of charges used to limit the gathering and interactions of gay people in the city beyond the sex-based accusation of sodomy.

INCREASED TARGETING OF LGBTQ+ ATLANTANS IN THE 1960S

As homosexual identities began to further develop within the United States during the 1960s, city and state governments across the country began to target gay people through changes in legislation that actively increased police harassment. In Atlanta, the related developments of greater suburbanization in the surrounding metropolitan area and increasing white flight of the city's residents as response to desegregation, began to alter the demographics of many intown neighborhoods. Young people involved in the growing countercultural movement, including gay people, began moving into the former, middle-class neighborhoods, located just north of downtown and near Piedmont Park (now known as Midtown), which offered abundant, affordable housing due to a sustained period of white outmigration and outmigration after World War II (Moffson and Ray 1998:15; Stone 1989:83). With a growing concentration of lesbian and gay residents living in the Midtown area and stricter sentencing for sodomy convictions following the Georgia General Assembly's update of the state statute in 1968, APD's vice squad became more active in its enforcement of ant-LGBTQ+ local and state laws.

THE HALLOWEEN AND YEA MAN WINE HOUSE RAIDS, 1966-1967

The earliest known major raid in the decade occurred on October 24, 1966. Referred to as the Halloween Raid, it involved the arrest of nearly 100 people. The raid is only referenced from *Atlanta Constitution* reports published two months after it occurred. The reports did not specify the names of the two bars involved in the

Vice Detectives Jail 8 in Raid On Nightclub

Vice squad detectives jailed eight persons in a weekend raid on a Negro club they said was responsible for recurring complaints as a hangout for female impersonators and homosexuals.

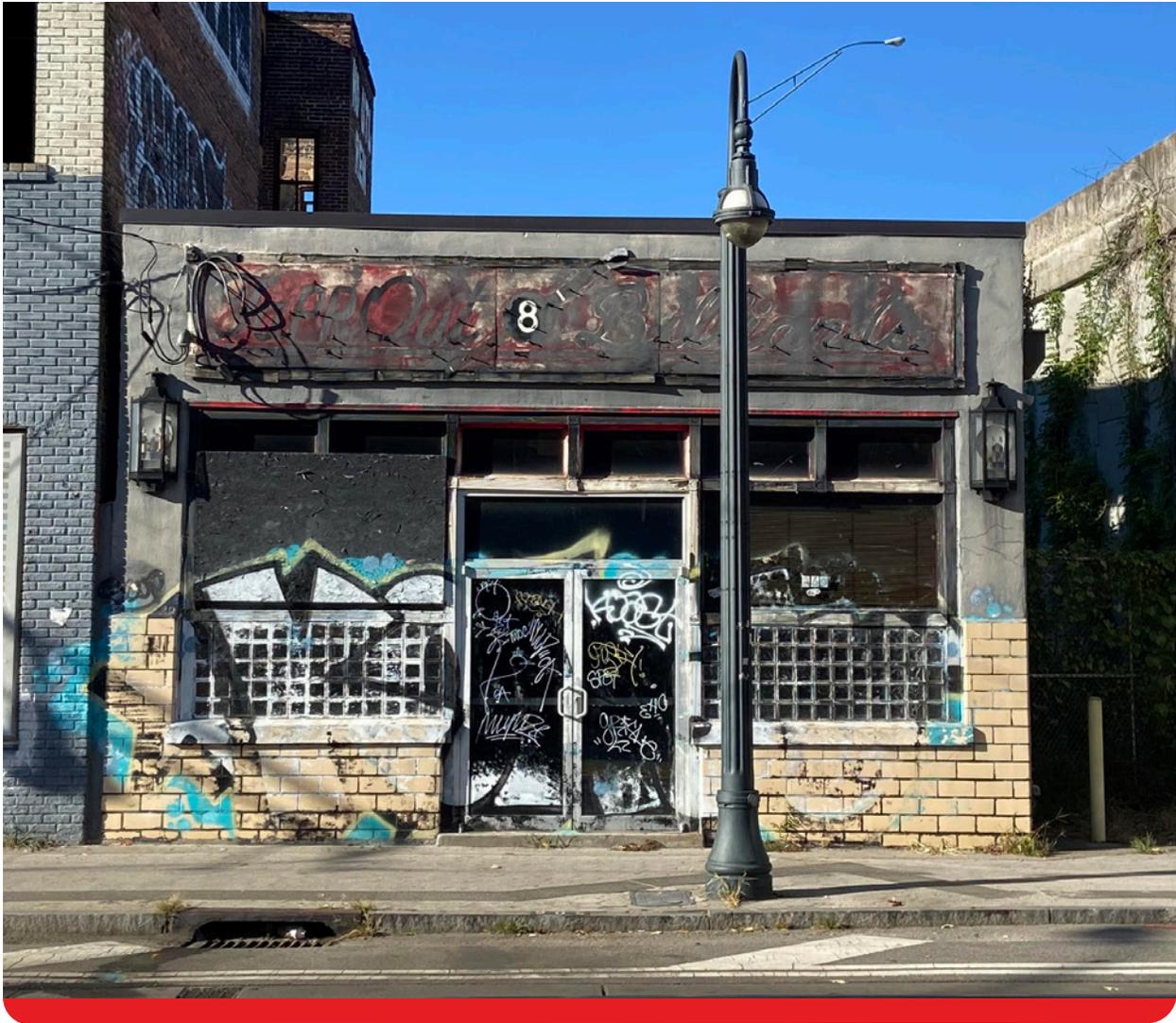
Detectives G. A. Logan and A. A. Harris said that when they entered the Yea Man Wine House at 262 Auburn Ave. NE, "we found female impersonators, drunks and a lot of people loafing and not buying anything." "We also observed people dancing," he said.

The detectives said their raid, shortly before midnight Saturday, landed three women and five men in jail under charges including drunkenness, impersonating a female and loafing. Ages of those jailed ranged between 22 and 53.

Newspaper Report of the May 6, 1967 Police Raid on the Yea Man Wine House (Source: *Atlanta Constitution*, May 8, 1967)

operation. Prior to the executed raid, APD had been planning to raid "one of Atlanta's 'gayest' bars," but after learning about a large after-hours Halloween party being planned by members of one of Atlanta's LGBTQ+ communities at a typically straight bar on Peachtree Street, the police altered their plan (Hebert 1966a).

The event began at 2:00 A.M. and required an invitation to enter, which members of the vice squad were able to secure. Approximately three



262 Auburn Avenue NE, Former Location of the Yea Man Wine House (Source: New South Associates, 2022)

police officers were able to enter the bar, and once their presence was recognized, the music, dancing, and talking stopped. Five police wagons were positioned out front, and the officers escorted the attendees out in groups of five, charging them all with disorderly conduct (Hebert 1966a). The 97 people arrested were then taken to the police station and charged a \$15 fine, while the owner of the bar was charged with operating a disorderly house (Hebert 1966b). One of the attendees reported to the *Atlanta Constitution* that “a vice squad officer told [him] it was a mass raid to scare

everybody,” highlighting the police’s use of these tactics to frighten LGBTQ+ people and maintain sexual norms within the city (Hebert 1966a).

The police raid of the Yea Man Wine House, a Black-owned nightclub located in the small, one-story commercial building at 262 Auburn Avenue NE, occurred the following spring. Acting on complaints the business operated “as a hangout for female impersonators and homosexuals,” two white vice detectives conducted the raid just before midnight on Saturday, May 6, 1967. Upon entering the club, the police officers stated they found “female impersonators, drunks and

a lot of people loafing and not buying anything,” according to their account of the event published two days later in the *Atlanta Constitution*. The police arrested three women and five men during the raid between the ages of 22 and 53. All eight people were jailed and charged with drunkenness, impersonation of a female, and loitering (*Atlanta Constitution* 1967).

THE ATLANTA VICE SQUAD'S ANTI-CRUISE AND SOLICITATION OPERATIONS

In the 1960s, the Atlanta police also continued to target known gay hangouts in Atlanta, increasing their raids of bars and private parties. Law enforcement also began to use a controversial tactic in their crackdown on cruising – inviting the solicitation of sex. Rather than just observing restrooms and park trails, police officers began to “make themselves ... available” to men looking for sex in public places (Hebert 1966b). Many members of Atlanta’s LGBTQ+ communities viewed this method as entrapment or the practice of law enforcement influencing a person to commit a crime.

The epicenter of the vice squad’s efforts to monitor Atlanta’s gay life was Piedmont Park, where police officers supervised activities in the bathhouse and walked the tree trails, a popular cruising location among gay men in the late 1960s and 1970s in the current area north of the Park Drive bridge, south of Westminster Drive, and along the Clear Creek culvert and railroad line. Patrol activities of these areas were often done out of uniform (*Atlanta Constitution* 1961). An article in the July 1974 edition of the *Atlanta Barb* later described the typical operational method used by the vice squad to arrest gay men in the city’s businesses and parks,

“two older vice division officers...openly cruise a third younger vice division officer. After the suspected gay joins the scene (or some unsuspecting straight flees to report homosexual activity) the two older officers leave to allow the third to solicit the suspected gay person. This solicitation may include following the suspected gay to other parts of the store”

If the targeted suspect touched police officers, they were arrested and charged with a variety of offenses that ranged from lewd conduct, to solicitation for the purpose of committing sodomy or disorderly conduct and assault and battery (*Atlanta Barb* 1974:1). Municipal courts prosecuted these cases and fined the men sometimes as much as \$250. Police also began monitoring cruising that was done using vehicles, which typically involved driving a car slowly down streets or along the edges of the park looking for sex. The officers set up control points, and if someone passed the point more than once, they pulled them over and questioned them (Hebert 1966b).

Men standing along the street as the vehicular cruisers passed were targeted by the police as well. Unlike those in the cars, they were able to be charged with a crime. The segment of Peachtree Street immediately south of Fox Theater, and most of the length of Cypress Street, were both known to the police as areas of homosexual prostitution and cruising, and the police utilized loitering charges to remove the men (*Atlanta Constitution* 1969; Hebert 1966b). Using a similar tactic to the vehicular cruising control points, the police would circle city blocks to see if people remained in the same location along the sidewalk for too long. If a person were caught in the same place twice, the

police would pull up and quickly photograph them before arresting them for loitering. The police used these methods to make the gay people of Atlanta nervous, which was part of their larger effort to limit the growth of LGBTQ+ communities and “keep [homosexuals] away from the public” (Hebert 1966b).

Information provided in the 1965, 1967, and 1969 APD annual reports show how many of the city’s LGBTQ+ residents were arrested by law enforcement during the late 1960s (Table 2).

Table 2. Totals of Cases Booked for Sex Offenses, Except Rape and Prostitution, 1965, 1967, and 1969

Year	Cases Booked			
	White Males	White Females	Black Males	Black Females
1965	151	11	230	29
1967	273	15	206	22
1969	203	23	145	16

(Atlanta Police Department 1965:43, 1967:43, 1969:43)

“STONEWALL OF THE SOUTH:” THE LONESOME COWBOYS RAID, AUGUST 5, 1969

The most infamous police raid in Atlanta occurred on August 5, 1969. Popularly known as the *Lonesome Cowboys* raid, the event is recognized as a turning point in LGBTQ+ history in the city and for igniting the LGBTQ+ rights movement in Atlanta, Georgia, and much of the Southeast (Waters 2019). Beginning in early August, the Ansley Mall Mini-Cinema began nightly screenings of *Lonesome Cowboys*, Andy Warhol’s homoerotic satire of Hollywood Westerns. The cinema was located within Ansley Mall at 1544 Piedmont Avenue NE, in the Ansley Park neighborhood of Atlanta. While Ansley Park was developing into an enclave of LGBTQ+ life at the time, many of the

residents in the primarily middle-to-upper class white neighborhood maintained strong personal and professional ties to the city’s political power structure (Romaine 1969:3).

About 15 minutes into the film, ten police officers entered the building. Three officers blocked the exits, while a few others made their way into the theater and ordered the approximately 70 patrons to put down their concessions, get out of their seats, and get into a line (Waters 2019). The officers demanded identification of the moviegoers, asked questions, and photographed each person so they could compare the images against photographs of “known homosexuals” (Hurst 1969b). According to Abbie Drue, a lesbian woman who was among those in the theater that night,

“It was just absolutely insulting in a lot of ways. I was asked where my husband was. I was lined up against the wall by myself. They would look you in the eye, and you had to show them your license” (Waters 2019).

The theater’s projectionist and manager, Joe Russ, was arrested and charged with exhibiting obscene pictures. *The Lonesome Cowboys* raid was the first obscenity raid in Atlanta since 1964 and one that Unitarian minister Rev. Edgar T. Van Buren, who was among those interrogated in the audience, likened to police-state repression “reminiscent of Nazi Germany” in his federal lawsuit against Fulton County (York 1969:14A; Hurst 1969b:1). Following the raid, Fulton County Solicitor General Hinson McAuliffe told the press that he was planning more theater raids and bringing charges against bookstores selling materials the police deemed obscene (Hurst 1969a; Waters 2019).

Though there had been plenty of raids of LGBTQ+ spaces prior to this one, the *Lonesome Cowboys*

July 28, 1969-1

"WARHOL'S LONESOME COWBOYS REALLY DIG IN THE SPURS"

STAGECOACH... SHANE... HIGH NOON... THE GOOD, THE BAD AND THE UGLY

... Now comes LONESOME COWBOYS. In the great tradition of the American Western, filmed entirely on location in Arizona with an all-star cast, inspired by the immortal legend of Romeo and Juliet, only the camera of Andy Warhol could bring to the screen the true story of what it was like to live the life of a cowboy in the Old West... a story of men among men and the woman who tried to interfere.

ANDY WARHOL'S LONESOME COWBOYS

IN EASTMAN COLOR A SHERPIX RELEASE

Features:

2:00-4:00-6:00

8:00-10:00

Late Show

Fri & Sat-12:00

ANSLEY MALL

mini cinema

ANSLEY MALL SHOPPING CENTER
Piedmont Rd. and Monroe Dr.

873-2274

Viva! Eric Emerson Tom Hampertz Taylor Mead (as the Nurse)

H
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Joe Dallesandro

Louis Waldon

Francis Francine

Julian Burroughs

X PERSONS UNDER 18 NOT ADMITTED

Advertisement for the Showing of Andy Warhol's *Lonesome Cowboys* at the Ansley Mall Mini-Cinema from the *Great Speckled Bird* July 28, 1969 (Source: Atlanta Cooperative News Project, Georgia State University Library)

raid was different. It created a new sense of anger in Atlanta's LGBTQ+ communities because the police had moved beyond targeting bars or parties and had violated their privacy by forcing them to be individually photographed (Waters 2019). Over the following year, some of the city's lesbian and gay residents began to organize politically, which led to the creation of the Georgia Gay Liberation Front (GGLF) in February 1971 (see Theme: Political Activism in Atlanta's LGBTQ+ Communities).

LGBTQ+ ATLANTANS PUSHING BACK ON POLICE OPPRESSION IN THE 1970S

During the early 1970s, members of the GGLF and other activists, including gay-affirming church leaders, began pushing for fairness in the treatment of the city's residents who were homosexual. As the activists grew more organized, Atlanta-based countercultural publications began to express their viewpoints, including the *Great Speckled Bird* and later, the *Atlanta Barb*.

During the waning days of his administration, Mayor Sam Massell appointed Bill Smith to serve on the Community Relations Commission (CRC) in the winter of 1973. Composed of various neighborhood leaders, the CRC was a municipal committee organized in 1966 under the administration of Mayor Ivan Allen to provide a better line of communication between the city government and low-income or marginalized communities and residents (Stone 1989:71).

Smith replaced Charlie St. John on the CRC. Often referred to as "the first gay anything" in Atlanta, St. John was a GGLF founding member, a co-organizer of the first Atlanta Pride march, and the first open gay man to sit on any city agency after Mayor Massell appointed him to serve on the CRC in 1972. Charlie St. John was fired from his job as a copy editor with the *Atlanta Journal* in 1973 for distributing Gay Pride Week flyers in employee mailboxes. (Gabriner 1973:8). He was later evicted from his apartment after the Georgia Bureau of

Apartment of Charlie St. John, 1170 Virginia Avenue NE (Source: Google 2023)



Investigation raided his residence at 1170 Virginia Avenue NE in 1973 and arrested him and his lesbian roommate under the suspicion of drug possession. Despite the fact that no drugs were ever found, and no charges were brought against the pair, the Massell administration eventually removed St. John from his position on the CRC. Shortly before his death of HIV/AIDS in 1992, Charlie St. John was honored for his contributions to the city as the first Pride Grand Marshal (Solomon 2021).

Like Charlie St. John, Bill Smith had emerged as one of the key leaders of the GGLF and was an early organizer of Atlanta's first Gay Pride March in 1971 before later becoming the second editor of the *Atlanta Barb* in 1974. In his work on the CRC and through his editorial voice in the *Atlanta Barb*, Smith pressed city leaders to eliminate police harassment in the gay community during the early 1970s. In 1973, Atlanta police increased the number of personnel assigned to the Vice Control Division by 50 percent, primarily to combat the rise in gambling and narcotics related offenses associated by an incursion of organized crime in the city. By this time, the three supervisors and 13 investigators constituted the general vice unit, which operated as "an investigative and supportive" group within the main Vice Control Division. The primary responsibility of general vice unit officers was to "detect and suppress prostitution and pimping, homosexuality and sodomy, and pornography and obscene materials" (Atlanta Police Department 1973:13, 1974:26).

A common flashpoint for the city's LGBTQ+ community at the time was the police department's ongoing entrapment operations at Piedmont Park, which were later expanded into Winn Park, located in the nearby Ansley Park neighborhood. In addition to the vice squad's

(renamed in the Vice Control Division in the early 1970s) solicitation actions to discourage gay cruising, in October 1971 APD reinstated Horse Mounted Patrols in Piedmont Park - nearly 40 years after mounted patrols had been discontinued in the city (Atlanta Police Department 1971:28). Working through the CRC, Bill Smith convinced Police Chief John Inman to begin an investigation into the treatment of gay people by the police. According to Smith however, the report produced by Major R.E. Nickerson of the Vice Control Division did not appropriately address the complaints nor did it provide any solutions (*Atlanta Barb* 1974).

Through the 1970s, leaders of Atlanta's LGBTQ+ communities continued to meet with city officials via the CRC, including Mayor Maynard Jackson, Public Safety Commissioner A. Reginald Eaves, and Police Inspectional Service Division Director Eldrin Bell. Though the discussions occasionally seemed productive, vice control's entrapment operations continued throughout the city's gay enclaves (*The Barb* 1974a, 1974b). Conversations between APD and the city's LGBTQ+ communities carried on through the late 1970s, but leadership within the Vice Control Division maintained a stance that "if [an officer] give[s] you the opportunity to commit a crime, [they] haven't entrapped you. The crime is already in your mind... [they] didn't put it there" (*The Barb* 1977).

ONGOING OBSCENITY RAIDS OF LGBTQ+ BOOKS AND FILM

Fulton County Solicitor General Hinson McAuliffe, who organized the *Lonesome Cowboys* raid in 1969, delivered on his promise to target more "obscene" material in Atlanta, and by the mid-1970s, he had successfully written and then lobbied for stricter obscenity legislation in the state level (Ayres, Jr. 1977). Soon after the law

was passed in July 1974, McAuliffe quickly began ordering raids on adult theaters and bookstores in the city (Jahn and Taylor 1975). Though his efforts did not solely target homosexual businesses, they did reduce the already limited number of places LGBTQ+ people could meet others and gain access to community knowledge, especially through the community publications that were sold in these places, which contained information about local events and were often deemed obscene by the Atlanta police.

In November 1977, the manager of After Dark Bookshops and Film Galleries at 1067 Peachtree Street NE (no longer extant) was arrested by an investigator working for McAuliffe's office for distributing obscene materials (*Atlanta Constitution* 1977). A year later, in December 1978, the Fulton County Solicitor General's office raided 21 adult bookstores and arrested 18 more people, including employees, managers, and owners of the businesses, on similar charges. After Dark was included in the second raid, as well as another gay bookstore, Down Under, which was located at 45 8th Street NE (no longer extant). The raids rarely resulted in the closure of bookstores because the law did not allow the police to easily target the businesses themselves, and the store's owners bailed their employees out and handled the charges (Rodrigue 1978:21). Over time, McAuliffe was successful at eroding the adult businesses in Atlanta, and by the late 1970s, After Dark was forced by a court to close its theater, though the bookstore remained open (After Dark Management 1980). In January 1981, with an increasing number of charges against employees, the majority of the adult bookstores in Atlanta agreed in court to close down if charges were dropped, but by this time, many of the most well-known gay adult bookstores had already shuttered (*Associated Press* 1981).

ESTABLISHING COMMUNICATION BETWEEN THE LGBTQ+ COMMUNITY AND THE POLICE, 1980s AND 1990s

In 1980, a number of LGBTQ+ organizations in the city, including the First Tuesday Association, the Atlanta Gay Center, the Atlanta Lesbian Feminist Alliance, and the Gay Atlanta Minority Association, formed a coalition with the goal of improving the relationship between APD and the LGBTQ+ community. The coalition's leaders met with Public Safety Commissioner Lee Brown and Atlanta Police Chief George Napper to discuss a sensitivity training program for officers, the closing of adult bookstores, and incidents of police harassment (Marini 2018:210, 215, 229–230). Though police raids of lesbian and gay bars had not occurred for several years, Mrs. P's at 551 Ponce de Leon Avenue NE was raided on September 24, 1980. The coalition pointed to this incident, along with continuing cases of police entrapment and other types of harassment of the city's LGBTQ+ residents as examples where open communication with law enforcement could create solutions to these issues (Marini 2018:216–217).

Responding to pressure from LGBTQ+ leaders, in the summer of 1980 the Atlanta City Council removed language from the city loitering ordinance that had long been used by police to indiscriminately harass gay residents (Chenault 2012). The creation of the Lesbian/Gay Rights Chapter of the Georgia American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) in early 1981 established a dedicated division with the local branch of the advocacy organization that was better equipped to advocate and respond to LGBTQ+ legal cases with the police. That same year, the Lesbian/Gay Rights Chapter of the ACLU, along with other groups involved with the earlier police outreach coalition, formed an advisory committee known as the



Exterior of Mrs. P's at 551 Ponce de Leon Avenue NE, the day after it was raided by Atlanta police, September 25, 1980 (Source: *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* Photographic Archives. Special Collections and Archives, Georgia State University Library)

Police Relations Coordinating Council (PRCC) to create a formal avenues for dialogue between the LGBTQ+ communities and law enforcement (Marini 2018:227–230, 249–252). The PRCC's work with the police department was instrumental in creating a sensitivity training program for officers working with LGBTQ+ people. However, communication between the two groups began to breakdown after Public Safety Commissioner Brown left the police department in the spring of 1982 (Marini 2018:255–256, 261).

Harassment and raids of LGBTQ+ people and places increased again under Brown's successor, Morris Redding, who Mayor Andrew Young appointed as Public Safety Commissioner in March 1982 (Cooper 1982:1). A few months later in July,

Atlanta police raided Club Exile, a private gay club on the third floor of the Peachtree Manor Hotel at 846 Peachtree Street NE, which resulted in two people being arrested and charged for sodomy. With the PRCC largely inactive for several years under the Young Administration in the mid-1980s, APD renewed their raids of gay establishments in the city (Marini 2018:265–266).

Following a raid by undercover vice officers of Bulldogs at 893 Peachtree Street NE, LGBTQ+ leaders sought to organize another police advisory committee as a response to the increased levels of law enforcement activity. In addition to existing concerns about law enforcement arrests, the reconstituted advisory committee also sought to reinstate sensitivity training for mid-level management within the department, have the city publicly provide statistics for those arrested for solicitation for sodomy, end existing policies that allowed the police to notify employers by phone

when an employee was arrested for sodomy, and remove sections that labeled individuals as “gay” on court summons (Lesbian and Gay Police Advisory Committee 1984).

The second iteration of the advisory board proved less effective due to internal divisions within the group that hampered the organization’s goals. It was also overshadowed by the Atlanta Citizen Review Board (ACRB), a 27-member ad-hoc committee established by Mayor Andrew Young in 1984 to review and make recommendations on resident complaints about the Atlanta Police and Corrections Departments. As the political developments unfolded, APD continued to target adult bookstores and bathhouses, including the Locker Room at 2325 Cheshire Bridge Road NE and Club Bath Atlanta at 76 4th Street NW (Marini 2018:338, 367–368, 426–430; Parker 1984:1B). Meanwhile the city’s LGBTQ+ residents experienced growing hostility and violence that was fueled by homophobia and a fear of HIV/AIDS among the public. The growing number of anti-LGBTQ hate crimes surged in 1985 and 1986 with the killing of four gay men in Midtown. Atlanta Gay Center co-founder, Frank Scheuren, estimated that between 12 and 15 LGBTQ people were murdered in metropolitan Atlanta during the late 1980s, while countless other assaults went unreported due to distrust of the police among LGBTQ+ communities (Copeland 1986:13A, 17A).

In March 1986, the Atlanta City Council adopted an amendment to the city charter that prohibited discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation. Championed by Civil Rights leader and then City Councilman, John Lewis, the law made Atlanta the second city in the South to pass gay rights legislation and the twelfth city to do so in the nation. A few months later, Public Safety Commissioner George Napper announced a policy to end discrimination

against openly lesbian and gay police officers within the department (Fleischmann and Hardman 2004:422; Hagin 1986:28).

The ACRB was discontinued under Maynard Jackson following his election to a third term as mayor in 1990. While Jackson and his Police Chief Eldrin Bell voiced support for the police department’s non-discriminatory hiring policy, concerns within the LGBTQ+ community about law enforcement persisted throughout Jackson’s third administration (Morris 1991:D3; Wildmoon 1992a:1). The Atlanta City Council’s creation of a Lesbian/Gay Task Force within the Public Safety Committee in 1992 also failed to quell complaints of many longtime LGBTQ+ leaders, who criticized the role of the new body and those who were appointed to serve on it (Wildmoon 1992b:1, 4). The July 1993 arrest of six Queer Nation activists for jaywalking outside the Pear Garden at 111 Luckie Street NW, Mayor Jackson’s initial veto of the city’s domestic partnership benefits registry, and APD’s continued failure to hire openly gay officers, further contributed to the ongoing skepticism among LGBTQ+ residents (Scruggs 1992:8; Shumate 1993:8; Wildmoon 1992c:3).

The often-heated discord between Atlanta’s LGBTQ+ community, city hall, and law enforcement lessened after former City Councilman Bill Campbell’s election as mayor in 1994, which was due in large part from support of the city’s LGBTQ+ voters. Throughout much of the Campbell administration during the 1990s, targeted harassment of Atlanta’s LGBTQ+ residents and businesses by APD generally decreased as much of the focus turned to controlling violent crime and the city’s preparations to host the Olympic games. The 1997 election of Cathy Woolard, the former head of the Lesbian/Gay Rights Chapter of the ACLU and the PRCC, to the Atlanta City

Council and Mayor Shirley Franklin's creation of an LGBTQ+ liaison post within APD in 2002 represented additional steps toward establishing better relations between the city government and the LGBTQ+ community at the start of the twenty-first century (Crary 2006:A8).

CONCLUSION

That period of growing trust between APD and LGBTQ+ residents was shattered with the raid of the Atlanta Eagle bar at 306 Ponce de Leon Avenue NE by 15 undercover officers and members of the police department's Red Dog drug investigation unit on September 10, 2009. The department's

LGBTQ+ liaison officer was not notified of the impending raid, which was conducted without a warrant and resulted in the arrest of eight bar employees (including the co-owner) and 62 bar patrons being frisked and forced to lie on the floor for hours, with some individuals reporting they were subjected to homophobic slurs by the arresting officers (Rankin 2009:B1, B6). The repercussions and political fallout of the Eagle Raid emerged as key issues in the 2010 mayoral and city council elections and showed the often fraught, but improving relationship between the Atlanta police and LGBTQ+ residents required renewed attention and ongoing dialogue (Stirgis 2009:B1, B4).

NRHP ELIGIBILITY STANDARDS

THEME: LGBTQ+ ATLANTANS AND HARASSMENT: LAWS AND POLICING

Associated Property Functions/Uses: The table below is intended to provide guidance on the types of properties that are expected to be associated with the theme LGBTQ+ Atlantans and Harassment: Laws and Policing. This list is not to be considered comprehensive, as it was developed in tandem with the research conducted for the development of the theme’s history. This list does not preclude other properties with differing functions and uses that could have associations with the theme, pending future research.

Property Description: Associated property types may include civic buildings, commercial

buildings, residential buildings, sites (such as parks and plazas), and districts, if a grouping of associated resources can be defined as significant under this theme. These will likely be places where documented and significant harassment of LGBTQ+ people took place with such events spurring a legal challenge or a response of social and political activism in Atlanta. Bars, theaters, public bathrooms, and other places where LGBTQ+ people were targeted by police may fall under this theme, as well as government buildings and plazas, where laws restricting or freeing LGBTQ+ individuals were made or protested.

Property Significance: Properties that have significance for their association with LGBTQ+ Atlantans and Harassment should have direct associations with an event or events that were historically significant for police enforcement or harassment and the establishment or removal of state laws and local ordinances designed to

Property Function or Use	Common Subcategories
Building: Residential	Apartment Duplex Residential Hotel Single-family Residence
Building: Commercial	Bar Retail Theater
Building: Civic	City Hall County, State, and Federal Buildings Courthouse Library
District	Commercial Landscape Residential
Sites/Landscapes	Parade Route Park Plaza

control and limit LGBTQ+ people's behavior. Some buildings may be associated with an important person who is considered a significant figure in the evolution of Atlanta LGBTQ+ civil rights. This would be a property that best represents that person's productive life and has an identified and documented association with that person. If a building is no longer extant, or the organization moved frequently, consideration for the individual's residence as NRHP-eligible can be made. Additionally, there may be a node of related buildings or sites that could be considered a district under this theme.

Geographic Locations: The city limits of Atlanta, particularly Midtown and Downtown.

Areas of Significance:

- Ethnic Heritage: Black
- Ethnic Heritage: Hispanic
- Politics/Government
- Social History: Civil Rights
- Social History: LGBTQ+ History
- Social History: Women's History

Levels of Significance: Most properties demonstrating a direct association with the theme would likely be eligible at the local (city) level of significance unless a property has significance with events or individual(s) that made a noted impact to LGBTQ+ history that resonated at the state, or even national levels. Local and state laws impacting LGBTQ+ people, as well as those judicated in Federal court, would be factors in considering the appropriate level of significance.

Criteria: NRHP Criteria A or B, Criteria Consideration G

Period of Significance: 1947-2000

Period of Significance Justification: The period of significance is recommended as beginning in 1947, with the account of the "Black Easter" raid at the still extant Cox-Carlton Hotel. Further research may reveal earlier extant properties with documented associations with this theme. The period of significance ends in 2000, the end of the period of study for this context statement. In general, if the period of significance continues to the present, the end of the study period is the recommended end date.

Eligibility Standards:

- Resources should be associated with an important event or series of events directly related to the creation of laws, policing, and government harassment of LGBTQ+ people in Atlanta.
- Resources may be associated with the life of an individual or individuals who played a significant role in the evolution of Atlanta LGBTQ+ civil rights.

Character Defining Features

- Documented association with the historic theme.
- A resource associated with the Theme: LGBTQ+ Atlantans and Harassment may be the physical location of a pivotal event in the history of LGBTQ+ civil rights.
- A resource may be located in a building used for multiple purposes or other purposes, originally.
- The associated event must have occurred at the property during the period of time in which it gained significance.

- For a resource to have significance associated with important individuals under Criterion B, the property must be directly associated with the individual's productive life during the period in which they achieved significance and must be representative of their important contributions to this theme.
- The resource must retain most of the essential character defining physical features from the period in which the event took place or in which the individual was directly associated with the property.
- For National Register eligibility, properties associated with this theme that are less than 50 years of age must possess exceptional importance and meet the requirements of Criteria Consideration G. Criteria Consideration G will apply even to properties that are more than 50 years of age but did not attain significance until a period less than 50 years ago. Properties achieving exceptional significance should demonstrate a direct association with a notable LGBTQ+ harassment and policing event or person(s) and retain recognizable features from its period of significance.
- The most important aspects of integrity for this theme should be Location, Design, Feeling, and Association. A significant property in LGBTQ+ policing and harassment history should be in its original location. It should retain recognizable features from its period of significance that contribute to its integrity of design, feeling, and association. Property specific research should aim to identify important features of the property that may have been important and present during the period of significance.
- Integrity of Materials and Workmanship, while important, may not be crucial for meeting the integrity threshold for this theme. Many buildings in the Inventory have experienced alterations and may no longer retain all of their original materials. Research and firsthand accounts of people present at the property during the period of significance can provide greater detail on what important features existed for the property, and which features are most important to be intact for consideration for eligibility.
- In most cases, integrity of setting should be considered in terms of an urban versus suburban setting and whether newer infill is in keeping with the historic period of development.

Integrity Considerations

- Overall integrity should be assessed within the time frame when the resource gained significance.



CASE STUDY

RESOURCE: ANSLEY MALL MINI-CINEMA, 1544 PIEDMONT ROAD NE

Note: This case study is a starting point for National Register eligibility analysis for this and related resources. Interiors of case study properties were not accessed during the creation of this context document, however, a thorough analysis of interior integrity would be required as part of any formal assessment of this property's eligibility for the National Register of Historic Places. Furthermore, these are not the official opinions of HPD and are provided here as starting points and models for additional analysis. Formal eligibility would need to be determined via in-depth analysis at the time of nomination.

“The Stonewall of the South,” a pivotal event in Atlanta’s LGBTQ+ history signaling the birth of the LGBTQ+ rights movement in the city, took place at the Ansley Mall Mini-Cinema on August 5, 1969. The event involved one of the most infamous police raids in the city that targeted LGBTQ+ people viewing the Andy Warhol film *Lonesome Cowboys*. About 15 minutes into the film, ten police officers

entered the building. Three officers blocked the exits, while a few others made their way into the theater and ordered the approximately 70 patrons to put down their concessions, get out of their seats, and get into a line. The officers demanded identification of the moviegoers, asked questions, and photographed each person so they could compare the images against photographs of “known homosexuals.” Occurring just a few months after the nationally famous Stonewall Rebellion in New York City, the *Lonesome Cowboys* raid generated anger within the local LGBTQ+ community and provided the spark that ignited the LGBTQ+ civil rights movement in Atlanta and the Southeast. In the aftermath of the raid, local activists organized the Georgia Gay Liberation Front (GGLF) in 1971, which organized the first Pride marches in the city and advocated for an end to police harassment, employment discrimination based on sexual orientation, and elimination of the state sodomy law.

The Ansley Mall Mini-Cinema was a small, 175-seat theater located on the west side of Ansley Mall, which was opened in 1964. The theater, which opened in 1968, later operated as the Film

Forum in the 1980s, and continued to show art house films. It appears to have closed by the early 1980s and has been occupied by a retail kitchen and cooking store (Cook's Warehouse) since 2009. The original retail space is intact and maintains high ceilings painted black, which are indicative of its early use as a movie theater. Research has not confirmed if any interior partitions were present that divided the entrance lobby and ticket counter from the theater itself.

The property is significant at the local level under Criterion A in the area of Social History: LGBTQ+ History and Politics/Government because it was the site of the pivotal police raid that spurred action in the city's LGBTQ+ community, launching the political activism and organizing of the gay rights movement. It is recommended eligible at the local level because it served as the catalyst for the city's LGBTQ+ community to form the GGLF. If research indicates the influence of the event impacted other communities throughout Georgia, the property may qualify for significance at the state level.

Note: Because of the role of Ansley Mall historically in the city's LGBTQ+ community, it is recommended that the entire mall be evaluated for NRHP eligibility.

National Register Criteria: Criterion A

Area(s) of Significance: Social History: LGBTQ+ History and Politics/Government

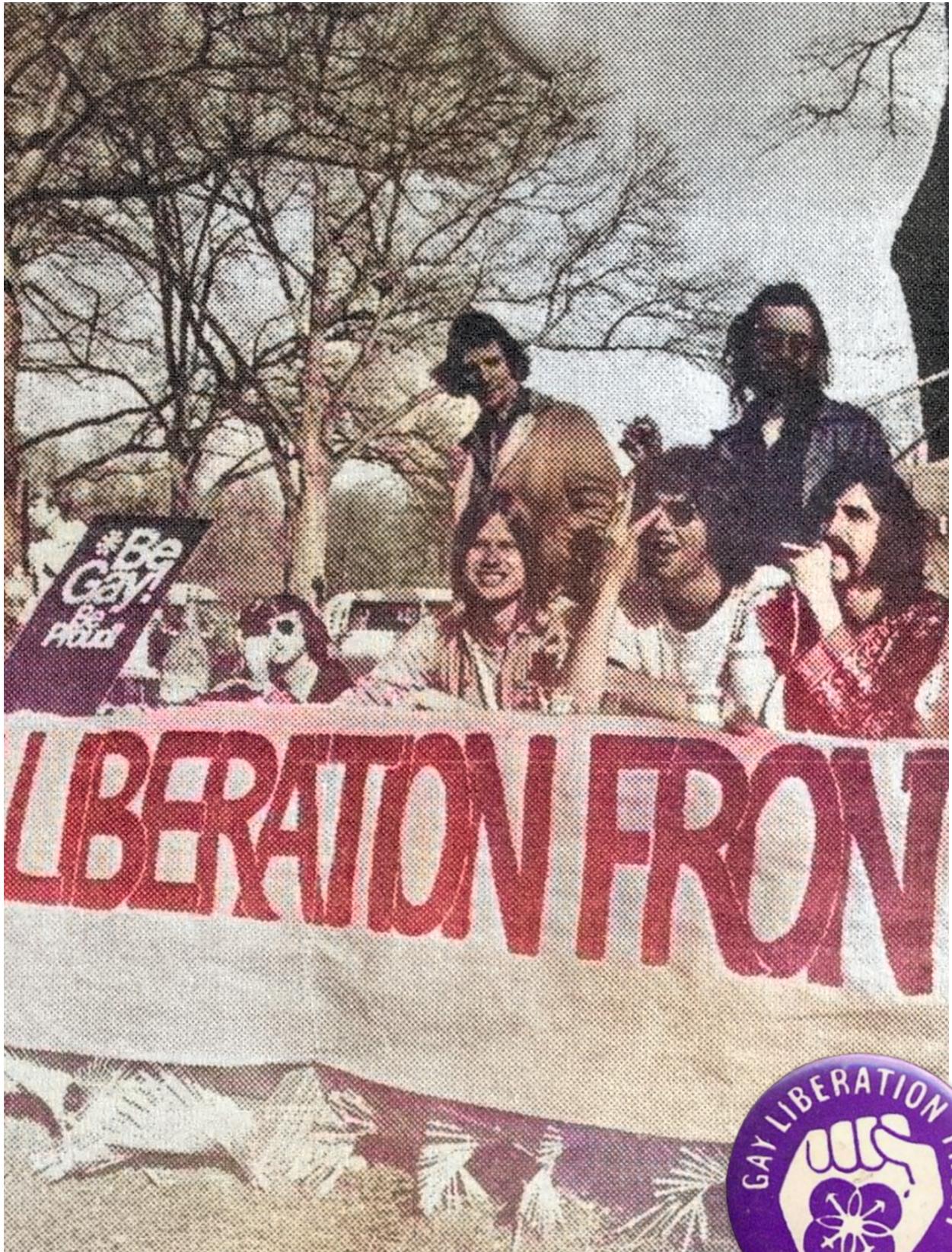
Period of Significance: 1969

Integrity: The Ansley Mall Mini-Cinema space occupies its original site of construction and retains integrity of location as a retail commercial space in Ansley Mall. The property maintains integrity of setting as it continues to be the larger Ansley Mall complex while the nearby surrounds consist of

historic residential neighborhoods to the east and west, none of which are immediately visible to the space. Although Ansley Mall has been updated and renovated on the exterior, it maintains its original footprint and layout. In addition, it is expected that malls and retail establishments receive updates and changes over time, to accommodate new tenants, evolving uses in space, and changing design trends. The theater space has not been enlarged and maintains its historic rectangular footprint, sandwiched between the former Morrison's Cafeteria space and a dry cleaning business. The theatre's entrance may have originally been located on the front of the mall, next to Morrison's Cafeteria. The current storefront appears to be a newer addition. The space has received some potential changes in the storefront window materials and no longer retains interior theater elements; however, it retains its original space with high open ceilings. While the former cinema area has diminished integrity of design, materials, and workmanship, the building space and the greater Ansley Mall building remains recognizable from its period of significance despite some ornamental alterations of the exterior, and it thus maintains integrity of association and feeling.

Character Defining Features:

- Direct association with the theme LGBTQ+ Atlantans and Harassment: Laws and Policing as it was the location of the pivotal police raid known as the *Lonesome Cowboys* raid in 1969, which has been characterized by historians "The Stonewall of the South."
- Retains essential character defining features from the period of significance: large, single-story commercial space with tall ceilings and open space in an open air mall-style pedestrian access.



Gay Liberation Front at Piedmont Park (Source: *The Great Speckled Bird*, June 1971: Special Collections and Archives, Georgia State University Library)



POLITICAL ACTIVISM IN ATLANTA'S LGBTQ+ COMMUNITIES

The origins of the modern LGBTQ+ civil rights movement in the United States has its roots in the Scientific-Humanitarian Committee, which was founded in Berlin, Germany in 1897 by Dr. Magnus Hirschfield, an openly gay man. Henry Gerber organized the Society for Human Rights in Chicago, Illinois in 1924, which was influenced by Hirschfield's earlier work and inspired by the more open gay community he experienced in Germany while stationed there with the U.S. Army after World War I. Like Hirschfield, the Society for Human Rights advocated for civil rights of gay and transgender people and sought to decriminalize homosexuality, but was quickly crushed after authorities prosecuted Gerber and other members and the organization was disbanded (National Park Service 2018). The open struggle for the economic, political, and social rights of LGBTQ+ people in Atlanta, as in other cities in the country, would not emerge until the early 1970s and was a process that evolved and expanded over time to fully represent the city's large and diverse LGBTQ+ communities.

OUT OF THE CLOSETS AND INTO THE STREETS: ORIGINS OF MODERN LGBTQ+ CIVIL RIGHTS IN THE UNITED STATES

Early uprisings by lesbian, gay, and transgender people against routine police harassment and mass arrests first surfaced in California in the decades after World War II with documented cases of spontaneous, active resistance to police

persecution in May 1959 at the Cooper Do-Nuts Café in Los Angeles, at Compton's Cafeteria in San Francisco's Tenderloin District in July 1966, and the Black Cat Tavern in the Silver Lake neighborhood of Los Angeles on New Year's Day in 1967 (Dolan 2021; Moffitt 2015). The riots illustrated the rising anger of LGBTQ+ people in California over the repression of their sexuality and a growing unwillingness among some individuals to quietly acquiesce in the face of ongoing societal and state-sanctioned persecution. Yet these events ultimately failed to garner widespread publicity or collective, and sustained, responses among the broader LGBTQ+ communities in the two cities.

That moment arrived on the other side of the country, in New York City, with the eruption of the Stonewall Riots in the summer of 1969. The protests and violent clashes over a five-day period, from the early morning hours of June 28th to July 3rd, followed the law enforcement raid and arrest of gay patrons at the Stonewall Inn in the city's Greenwich Village neighborhood. The Stonewall Riots are credited as the spark that ignited the gay rights movements and galvanized wider LGBTQ+ political activism throughout the United States and the world during the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries (Carter et al. 1999:7)

On July 27, 1969, a group of lesbian and gay activists in New York organized a protest march from Washington Square to the Stonewall Inn and a number of LGBTQ+ rights organizations were formed after the uprising, including the Gay Liberation Front (GLF) and the Gay Activists Alliance (Carter et al. 1999:8). Members of the more radical GLF were heavily influenced by the Marxist politics and lesbian-feminism of the New Left activist movement that was first spearheaded by the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) during the early 1960s. Viewing gay liberation as a civil rights

issue, the GLF and other post-Stonewall activists favored confrontation through direct action and political involvement, thoroughly rejecting the assimilationist approach advocated by groups associated with the earlier homophile movement, such as the Mattachine Society, the Daughters of Bilitis, and the Janus Society (Chenault 2008:156–158; Encarnación 2014:37–38).

THE LESBIAN AND GAY RIGHTS MOVEMENT IN ATLANTA, 1969-1976

In Atlanta as elsewhere, the Stonewall Riots would later be commemorated as a foundational moment for the modern gay rights movement. However, the uprising received no mention in the July and August editions of the city's counter-cultural newspaper, the *Great Speckled Bird* (let alone from the two establishment dailies - the *Atlanta Constitution* and the *Atlanta Journal*). Rather, it was a police raid during a screening of Andy Warhol's *Lonesome Cowboys* at the Ansley Mall Mini-Cinema on August 5, 1969 (see Theme: LGBTQ+ Atlantans and Harassment), that became the immediate turning point in the city's LGBTQ+ history and spurred some members of Atlanta's large, but politically powerless, lesbian and gay community into local organizing and activism for equal rights. According to Berl Boykin, a writer with the *Great Speckled Bird* and later one of the main co-founders of the Georgia Gay Liberation Front (GGLF), the *Lonesome Cowboys* raid (as it later came to be known),

"...was the immediate incentive, or cause, for us to form the Georgia Gay Liberation Front. We were fucking fed up with being busted and harassed, chased from pillar to post in a supposedly free country" (Boykin 2017).

While Boykin and Steve Abbott, both former Emory University students, began writing and republishing articles in the *Great Speckled Bird* addressing lesbian and gay liberation in the weeks and months after Stonewall, their efforts to marshal a core of local activists in the city appeared to prove difficult through 1969 and much of 1970 (hm 1969:5; Lance 1970:9; Liberation News Service 1970:15). To commemorate the first anniversary of the Stonewall Riots, Boykin, Abbot, Dr. Ara Dostourian, Judy and Phil Lambert, Vicki Gabriner, Paul Dolan (aka Severin), and a few others helped organize a low-key Gay Pride rally in May of 1970 during the Atlanta Arts Festival at Piedmont Park (D. Hayward, personal communication, October 14, 2022). Boykin remembered the rally generally consisted of a small group setting up an unlicensed booth at the festival and the distributing gay literature (Boykin 2017).

THE GEORGIA GAY LIBERATION FRONT

The November 23, 1970, edition of *The Great Speckled Bird* contained a reprint of Carl Wittman's "Gay Manifesto" that had originally been published by the *Chicago Seed* in May of that year. In notes accompanying Wittman's multi-page declaration, *Bird* writer Miller Francis, Jr. noted the issues and oppressive conditions affecting the lesbian and gay communities in other parts of the nation were similar to those experienced by LGBTQ+ residents in Atlanta. Francis also commented on active plans to organize an Atlanta branch of the GLF and the ongoing search for a suitable venue to host regularly scheduled meetings (Wittman and Francis 1970:2–3, 18–19).

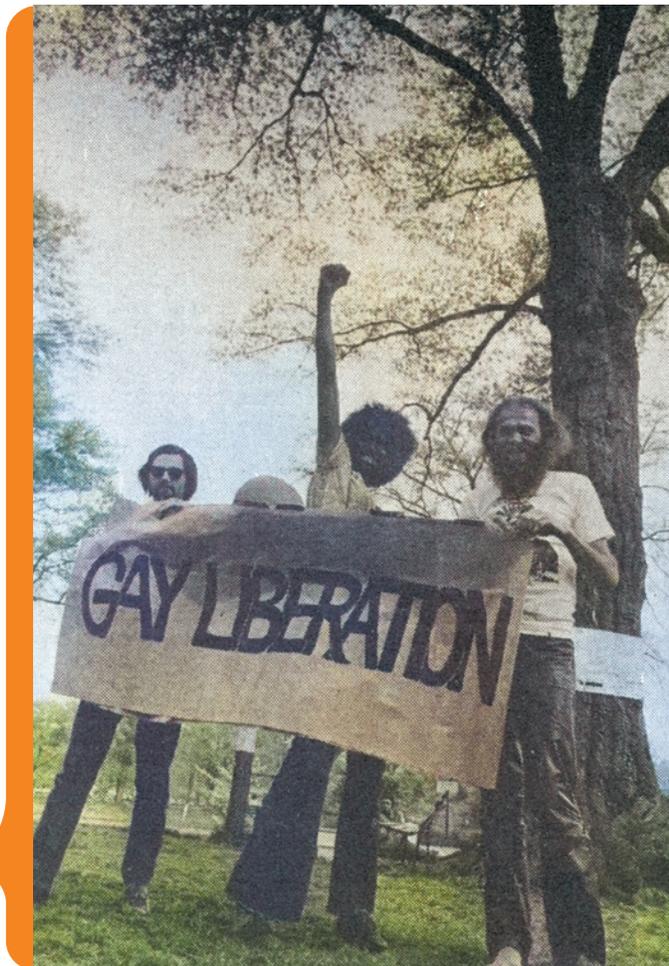
Finally, on February 4, 1971, founding members of the Atlanta Gay Liberation Front (later renamed the Georgia Gay Liberation Front to



Site of the First Georgia Gay Liberation Front Meeting on February 4, 1971, at 1451 Oxford Road NE, Emory Village, DeKalb County (Source: New South Associates, 2022)

reflect the group's wider scope) held their first open meeting at the Morningstar Inn, a health-food cooperative that occupied the building located in Emory Village at 1451 Oxford Road NE (in the Druid Hills neighborhood of DeKalb County, just outside the City of Atlanta limits). In his article about the event that appeared in the February 15, 1971, edition of *The Great Speckled Bird*, Steve Abbott stated over 100 young, and predominantly white, women and men packed themselves into the building for the meeting, with some Black LGBTQ+ attendees also present. The dual mission of the GGLF was to serve Atlanta's and Georgia's lesbian and

Early Georgia Gay Liberation Front Demonstration at Piedmont Park, 1971. (Source: *The Great Speckled Bird*, June 21, 1971. Special Collections and Archives, Georgia State University Library)



gay community and to challenge the repressive political and social structure imposed on LGBTQ+ residents by the state's straight society (Abbott 1971a:6; Boykin 2017).

Some attendees stressed the need for greater African American representation in the GGLF and for women to have an equal share in the planning and operation of the organization. One woman also cautioned against the problem of male chauvinism, which had already splintered the New York GLF when women members left to form their own radical lesbian organization. Despite these warnings, a slate composed mostly of white men was selected to head the group's various committees. The GGLF's original leadership included Berl Boykin overseeing the legal committee and Steve Abbott over the publicity committee. Billie McClaine and Bill Smith, an openly gay employee with the Fulton County Board of Education, were elected as co-chairpersons of the GGLF (Abbott 1971a:6; Lambert 1972:7).

EARLY ATLANTA GAY PRIDE MARCHES, 1971-1972

At subsequent meetings held in the Crisis Community Center (1013 Peachtree Street NE; no longer extant) and elsewhere, GGLF leadership immediately set about making plans to organize the first Gay Pride March in Atlanta and eliminate anti-homosexual city ordinances and the state's sodomy law (see Theme: LGBTQ+ Atlantans and Harassment). The City of Atlanta and Mayor Sam Massell declined the GGLF a permit for the first march, which was officially known as the "Christopher Street Demonstration" and billed as "Atlanta's first street action against Gay oppression." Undeterred by the snub, between 125 and 200 lesbian, gay, and straight-identifying people turned up to participate in Atlanta's first

Gay Pride March on June 27, 1971 (Boykin 2017; Fleischmann and Hardman 2004).

The march began at noon in front of the Federal Building at 878 Peachtree Street NE with Berl Boykin serving as the first Grand Marshal (D. Hayward, personal communication, October 14, 2022). Planners selected the government building site to protest the discriminatory practices undertaken by the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare against LGBTQ+ employees at the time. Confined to the sidewalks and crosswalks, the marchers walked in a loop up and down Peachtree Street in front of the federal building before heading north to Piedmont Park, where a rally was held with a slate of speakers and capped by a guerilla theater performance (Abbott 1971b:4; *The Great Speckled Bird* 1971:5). GGLF organizers were ecstatic with the local response after worries about how many people would actually show up for the event and concerns over potential violence against the marchers (Lambert and Cutler 1972:4–5).

On July 14, 1971, just a few weeks after the Gay Pride March, GGLF members Bill Smith, Beryl Boykin, and Klaus Smith stormed the office of Georgia Governor Jimmy Carter and demanded equal civil rights for the state's lesbian and gay residents along with an end to Georgia's severe sodomy laws. Carter responded by having them removed from his office (Padgett 2021:21–22). By early 1972, the GGLF had moved their operations into a converted warehouse at 128 Pine Street NE (no longer extant) just west of the city's Civic Center auditorium in the Bedford Pine neighborhood. The GGLF shared the building with the Georgia Women's Abortion Coalition and used the facility for meetings and organizing, fundraisers, voter drives, and dances (Lambert and Cutler 1972).



The Second Atlanta Pride March, June 25, 1972 (Source: Edmund Marshall, photographer. Originally published in *The Great Speckled Bird*, July 3, 1972. Image hand colored by Stephanie Coffin. Courtesy of WRFG 89.3 FM Atlanta)

The second Gay Pride March in Atlanta was held on Sunday, June 25, 1972. Unlike the previous year, the administration of Mayor Sam Massell finally issued a permit to hold the event, making it the first Gay Pride March to be officially recognized by the city. The GGLF's political demands for the march consisted of a Gay Bill of Rights for state residents and the reopening of Greenhouse Hill in Piedmont Park (now the site of the Botanical Gardens). The hilltop had been a popular cruising spot for some members of Atlanta's gay community prior to a spate of police harassment and the eventual closure of the area for redevelopment as part of planned

park improvements by the City of Atlanta Parks Department (Lambert and Cutler 1972:5).

An estimated 100 people attended the second Gay Pride March, which began at the GGLF headquarters on Pine Street. The marchers made their way north along Peachtree Street carrying banners and chanting "What do we want?" "Liberation!" Two truckloads of drag queens, known as the "Grease Sisters," joined the end of the parade route before it concluded with a rally at Piedmont Park that included songs performed by Elaine Kolb of the Womansong Theater and a host of speeches by representatives of the Georgia

and Knoxville, Tennessee chapters of the GLF, the Georgia Women's Abortion Coalition, and the Socialist Workers Party - the only political party in the United States at the time to formally endorse LGBTQ+ rights in its presidential platform (Cutler 1972:8).

SPLINTERING AND DISSOLUTION OF THE GEORGIA GAY LIBERATION FRONT, 1973

The months before and after the 1972 Gay Pride March would prove to be the high-water mark for the GGLF in Atlanta. After the move into the new headquarters on Pine Street, the group became more involved in local legal cases, establishing lines of communication with state and city political leaders, and helping coordinate plans for the first Southeastern Gay Conference to be held in Athens, Georgia (Smith 1973:7). Attempts were also made to organize a GGLF-affiliated student group at Georgia State University, but these efforts were ultimately rebuffed by the school's administrators and the Student Government Association (Lambert and Cutler 1972:4-5; *The Signal* 1972:5).

Despite these advances, the GGLF was never able to appeal to the wider LGBTQ+ communities in Atlanta. Some, including Frank Powell, owner of the Sweet Gum Head nightclub, and Vera Phillips, owner and operator of Mrs. P's, were openly antagonistic towards the group. The failure of the GGLF to have a larger impact appeared to be due to a whole host of issues and conflicts. Internal differences over policy, management, and messaging between lesbian, gay and drag contingents within the GGLF, early fault lines that first emerged during the founding of the organization in 1971, resulted in the formation of a short-lived splinter group, the Feminist

League Against Macho Empire (FLAME) headed by Paul Dolan (aka Severin), and a separate group of women who organized the Atlanta Lesbian and Feminist Association (ALFA), in the summer of 1972 (Hayward 1981). Meanwhile, political, socially conservative, or closeted individuals tended to avoid or strongly disagree with the group's militancy and affiliation with revolutionary Marxist politics. Finally, the predominantly white and middle-class members of the GGLF did not consistently engage or build solid relationships with those in the city's Black LGBTQ+ communities (Lambert 1972:7; Padgett 2021:75-76; Smith 1973:7; Kaye 1972:15).

As former GGLF leader, Bill Smith, recalled, "people began to drift away" from the GGLF by early 1973, discouraged by infighting and the group's lack of direction. The Metropolitan Community Church (MCC), ALFA, GGLF, and the Southeastern Gay Coalition, a short-lived organization founded by Bill Smith, managed to pool their resources to sponsor the 1973 Atlanta Pride March, which followed the same route as the previous year's event. A few weeks later, the remaining members of the GGLF voted to officially dissolve the organization on July 14, 1973 (Smith 1973:7; *Atlanta Barb* 1974:1).

Following the demise of the GGLF, no parades were held in Atlanta in late June of 1974 and 1975. Instead, local LGBTQ+ groups organized Gay Pride Week activities in Piedmont Park (*The Barb* 1976a:1). Rather than serving as a major setback, this period allowed time for the city's small, but dedicated and growing LGBTQ+ rights movement to diversify, recalibrate their efforts, and establish new and more direct methods in the fight for greater equality and against ongoing harassment by law enforcement and the courts.

THE ATLANTA LESBIAN FEMINIST ALLIANCE (ALFA)

A group of lesbian members of the GGLF formed ALFA as a separatist, lesbian-feminist organization on June 23, 1972. According to co-founder Lorraine Fontana, the decision to create the group was motivated by ALFA members feeling increasingly unwelcome in some of Atlanta's primarily heterosexual and anti-gay, socialist and feminist organizations and no longer willing to tolerate the male-dominated leadership of the GGLF (Fontana 2012). An early mission statement published in the August 21, 1972, edition of *The Great Speckled Bird*, declared ALFA would be "a political action group of gay sisters...and an umbrella group for Women's projects and gay Women's projects" that would also "serve as a communications center for all these groups." However, the founding members' vision for

ALFA extended beyond just political activism and encompassed social support along with a broad range of educational and artistic opportunities for all lesbian women in Atlanta (Kaye 1972:15).

In addition to Lorraine Fontana, co-founders of ALFA included "founding mother" Elaine Kolb, Diana Kaye, Vicki Gabriner, Elizabeth Knowlton, and Jane Lifflander, among others. Many of the original women in ALFA were white, middle-class, and well-educated. Several had been founding members of the GGLF, written for *The Great Speckled Bird*, and were actively involved in women's liberation movement and social justice groups in the city (Fontana 2012; Sears 2001:137–138). ALFA held its first few meetings in the GGLF offices at 128 Pine Street NE. By October of 1972, the group had relocated to the

First ALFA House, 1190 Mansfield Avenue, NE (Source: New South Associates, 2022)



first ALFA House at 1190 Mansfield Avenue NE, in Candler Park, where many of the members lived in the city's old Bass District, which also included Little Five Points and the Poncey-Highland neighborhood (Fontana 1972:18). Nicknamed the "Edge of Night," the two-story Queen Anne style ALFA House was the first women's only space in Georgia and contained rooms used for meetings, educational events, and a lending library (Fontana n.d.).

ALFA began publication of its own monthly newsletter in September of 1973. A month later, the group moved into the second ALFA House, a rented duplex located at 1526 McLendon Avenue NE, and would remain in that location over the next 13 years. During that time, ALFA members immersed the organization into the artistic and social culture of the city's LGBTQ+ communities, through staging of performances by the Red Dyke and WomanSong theaters, hosting and producing lesbian-centered radio shows on WRFG, creating the ALFA Omegas, the first only lesbian softball team in the Atlanta City League, and hosting numerous educational workshops, book and poetry readings, and guest lectures at the ALFA House and other locations (see Theme: LGBTQ+ Media in Atlanta and Theme: LGBTQ+ Arts in Atlanta).

Politically, ALFA played key roles in the fight for racial equality and LGBTQ+ civil rights, the anti-war movement, and feminism in Atlanta. Along with serving as a co-sponsor and organizer of the Atlanta Gay Pride March in 1973, ALFA members also established a protest of the *Atlanta Constitution* and the *Atlanta Journal* that year after management at both newspapers refused to print information about the group's events. The group co-founded the Georgians for ERA (Equal Rights Amendment) in 1973 and was the first openly lesbian organization

in Georgia to participate in the January 1974 protest march at the State Capitol in support of the state's passage of the amendment (*Atlanta Constitution* 1973:5B; Casson 1974:13A; Fontana n.d.).

By the mid-1970s, the ALFA House also functioned as a meeting space for other feminist and social activist groups, including the Atlanta Socialist-Feminist Women's Union and the Dykes for a Second American Revolution (DAR II) (Wildmoon 1994b:14). Over the course of the 1970s and 1980s, ALFA continued to be a key organizer of the Atlanta Pride marches, including the Annual Dyke March during Pride Weekend, which began in 1984. Other major avenues of political outreach in the Atlanta extended into countering police harassment (see Theme: LGBTQ+ Atlantans and Harassment), fighting racism in gay bars, and coordinating anti-war and anti-Ku Klux Klan rallies (Chesnut and Gable 1997:255; Sears 2001:137, 140–141). The group and its members were also heavily involved in the Atlanta freeway revolt by intown residents against the proposed Presidential Parkway and in helping to develop the city ordinances that prohibited discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation that were eventually adopted by the Atlanta City Council in 1986 (Fleischmann and Hardman 2004; Fontana n.d.).

By the late fall of 1985, rising monthly rent for the second ALFA House, along with growing maintenance and disability access issues with the building, prompted ALFA leadership to establish a House Search Committee to find a new, permanent meeting space in the city. ALFA purchased the Queen Anne Cottage at 64 Clay Street NE in the Kirkwood neighborhood in February 1986. ALFA moved into the new location in June of that year following numerous repairs to the dwelling. Ongoing and expensive renovations to the new house prevented the opening of the

group's library. This issue, combined with an aging and declining membership, along with growing disagreements over ALFA's utility as a political or social organization, generally hampered finances and operations during the late 1980s and early 1990s. By October of 1990, membership had fallen below 100 as many became frustrated and burned out by the amount of work required make the ALFA House functionable (Fontana n.d.).

Finally, on April 10, 1994, the remaining members voted to disband ALFA. For over 20 years, ALFA had been a central fixture in the communal and political lives of the lesbian community in Atlanta and the Southeast but had since been eclipsed by the city's changing LGBTQ+ climate and culture. According to longtime member Lorraine Fontana, "Basically it was past its time...Some people still doggedly held onto what it was but it's clear that more and more people have come out, want to be active but in different things. ALFA was what it was" (Wildmoon 1994b:14).

EARLY PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT – THE ATLANTA COMMUNITY RELATIONS COMMISSION AND THE ATLANTA GAY COALITION

Recognizing the need to establish a more direct line of communication with city government, GGLF leadership began pressuring Mayor Sam Massell in the spring of 1972 to appoint one of the group's members to the Atlanta Community Relations Commission, a volunteer municipal body established in 1966 to hear concerns by members of the city's low-income and marginalized communities (Stone 1989:71). The Massell administration eventually selected GGLF member Charlie St. John to serve on the CRC in February 1973 as the first openly gay representative in the City of Atlanta. His tenure proved to be short

one, however (see Theme: LGBTQ+ Atlantans and Harassment). Following a police raid on St. John's apartment for alleged drug possession, the *Atlanta Journal* fired him from his job as a copy-carrier, and he was eventually removed from the commission (Cutler 1973:2; Padgett 2021:40–41, 70, 81–82).

In the build-up to the Atlanta municipal elections all the mayoral candidates were invited to address the 1973 Pride Rally in Piedmont Park but none appeared (Padgett 2021:75). Following his loss to Maynard Jackson, outgoing Mayor Sam Massell appointed former GGLF secretary and treasurer, Bill Smith, to replace Charlie St. John on the CRC in the fall of 1973. Smith's service on the CRC from 1973, until his eventual resignation in 1978, largely overlapped with his operation and ownership of *The Barb* newspaper (originally the *Atlanta Barb*). Businessman Ray Green had founded *The Barb* as Atlanta's first LGBTQ+ newspaper in February 1974 and later handed it over to Bill Smith in the spring of 1975 (see Theme: LGBTQ+ Media in Atlanta) (Padgett 2021:89, 236–237). In his dual roles as both a politician and writer, Smith sought to establish dialogue and build relationships between the Atlanta LGBTQ+ communities and the city's new, young mayor, while also holding Jackson's administration accountable for its tacit approval of anti-gay legislation proposed by the Atlanta City Council and the police department's ongoing raids and harassment of LGBTQ+ businesses and social spaces (Smith 1975:2, 13; *The Barb* 1975b:1,13).

In addition to Smith's work on the CRC, several individuals and groups formed the Atlanta Gay Coalition (AGC) in early 1975 to combat bias and misrepresentations of the city's LGBTQ+ community by local government agencies and the media. Among those involved in the creation of the AGC were Revs. John Gill and Jim Snow of the Metropolitan Community Church (MCC), along

with Martha Smith of ALFA, Dr. Stuart Strenger, the Chief Psychiatrist at Emory Hospital, Bill Smith, the Atlanta chapter of the National Organization for Women (NOW), the Atlanta Lawyers Guild, the Atlanta ACLU, *The Great Speckled Bird*, Young Socialist Alliance/Socialist Workers Party, and Rev. Dwight Jackson of Friendship Baptist Church and a commissioner with the CRC. Some other individuals withheld their names due to fears over job endangerment. Members established three primary goals of the AGC: provide a response to a series of anti-gay articles that had recently been published in local newspapers; meet with major media outlets in Atlanta to formulate policy for appropriate LGBTQ+ language; and organize a networking forum where gay and lesbian organizations could work together on issues of mutual interest (*The Barb* 1975a:1, 11).

NEW VOICES AND DIFFERENT APPROACHES: LGBTQ+ CIVIL RIGHTS ACTIVISM IN THE LATE 1970S

The Atlanta Gay Pride March finally made its return on Sunday, June 27, 1976, with parade goers starting from the Civic Center parking lot on Pine Street, proceeding west to Peachtree Street, and north to 14th Street before heading east into Piedmont Park where it ended with a rally. The march capped off a weeklong slate of LGBTQ+ centered activities organized by the Gay Pride Week Planning Committee that included seminars for students interested in forming gay organizations at Georgia State University, the Georgia Institute of Technology (Georgia Tech) and Emory University. Other events focused on the development of legislation aimed at creating an Atlanta city ordinance banning discrimination based on sexual orientation and repealing the state's anti-sodomy law. The planning committee

met at the first incarnation of the Atlanta Gay Center, located in a former residence at 20 4th Street NW (no longer extant). The committee was composed of a diverse make-up of groups, many of which had been involved in organizing previous marches and other local LGBTQ+ rights issues, and included ALFA, the Atlanta Gay Center, Dignity, a gay Catholic organization, the Metropolitan Community Church, and Integrity, a non-profit organization working for LGBTQ+ inclusion within the Episcopal Church (*The Barb* 1976a:1, 1976b). To celebrate the return, Mayor Maynard Jackson proclaimed Saturday, June 26, 1976, as "Gay Pride Day," the first time the city officially recognized the event. Jackson issued the proclamation in the face of scathing criticism and legal opposition by several civic and religious organizations that operated anonymously under the name "Citizens for A Decent Atlanta" (Gray 1976:1A, 10A).

Buoyed by these successes, the Gay Pride Week Planning Committee, which had renamed itself the Gay Pride Alliance (later the Atlanta Gay Rights Alliance) in 1976 under the leadership of Linda Regnier and Victor Host, announced tentative arrangements in the spring of 1977 for the upcoming Gay Pride Week in the summer. Planning for the 1977 event took place amidst renewed resistance by the Citizens for A Decent Atlanta and the growing backlash to LGBTQ+ rights among reactionary groups coalescing in Florida behind former singer and right-wing activist, Anita Bryant, who led the fight to repeal Miami-Dade County's gay rights ordinance (Robison 1976:4, 14; *Atlanta Constitution* 1977; Moore 1977a:10). Bowing to local pressure during an election year, Mayor Maynard Jackson refused to issue a similar Gay Pride Day proclamation in 1977, disappointing and angering many. Instead, the Mayor opted to declare Saturday, June 25, 1977, as "Civil Liberties Day" but made an appearance the following day to

shake hands with the approximate 1,500 marchers during Gay Pride, making it the largest attended march in the city up to that date (Martin 1977:1A, 17A; *The Barb* 1977b:1; Laughlin 1977:1).

FIRST TUESDAY DEMOCRATIC
COMMITTEE (FIRST TUESDAY
ASSOCIATION FOR LESBIAN AND GAY
RIGHTS)

In the days following the Gay Pride March, *The Barb* newspaper announced the formation of a new LGBTQ+ political organization in Atlanta. Rev. Howard Wells of the MCC, Frank Scheuren, president of the local chapter of Dignity, Dr. Stuart Strenger, Chief Psychiatrist of Emory, and Gilbert

1977 Atlanta Pride Parade (Source: *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* Photographic Archives. Special Collections and Archives, Georgia State University Library)

“Gil” Robison, a co-founder of the Atlanta Gay Rights Alliance, chaired the initial planning meeting for the new group on July 4, 1977. According to Gil Robison, an Atlanta native and freelance photographer who became a registered lobbyist with the State of Georgia in February 1977, the association would work within the Democratic Party, “which has historically been more supportive of civil rights and individual freedom” and endorse political candidates “who support anti-discrimination legislation and the repeal of the sodomy statutes used in entrapping and harassing our people” (*The Barb* 1977a:1; *The Barb News Service* 1977:1, 5).

Eventually named the First Tuesday Democratic Committee (and later renamed the First Tuesday Association of Lesbian and Gay Rights in 1980) to commemorate the date of the Dade County Referendum of June 1977 that repealed Miami



gay rights ordinance, the political committee represented a significant shift in the ongoing fight for LGBTQ+ civil rights at the state and local levels. Anita Bryant's success in repealing the Dade County gay rights ordinance and Mayor Jackson's retreat in the face of pressure by groups such as Citizens for A Decent Atlanta, exposed the limited political influence of the city's LGBTQ+ communities despite several years of work by various activist groups and individuals, including Bill Smith, who Jackson appointed co-chair of the CRC in January 1977 (Roberts 1978:10). As Gil Robison later noted,

“Up until that time, there really had not been an organization that was solely dedicated to legislative and electoral politics. It was about movement politics, which was great and wonderful but... limited. I thought it would probably be a good idea to have something that had more influence in the real world”
(Robison 2022)

As an organization, First Tuesday was representative of other Atlanta LGBTQ+ political advocacy and community support groups that followed in the 1980s and 1990s in the sense that it never occupied or maintained its own separate office or meeting space. Instead, the group, and its members, operated through mailing lists and held meetings in public libraries or shared LGBTQ+-owned or welcoming community, religious and social spaces, such as the Atlanta Gay Center, the MCC, or various bars, clubs, and bookstores. First Tuesday organized a registration drive of LGBTQ+ voters ahead of the Atlanta municipal elections in the fall of 1977 and sponsored the first public forum for Atlanta's mayoral and city council candidates to make their campaign appeals to the city's gay voters (*The Barb* 1977a:1). Hailed by one

news reporter as “an historically significant event in Atlanta's political life,” the forum signaled the emerging clout of the city's LGBTQ+ electorate. The 16 political candidates that attended the event at the MCC in September 1977 were questioned about their positions on the proposed gay rights ordinance in the city. Incumbent Mayor Maynard Jackson, still under fire from many lesbian and gay residents for his refusal to issue a Gay Pride Day declaration earlier in the year, declined to appear at the forum (Smith 1977a:1).

In the months leading up to the election, First Tuesday prepared a candidates ratings guide based on their positions on LGBTQ+ rights provided during the forum and a mailed questionnaire (Smith 1977b:1). First Tuesday, the Atlanta Gay Rights Alliance, and *The Barb* newspaper all eventually endorsed Council member Emma Darnell during the primary who was easily defeated by Mayor Jackson enroute to his eventual re-election in November. Despite the loss, Robison took heart in the role First Tuesday played in making lesbian and gay civil rights a widely discussed topic in the election and the support it was able to garner for Darnell in the Midtown precinct of Atlanta's District 6 (Moore 1977b:8).

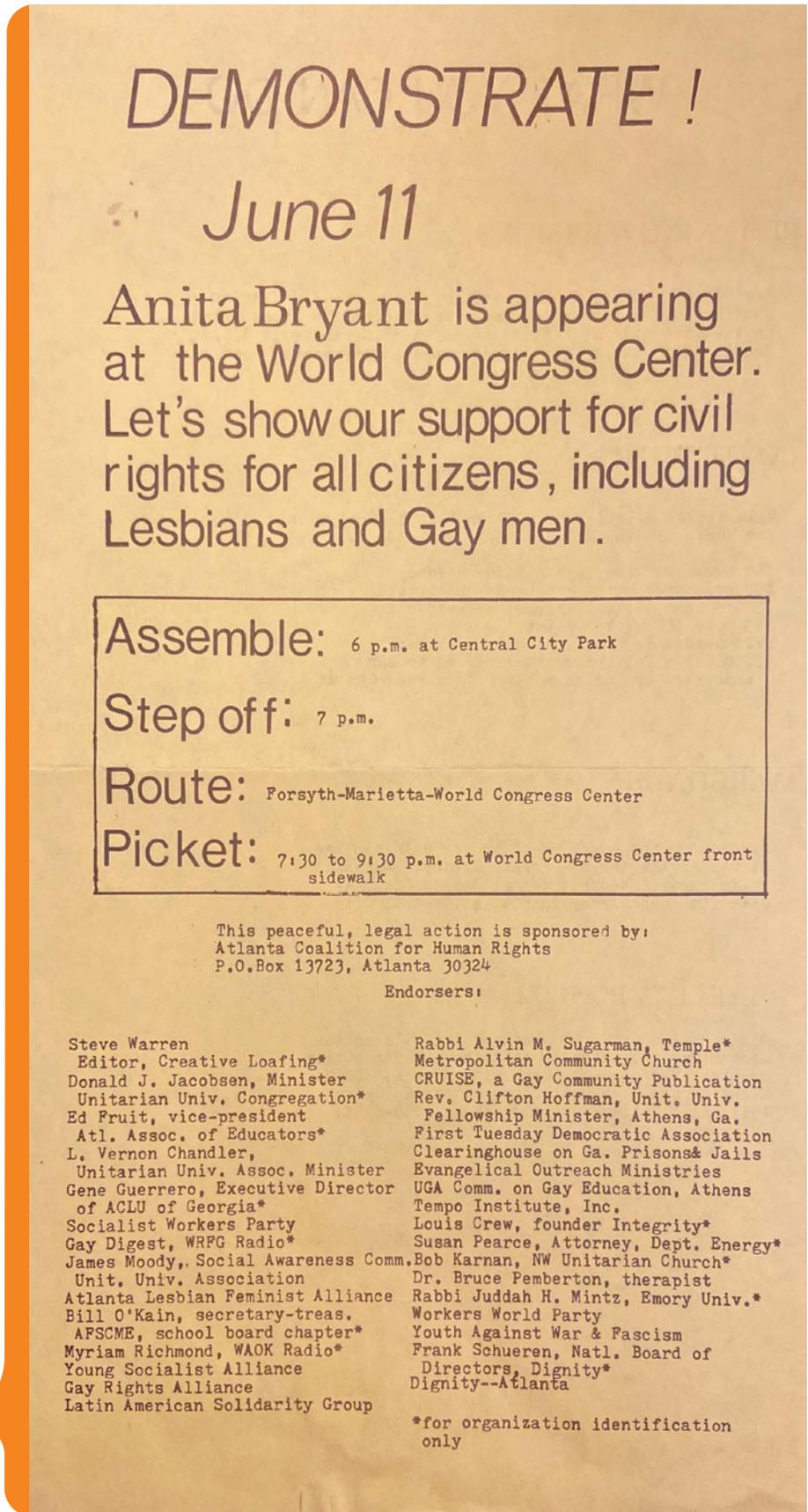
THE ATLANTA COALITION FOR HUMAN RIGHTS MARCH AGAINST ANITA BRYANT, JUNE 11, 1978

During the weekend of March 31–April 2, 1978, approximately 600 LGBTQ+ people from throughout the South met in Atlanta at the Georgia Terrace Hotel and Fabulous Fox Theatre for the third annual Southeastern Conference of Lesbians and Gay Men. Anita Bryant's anti-LGBTQ+ campaign was a major topic of discussion among many attendees at the conference, where initial planning was undertaken to establish the

Southeastern Lesbian Network and the Lesbian Writer's Conference (Fontana n.d.; Russakoff 1978). An announcement in late April that Anita Bryant, the anti-LGBTQ+ rights activist and leader of the "Save Our Children" campaign, would be a guest speaker at the Southern Baptist Convention to be held in Atlanta in June sent a jolt through in the city's LGBTQ+ communities. Victor Host of the Atlanta Gay Alliance stated she would be met by large contingent of LGBTQ+ protesters and their straight allies engaged in a peaceful demonstration "just to let Anita Bryant know that we disapprove wholeheartedly of her being here" (Moore 1978:4C).

The diverse groups of protesters collectively organized as the Atlanta Coalition for Human Rights and set the date of the protest march to Sunday, June 11,

Anita Bryant Protest Flyer, 1978 (Source: Gil Robison papers, MSS 1152, Kenan Research Center at the Atlanta History Center)



1978, to coincide with Bryant's speech at the Southern Baptist Convention. Approximately 2,000 people made their way to Central City Park (now known as Woodruff Park) in downtown Atlanta where the march began at just after 7:00 p.m. Carrying homemade signs, oranges (a reference to Bryant's career as a spokesperson for the Florida citrus industry), and chanting "Hey, hey! Ho, ho! Anita Bryant's got to go!" the crowd made their way up Marietta Street to the plaza outside the conference in the Georgia World Congress Center, where a two-hour rally was held (*Cruise Weekly* 1978:8–9; Murray and Wells 1978:1A, 10A). The protestors listened to several speakers, including James Moody, the openly gay columnist for the *Atlanta Gazette* newspaper, and lesbian activist and historian, Maria Helena Dolan, who proclaimed in her speech to counter-protesters and the conference attendees inside "I come to you as a defiant dyke!" (Hayward 1982; Solomon 2021).

The Anita Bryant protest politically energized many in the city's LGBTQ+ communities in way that had not occurred since the emergence of the lesbian and gay rights movement in 1971. As co-organizer and activist Gil Robison, noted,

"...she (Bryant) was a great draw. People came out of the woodwork to oppose her...the demonstration was the largest we'd had...We were so successful in fundraising that we had money left over that we used to start the second (Atlanta) Gay Center" (Robison 2022)

A few weeks after the protest march, Robison made an announcement on the steps of Atlanta City Hall that First Tuesday would sponsor six, lesbian and gay candidates for positions on the Fulton County Democratic Executive Committee.

The slate included Robison along with Steve Warren, Frank Scheuren, Diane Stephenson, Rex Matthews, and John Franklin (Roberts 1978:10). Robison and Stephenson, executive director of the re-organized Atlanta Gay Center, were eventually elected by the Fulton County Democratic Party to serve on the executive committee, making them the first, openly gay party officers in Georgia. Over the following year the pair pushed to include LGBTQ+ civil rights and repeal of the state's sodomy statutes as part of the official platform of Fulton County Democrats (Mooney 1979:2C).

THE ATLANTA LESBIAN AND GAY PRIDE PARADE AND FIRST NATIONAL MARCH ON WASHINGTON, 1979

Buoyed by growing optimism a sense of greater unity among many in the Atlanta LGBTQ+ communities, planners for Pride Week in 1979 sought to create a festive character for the 10-year Lavender Anniversary of national Gay Pride that celebrated the city's vibrant LGBTQ+ cultures (Hayward 1982). Organizers referred to the 1979 Lesbian and Gay Pride event as a parade, rather than a protest march, and called for a large turnout and the inclusion of decorative floats. The proposed route largely followed the same itinerary used in 1977 - starting at the intersection of Pine Street and Piedmont Avenue near the Atlanta Civic Center parking lot, traveling north on Piedmont, west on Ponce de Leon Avenue to Peachtree Street. From there, the parade headed north to 12th Street where it turned east into Piedmont Park. According to a description of the upcoming event in *Cruise Weekly* magazine, "the conclusion in Piedmont Park would be more a 'party' than a rally" with entertainment, refreshments, and games (*Cruise Weekly* 1979a:10–11). Despite the more celebratory nature of the 1979 Pride parade,

only about 500 people took part on the humid Sunday afternoon of June 25, 1979, a low number that disappointed event organizers and activists in light of the high turnout from the previous year (*Cruise Weekly* 1979b:8–9).

Later that year, LGBTQ+ activists in Atlanta helped organize and participated in the first National March on Washington for Lesbian and Gay Rights, which took place in the nation’s capital on October 14, 1979. Between 75,000 and 125,000 people attended the protest and the march leaders issued five demands directed at federal and state leaders: a passage of a federal law establishing LGBTQ+ rights; repeal of the ban on discrimination based on sexual orientation in the federal government workforce, military, and federally contracted employment; repeal of all anti-LGBTQ+ state and local laws; an end to discrimination of LGBTQ+ parents in custody cases; and the protection of LGBTQ+ youth from oppressive federal, state, and local laws (National March on Washington For Lesbian and Gay Rights 1979). Additional national marches would later be held in 1987, 1993, 2000, and 2009.

GROWING DIVERSITY, ELECTORAL STRENGTH, AND THE POLITICS OF AIDS IN THE 1980S

Just as he had in the two previous years, outgoing Mayor Maynard Jackson refused to issue an official proclamation of city support for Gay Pride Week, now renamed Lesbian, Gay, and Transperson (LGT) Pride Week, which was held from June 21–June 28 in 1980. The LGT Pride parade took place on the afternoon of June 21st and drew 1,500 marchers who walked from Woodruff Park in downtown, north up Peachtree Street, to Piedmont Park where the event concluded with a

rally (Lesbian/Gay/Transperson Pride Committee 1980; McDonald 1980:3B). The 1980s would bring increased diversity among the LGBTQ+ political and social groups in Atlanta, many of which had largely been organized and managed by white lesbians and gay men up to that point. The power of the city’s LGBTQ+ political lobby and voting bloc in Midtown would also continue to gain strength as the decade progressed, in both local races and at the state level. Such growth would occur in the face of an ascendant, anti-LGBTQ+ conservative movement in Georgia and the nation and the ravages of the HIV/AIDS epidemic, which quickly became a key component of political activism and engagement within the city’s LGBTQ+ communities.

GAY ATLANTA MINORITY ASSOCIATION AND BLACK AND WHITE MEN TOGETHER

In April 1979, a group of Black gay men established the Gay Atlanta Minority Association (GAMA) under the leadership of Greg Worthy, Melvin Ross, and Gene Holloway. GAMA was the first Black LGBTQ+ political advocacy and social organization in Atlanta. The group maintained an early office in the Atlanta Gay Center location at 931 Ponce de Leon Avenue NE before later holding meetings in the Festival Lounge at 142 Spring Street NW (now Ted Turner Drive) in Downtown Atlanta (Dolan and Hayward 2018). During the early 1980s, GAMA took the lead in combatting ongoing issues of racism among the white lesbian and gay communities. Later known as the Atlanta Anti-Discrimination Project, the campaign sought to end the longstanding discriminatory admission policies of several Midtown bars and nightclubs that prohibited or limited access of African American patrons by charging higher admittance fees or requiring multiple forms of identification



Greg Worthy, Co-founder of GAMA, 1979 (Source: *Gaybriel*, Volume 10, August, 1979. Atlanta Lesbian and Gay History Thing papers and publications, a/c. MSS773. Kenan Research Center at the Atlanta History Center)

(Chapman 1981:16D; *Gaybriel* 1979; Gay Atlanta Minority Association 1981).

“I was walking down the street holding the hands of blacks, whites, and lesbians. I thought at long last gay unity. Then I was invited to a party after the march, and everyone at the party went to Backstreet when it broke up. I was not able to get in. It then hit me that gay unity was not real...Blacks are good enough to entertain but not be patrons”
Greg Worthy, co-founder of GAMA (Sears 2001:297).

GAMA’s anti-racism campaign was soon joined by the Atlanta Chapter of the National Association of Black and White Men Together (NABWMT). Thirty-five members began holding their meetings

at the Atlanta Gay Center location on Ponce de Leon in December 1981, over a year after the founding of the parent organization in San Francisco in May 1980 (Atlanta Gay Center 1981). The gay multiracial and multicultural support group and social justice organization was formed to fight against racism in the LGBTQ+ community and homophobia within the larger U.S. society (National Association of Black & White Men Together 2022). NABWMT worked with GAMA, and other supportive groups including, ALFA and First Tuesday, as part of the Atlanta Anti-Discrimination Project in the early 1980s.

THE 1981 ATLANTA MUNICIPAL ELECTION

In March of 1981, members of the LGT Pride Committee helped to organize a protest demonstration against anti-LGBTQ+ conservative activist Jerry Falwell’s visit in Marietta, Georgia. Over the summer months, the first governmental, media, and medical reports began to appear documenting a mysterious disease that would later be known as AIDS. But it was the Atlanta municipal elections later that November would garnered most of the attention of many LGBTQ+ political activists in the city that year (Jameson 1981:1; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services 2022).

The American Civil Liberties Union of Georgia established a Gay and Lesbian Rights Chapter in May 1981 and began working with First Tuesday and the Atlanta Gay Center to address the continuing police harassment of gay men through the newly established Atlanta City Council Public Safety Committee (Fleischmann and Hardman 2004:417). Prior to the municipal elections that fall, First Tuesday held another political forum of the council and mayoral candidates to question their commitments toward LGBTQ+ civil rights in the city. Six out of seven mayoral candidates

took part in the event in contrast to the previous election, where only one candidate bothered to attend. The willingness of candidates to participate in the First Tuesday forum and demonstrated the growing importance of the lesbian and gay electorate in Atlanta politics, which was estimated at approximately 10 percent of registered voters in the city (Ashkinaze 1981:12A, 14A).

During the 1981 mayoral campaign, candidate and former councilmember, Sidney Marcus, strongly courted the predominantly white gay electorate located in Midtown. His opponent, the well-known Civil Rights Movement leader, minister, former congressman, and U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, Andrew Young, preached before a predominantly gay audience at the MCC and met privately with several of the city's lesbian and gay political leaders (Ashkinaze 1981:12A). But after his election as mayor, Andrew Young declined signing the Atlanta City Council's adopted LGT Pride Day proclamation for June 26, 1982, arguing it was "inappropriate for governments to proclaim or comment on the sexuality of private individuals" (*Metropolitan Gazette* 1982a:7).

ATLANTA PRIDE PARADES, 1982 -1984

The 1982 LGT Atlanta Pride Parade ushered in a new route for the event when an estimated 4,000 marchers walked two-and-a-half miles down Peachtree Street from Piedmont Park to the Georgia State Capitol building protesting in favor of LGBTQ+ civil rights and equal protection under the law, fighting against racism and sexism within the LGBTQ+ communities, and again calling for an end to the state's sodomy statutes (Lesbian/Gay/Transperson Pride Committee 1982). There, the crowd gathered on the steps and listened to speeches from the comic entertainer PICI

(Francis Pici), Rev. Mike Piazza of the MCC, and Jonetta Smallwood of ALFA and the Black lesbian group, Sisters. Unlike the previous two years, the speeches were pointedly political and involved the recent police harassment and killings of LGBTQ+ people and vandalization of the Metropolitan Community Church in the Virginia-Highland neighborhood (*Metropolitan Gazette* 1982b:7)

Only about 2,000 marchers took part in the Pride Parade on Saturday, June 25, 1983 – a considerable decline from the previous year that perplexed the planning committee. The march was officially rechristened the Lesbian/Gay Pride Parade, an apparent capitulation to some of those in Atlanta's white gay community who had earlier criticized the inclusion of "Transpersons" as part of the event name. The route began at the Atlanta Civic Center, traveled west along Ralph McGill Boulevard, and north up Peachtree Street where it terminated in a rally and street party on the block between 10th and 11th streets. While organizers stated there was no theme or critical LGBTQ+ issue associated with that year's parade, it was the first march in Atlanta to include a "Stop Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome" banner and a candlelight vigil was held in Piedmont Park during Pride Week for the more than 400 gay men who had died throughout the U.S. so far from complications associated with the disease (Fleischmann and Hardman 2004:417; Straus 1983:4B).

The growing AIDS epidemic emerged as a central focus during the Atlanta Lesbian/Gay Pride Week in 1984. AID Atlanta, which was founded in 1983 as an all-volunteer organization in the city dedicated to providing healthcare services and education toward the fight against HIV/AIDS, held a series of special information seminars during Pride Week (*Pulse* 1984). Formation of AID Atlanta coincided with the creation of the Georgia AIDS Legislative

Coalition, a group of LGBTQ+ activists, public health professionals, and state legislators who worked together to lobby for state funding of AIDS education and healthcare programs (see Theme: LGBTQ+ Healthcare and Advocacy). While Mayor Andrew Young issued an official proclamation declaring July 3, 1984 as “Gay/Lesbian Rights Day,” neither he or other high-ranking city leaders attended the march, which followed the same route as the 1983 event and included only 500 participants according to a count provided by the *AJC* (Barnes 1984:2B).

LGBTQ+ INVOLVEMENT WITH THE 1988 DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL CONVENTION

By the mid-1980s, political advocacy among the major lesbian and gay groups in Atlanta had started to shift from addressing police harassment of LGBTQ+ residents in Midtown to formulating responses to the AIDS crises and repealing anti-LGBTQ+ legislation at the local and state levels. In November 1984, a group of political organizers that included Ed Stansell, an assistant dean at Emory University, community leader, Peter Whiteside, and lobbyist Gil Robison, chartered the Atlanta Campaign for Human Rights (ACHR). Later renamed the Greater Atlanta Political Awareness Coalition (GAPAC) in 1988, and now known as Georgia Equality, it was the first non-partisan political action committee in the state to engage local political leaders to address the needs of the city’s LGBTQ+ communities (Fleischmann and Hardman 2004:417; Chenault and Braukman 2008).

The 1985 Atlanta mayoral election generally lacked competitiveness as Andrew Young faced no significant opposition and handily won reelection to a second term as mayor (Stone 1989:209). In February of 1986, 350 LGBTQ+ people protested outside the former First Baptist Church of Atlanta

at 754 Peachtree Street NE in Midtown (no longer extant) over the pastor’s remarks that AIDS was an expression of god’s judgement of homosexuality (Hayward 2004). The next month LGBTQ+ political organizers celebrated the Atlanta City Council’s almost unanimous passage of a city ordinance prohibiting discrimination based on sexual orientation (see Theme: LGBTQ+ Atlantans and Harassment).

In early February 1987, the Democratic National Committee officially announced it had selected Atlanta as the host city for the 1988 Democratic National Convention (Sack 1987:1). The selection of Atlanta for the convention, along with the U.S. Supreme Court’s hearing of *Bowers v. Hardwick* challenging Georgia’s sodomy law, placed a national spotlight on the growing economic and political clout of the city’s sizeable LGBTQ+ population. Despite this progress, the 1987 Atlanta Pride Parade was a relatively subdued event largely due to the devastating impact of AIDS on the local gay population. Held on Saturday, June 27, 1987, the parade route from the Atlanta Civic Center to the State Capitol avoided Peachtree Street and was limited to the sidewalks in order to make it more accessible, so those participants who were weakened from AIDS could participate. A memorial service for those who died from AIDS was held the following day at All Saints Episcopal Church at 634 West Peachtree Street NW (Sverdlik 1987:1C, 7C).

Prior to the Democratic National Convention, the thirteenth annual Southeastern Conference for Lesbian and Gay Men was held over three days in mid-April at the Pierremont Plaza Hotel (now the Crowne Plaza Hotel at 590 West Peachtree Street NW) in Midtown. Over 400 people attended the networking event from across the country, which included workshops on homophobia, fundraising,



AIDS Protest Vigil at the Georgia State Capitol, May 7, 1988 (Source: *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* Photographic Archives. Special Collections and Archives, Georgia State University Library)

AIDS statistical information, and organizing within small, rural communities (Harvey 1988:7B; *Southern Voice* 1988b:16). The following month, more than 100 protesters held a 26-hour vigil on the steps of the Georgia Capitol Building on May 7-8, 1988, to protest Governor Joe Frank Harris' slashing the Department of Human Resources request for AIDS funding by nearly 75 percent (Tucker 1988:1, 3).

In the wake of the historic, Second National March on Washington for Lesbian and Gay Rights on October 11, 1987, and in the months leading up to the Democratic National Convention, national LGBTQ+ advocacy organizations also began establishing local offices in Atlanta. The Human Rights Campaign Fund and the AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power (ACT UP) both started local

chapters in Atlanta in 1988. This trend would continue with other groups into the 1990s (e.g., the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation or GLAAD in 1992, the Lambda Legal Defense and Educational Fund in 1997) (Fleischmann and Hardman 2004). According to one estimate, approximately 12 LGBTQ+ organizations existed in the city prior to 1987. By 1989, that number had ballooned to almost 100 groups (Hill 1989a:A6).

Also among the new local groups was the Legislative Equality for Gays and Lesbians (LEGAL), which was established in 1988. Linda Meredith was the spokesperson for LEGAL and Lee Harrington served as the first president of the organization. Like First Tuesday before it, the group's mission was to work within the Georgia Democratic Party to eliminate social, political, and economic discrimination. LEGAL backed five openly lesbian and gay representatives to serve as delegates to the DNC. Gil Robison and Joe Williford represented the Fifth Congressional District in Atlanta, while

Dick Rhodes, Melinda Daniels, Paul Garrard were elected in the Fourth District in northeast metropolitan Atlanta (within I-285). Of the five, Rhodes and Daniels were ultimately elected with Garrard serving as an alternate at the Convention in late July, which was met by a rally sponsored by LEGAL that consisted of over 1,000 people demonstrating on behalf of LGBTQ+ issues (Bates 1988:1, 10; Duncan 1988a; *Southern Voice* 1988a:1, 3). In addition, both Robison (District 40, Fulton County) and Rhodes (District 46, DeKalb County) ran for seats in the Georgia General Assembly—the first openly gay candidates to do so in Georgia. Both men however, failed to make it out of their respective primaries (*Atlanta Constitution* 1988:3B).

“OUR TIME TO BE RECOGNIZED HAS ARRIVED” - THE 1989 ATLANTA MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS

Between 2,000 and 5,000 people attended the Lesbian and Gay Pride Day Parade held on Saturday, June 24, 1989, that was credited at the time as being one of the largest, most diverse, and hottest marches on record in the city. The parade honored the twentieth anniversary of the Stonewall riots and political engagement among the city’s LGBTQ+ communities in the ongoing fight against AIDS and the upcoming city elections were on the minds of many marchers and speakers the concluding rally in Piedmont Park (Wiggans and Nikolopoulos 1989:1, 13). More so than in 1981, the mayoral election in 1989 between the former mayor, Maynard Jackson, and Fulton County Commissioner, Michael Lomax, clearly highlighted the importance in attracting LGBTQ+ voters. Both candidates would hire openly gay liaisons on their campaign staffs and actively courted the lesbian and gay electorate, not just in Midtown, but throughout the city (Hill 1989b:A1, A6).

Still sensitive after the criticism he received after his decision not to officially designate Gay Pride Day in 1977, Maynard Jackson touted his earlier achievements, including the 1976 Gay Pride proclamation, his work with Bill Smith and the Community Relations Commission to bring an end to police harassment of gay residents, and creation of the Neighborhood Planning Unit (NPU) system. The former mayor’s campaign also issued a detailed “Platform for the Gay and Lesbian Community” that promoted an expansion of LGBTQ+ civil rights and anti-discrimination policies in the city and county, increased funding for patient services and housing for those living with AIDS, improved public safety measures, and the appointment of lesbian and gay staff members and city government positions within his administration (Atlantans for Maynard Jackson 1989). While on the campaign trail Michael Lomax touted his leadership on the Fulton County Board of Commissioners in first speaking out about AIDS in 1981 and later securing public funding for AIDS testing and education in 1983, the first government funding to combat the epidemic in the state. He also pledged if he was elected as mayor he would establish hate crimes as a reporting category for the Atlanta police, reestablish the Community Relations Commission (as did Jackson), and support for an emergency housing fund within the city to assist those living with AIDS (Morse 1989:1, 3; Sojourner 1989:28–32).

Several lesbian and gay business, political, and social organizations became very involved with fundraising and voter education initiatives over the course of the 1989 election. The Metropolitan Atlanta Council of Gay/Lesbian Organizations (MACGLO) and LEGAL sponsored candidate forums and fundraisers over the course of the campaign. GAPAC conducted extensive interviews with Jackson and Lomax that involved a host of wide-ranging issues (ethics, city/environmental planning,

crime), as well as topics of concern among those in the Atlanta LGBTQ+ communities, including lesbian and gay city employment and contracting, the city's AIDS responses, same-sex relationship benefits for city employees, hate crimes reporting, and sensitivity training requirements proposed by the Police Advisory Committee (Greater Atlanta Political Awareness Coalition 1989:5–8). The interview answers were printed in full as part of *GAPAC News* inserts within the *Southern Voice* newspaper over the summer of 1989 and GAPAC later prepared an endorsement list of all mayoral and council candidates in September before the primaries (Whiteside 1989:1).

AFRICAN AMERICAN LESBIAN/GAY ALLIANCE

The African American Lesbian/Gay Alliance (AALGA) was another LGBTQ+ organization that would play a sizable role in the 1989 city elections. Reverend Carolyn Mobley and Marquis Delano Walker served as the first co-chairs of AALGA, which was founded in 1986 as a political and social organization for Black lesbians and gay men. Other notable individuals credited with the founding of AALGA included Rev. Duncan Teague and Chuck Cummings. Early meetings were held at the Atlanta Friends Meeting House at 1384 Fairview Road NE and later at the community room located in the basement of St. Anthony of Padua Catholic Church at 928 Ralph David Abernathy Boulevard SW in the West End neighborhood (Teague 2022).

Like GAMA and BWMT, AALGA sought to confront the problems of racism in the white LGBTQ+ community and homophobia among the city's Black population (Berry 1989:11). Unlike those earlier groups, AALGA maintained a co-gender membership. Mobley was an activist and vocalist who was involved with the Feminist Women's

Chorus, the Atlanta Gay Center, and the MCC. Walker was a counselor with Outreach, Inc., an AIDS prevention and service agency for the city's African American residents and served as the first Person with AIDS (PWA) on the AID Atlanta Board of Directors, prior to his death from complications with AIDS in October 1987 (Thomas 1987:1B, 4B; *Southern Voice* 1988c:13). Playwright and poet Sabrina Sojourner and Joan Garner later served as co-chairs of AALGA during the year of the election. Maynard Jackson addressed an AALGA meeting in July of 1989 and Sojourner wrote extensively about the two candidates, the campaigns, and how they addressed the issues of concern to the Black LGBTQ+ community in *Southern Voice* and *Etcetera Magazine*.

Michael Lomax's surprising decision to drop out of the mayoral race in early August 1989, greatly disappointed some of his LGBTQ+ supporters, including Sabrina Sojourner and Cathy Woolard, president of the Lesbian and Gay Rights Chapter of the ACLU in Atlanta, but also effectively handed Maynard Jackson a third term in office after easily winning the Democratic primary over Civil Rights activist, Hosea L. Williams. Lomax cited his low support among the city's large Black electorate but also his tepid showings among many white voters (Sack 1989:1A, 14A). Days after leaving the race, Lomax effectively dropped his plans for the Fulton County Commission to consider anti-discrimination and affirmative action ordinances for lesbian and gay residents and public employees, which further deepening the disillusionment among his LGBTQ+ allies (Corvette 1989:1C, 3C). Meanwhile, Jackson later hired former AALGA co-chair (and Michael Lomax volunteer liaison), Joan Garner, as a senior advisor in his administration and a co-chair of the City Council's Lesbian and Gay Public Safety Task Force (Wildmoon 1993c:19).

EXPANDING AND SOLIDIFYING LGBTQ+ CIVIL RIGHTS IN THE 1990S

The LGBTQ+ civil rights movement in Atlanta generally became more institutional in the 1990s as better-financed local, state, and national organizations joined the ongoing battles for improved HIV/AIDS health services and abolish the state sodomy law; however local grassroots protest campaigns also persisted. While violence against LGBTQ+ people continued to be a problem within Atlanta, implementation of the city's 1986 anti-discrimination ordinance and domestic partnership registry in 1993 helped shift the focus of local activists toward addressing anti-LGBTQ+ discriminatory actions and policies in the private sector and other parts of the metropolitan area. Following the International Olympic Committee's (IOC) award of the 1996 Olympic Games to the City of Atlanta in September 1990, local grassroots groups and organizers were increasingly able to appeal at the national and international levels for economic and political pressure on local and state leaders to repeal anti-LGBTQ+ discriminatory policies or laws (Fleischmann and Hardman 2004:408).

DIRECT ACTION PROTESTS: ACT UP/ ATLANTA

Local activists started the Atlanta chapter of ACT UP on August 1, 1988, over a year after the organization was founded in New York City to confront the HIV/AIDS crises (ACT UP/Atlanta 1994). As in other cities, ACT UP/Atlanta adopted the icon of the pink triangle, once used by the Nazis to identify homosexual prisoners in the concentration camps, and the slogan Silence = Death. Local members

of ACT UP immediately became engaged in a series of high-profile, direct-action demonstrations that garnered local media attention and sometimes negative reactions from other (often older) lesbian and gay activists in Atlanta (Duncan 1988b:4). On August 27, 1988, 24 members of the ACT UP/Atlanta picketed for one hour at the Circle K convenience store at 2118 DeFours Ferry Road NW as part of a nationwide ACT UP protest of the national company's decision to deny employee medical claims for those with HIV/AIDS. A second protest was staged a few days later at another Circle K affiliate near Northlake Mall in DeKalb County (Duncan 1988c:1, 2). The following month, ACT UP staged a "Die In" and mock funeral at the Georgia Governor's Mansion on September 29, 1988, to protest Governor Joe Frank Harris' refusal to fund AZT treatments for uninsured AIDS patients in the state (AIDS Coalition To Unleash Power/Atlanta 1988). During the late 1980s and early 1990s, contingents of ACT UP/Atlanta members would prominently march in the Atlanta Pride parades and make their presence known at various AIDS-related events and protests throughout the area.

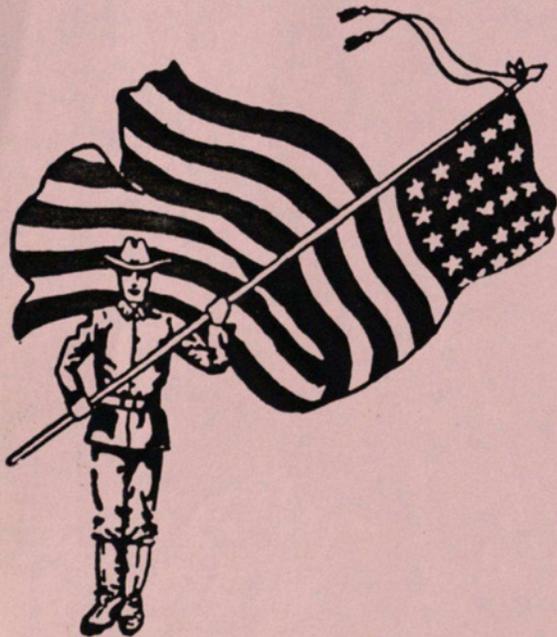
People may think this isn't a political town, that the gays and lesbians here are more interested in what's happening at Lenox Square than Grady Hospital. If that's the case, then it's time for that to change. And like those at Stonewall, it's time for us to fight back. - Chip Rowan, ACT UP/Atlanta (Wiggins and Nikolopoulos 1989)



On January 8, 1990, more than 300 ACT UP activists from Atlanta and across the country staged a two-hour demonstration at the Georgia State Capitol building on the opening day of the legislative session to call for an

STOP STATE SPONSORED GENOCIDE

The Atlanta AIDS COALITION TO UNLEASH POWER (ACT UP/
ATLANTA) will sponsor a funeral procession and "Die - In" at the governor's



ACT UP

FOR A BETTER AMERICA !

mansion on Thursday, September 29, 1988. The protest is in response to Governor Joe Frank Harris' refusal to fund AZT treatments for indigent or uninsured AIDS patients. Many other states are picking up the tab now that federal money has run out. But Governor Harris prefers to let Georgians die.

Participants should meet at the Buckhead BIG STAR Supermarket at 5:00 pm. From there we will drive to the governor's mansion in funeral-procession style. Parking has been arranged for, allowing us to leave our cars and lay down in front of the Governor's home as if dead. This will be a graphic portrayal of the fate of AIDS patients in Georgia who are about to lose the only drug that has been shown effective in combatting their illness. The demonstration will be over at 6:30 pm.

end to the state's sodomy law. Sixty-three people were arrested as part of the civil disobedience protest (O'Neill 1990:3). The following day, 400 ACT UP protesters stormed the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention campus, located just outside the city, to protest the public health agency's limited official definition of AIDS and statistical collection methods for HIV infections. During the two-hour occupation and standoff with police, the protesters hung banners that read "CDC Kills," painted outlines of bodies on sidewalks to memorialize those who died from inaccurate HIV diagnosis, threw ping-pong balls, meant to represent immune system T-cells, down building hallways (AIDS Coalition To Unleash Power 1990; Georgia State University Library 2023). ACT UP protesters would return to the CDC the following December. The police arrested almost 90 people after 47 activists took over the office of the Deputy Director of AIDS for the CDC at Executive Park demanding that women infected with HIV/AIDS be recognized and adequately treated. At the same time, another 600 activists from other various ACT UP chapters occupied the agency's main campus facility (Wofford 1990:5).

QUEER NATION/ATLANTA AND THE CRACKER BARREL PROTESTS, 1990-1992

Some members of ACT UP formed Queer Nation in New York City in March of 1990 to combat rising anti-gay discrimination, violence, and homophobic attacks in the media. With the slogan, "We're Here. We're Queer. Get Used to It," the group was modeled after the confrontational protest methods earlier employed by ACT UP. By the summer and fall of 1990, organizers had established additional chapters in cities such as Boston, Chicago, and San Francisco. Twenty-two,

Black and white lesbian and gay men established an Atlanta chapter of Queer Nation in the fall of 1990 and held their early meetings at the Little Five Points Community Center. Queer Nation/Atlanta staged its demonstration on November 10, 1990 at Jock's & Jill's Sports Grill, located at 112 10th Street NE. Organizers selected the Midtown sports bar to protest the management's policy of using police to evict LGBTQ+ people displaying affection (*Southern Voice* 1990:3, 9).

Queer Nation/Atlanta would garner more publicity in 1991 and 1992 working with the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force (NGLTF) in coordinating a national boycott of Cracker Barrel chain restaurants. The protests were in response to the Tennessee company's new corporate policy of banning workers "whose sexual preferences fail to demonstrate, normal, heterosexual values," and the subsequent firings of gay and lesbian employees in Florida, Georgia, and North Carolina. Beginning in early March 1991, Queer Nation/Atlanta protesters began applying for jobs in person at Cracker Barrel locations throughout metropolitan Atlanta (Norcross, Douglasville, Lithonia), asking managers

"Do you hire gays and lesbians?" Soon, the protests took the form of boisterous sit-ins in Atlanta and quickly spread to other cities throughout the Southeast (Garvey and Kaupman 1991a:2, 1991b:2). Cracker Barrel rescinded its policy but refused to meet protesters' other demands, which included back pay for the fired employees. The company also filed suit against Queer Nation/Atlanta, the Tennessee Boycott Coalition, and the NGLTF in November 1991. The case was quickly dropped the next year; however, several Queer Nation protesters faced trial for criminal trespass charges levied during the sit-ins (National Gay and Lesbian Task Force 1992; Saunders 2014).

"WE'RE
HERE.
WE'RE
QUEER.
GET
USED
TO
IT."

Act Up Slogan

1993 ATLANTA LESBIAN/GAY PRIDE FESTIVAL AND FIRST DYKE MARCH

The size of the Atlanta Lesbian/Gay Pride Parade exploded during the early 1990s, jumping from an estimated 5,000 marchers in 1989, to more than 60,000 people in 1992, despite infighting among some on the Atlanta Lesbian/Gay Pride Committee (ALGPC) that threatened to short-circuit planning

First Atlanta Dyke March in Piedmont Park, 1993
(Source: *Atlanta Journal-Constitution Photographic Archives. Special Collections and Archives, Georgia State University Library*)



for the event (Wildmoon 1993a:1). Those numbers would swell again to approximately 100,000 people for the parade, which took place on Sunday June 27, 1993, with Deana Collins and Duncan Teague serving as co-grand marshals. The march extended along the standard route from the Civic Center, north on Peachtree Street, and terminating in Piedmont Park. In addition to the massive size, the 1993 parade was notable for reviving the Dyke March that was originally held in Candler Park in 1983. The 1993 Dyke March took place at noon the day prior to the Pride Parade. Organized by the Atlanta chapter of Lesbian Avengers, a direct-action protest group, the Dyke March consisted of 1,800 lesbians, dancing, drumming, fire-eating, and marching around Piedmont Park along Piedmont Avenue, Monroe Drive, and 10th Street. The Dyke March has since become a staple of Atlanta Pride Week festivities that is open to “all women loving women” (trans-inclusive) of any race, culture, orientation, ability, health, socioeconomic level, family structure, faith or age” (Wildmoon 1993b:3, 15; Moore 2012:D1).

OLYMPICS OUT OF COBB COALITION, 1994

In August 1993, the Cobb County Commission passed a resolution denouncing the “gay lifestyles” as “incompatible with the standards to which this community subscribes” and “directly contrary to state laws.” The anti-LGBTQ+ declaration was part of the commission’s decision to eliminate local arts funding rather than risk funding for works that could express gay content. The resolution elicited strong local reaction from LGBTQ+ groups and straight allies throughout metropolitan Atlanta. To protest the measure, approximately 1,800 people with ACT UP, Lesbian Avengers, Queer Nation, the Cobb Citizens Coalition, and other groups held a “Queer Family Picnic” demonstration in the Marietta Square



(Opposite) (Top) Olympics Out of Cobb Co-Founders Pat Hussain (center) and Jon-Ivan Weaver (right). (Source: JohnVanHasselt/Getty Images). (Bottom) "Olympics Out of Cobb" Protest at Woodruff Park in Downtown Atlanta, February 27, 1994 (Source: Atlanta Journal-Constitution Photographic Archives. Special Collections and Archives, Georgia State University Library)

on August 22, 1993 (Vejnoska 1993:D1; Alexander and Morris 1993:B1; Shumate 1993:7).

Five months later, in mid-January 1994, the Atlanta Committee for the Olympic Games (ACOG) announced it had selected the recently opened Cobb Galleria Centre as the site for volleyball during the 1996 Olympic Games. The decision to host the competition in Cobb County sparked vocal backlash among a handful of LGBTQ+ people in Atlanta. The following month, a coalition of groups and individuals formed Olympics Out of Cobb County (OOC), under the leadership of co-chairs Jon-Ivan Weaver and Pat Hussain, a longtime activist in the city who was involved with AALGA, GLAAD/Atlanta, and the Lambda Community Center. Hussain also served on the executive committee of the 1993 March on Washington and the board of directors of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force. The organization staged their first protest urging ACOG to pull the competition out of Cobb County at Woodruff Park in downtown Atlanta on February 27, 1994 (Wildmoon 1994a:3).

By March, the OOC was joined by Congressman John Lewis and the National Rainbow Coalition in demanding a new host venue for the event. Using any publicity tool available, including public demonstrations, media appearances, flyers, t-shirts, airplane banners, and even a 21-mile protest torch run, the OOC organizers kept up their pressure on ACOG. The group also demanded the Olympics planning committee condemn Cobb County's anti-gay resolution, called for an

end to the Georgia sodomy law, removal of the Confederate battle emblem from the state flag, and removal of Olympic licensing rights from any company that discriminated against lesbian and gay people (Shumate 1994:3). Finally, in on July 29, 1994, ACOG responded to the outcry and announced it would move the volleyball competition out of Cobb County and instead play the games in Athens at the University of Georgia Coliseum (Turner 1994:1).

FIRST ATLANTA BLACK GAY PRIDE WEEKEND, 1996

More than 200,000 people attended the Atlanta Pride weekend celebrations from June 28-30, 1996 – double the number of people from just three years earlier, which made it one of the largest LGBTQ+ events in the nation. The parade took place on Sunday and followed its normal route along Peachtree Street, starting near the Civic Center MARTA station, and ending in Piedmont Park at 10th Street. The day was capped by a performance by the Indigo Girls and speakers that included Coretta Scott King (Crenshaw 1996:11).

Two months later, the group, In the Life Atlanta (ITLA), organized the first, formal Atlanta Black Gay Pride event over the Labor Day weekend from August 30-September 2, 1996 (Atlanta Black Pride 2022). Atlanta Black Gay Pride was an outgrowth of earlier annual Labor Day picnics held in the city for Black lesbians and gay men and first hosted by event organizer, Henri McTerry (who is widely credited as the "Father of Atlanta Black Gay Pride") in the backyard at his home in Decatur during late 1970s and early 1980s. By the mid-1980s, McTerry's picnics hosted more than 500 people from all over the country (Washington 2013:85, 2018). The picnic gatherings eventually moved to Atlanta public parks, including Candler Park,

which was among the earlier sites used for the event in the 1990s. In addition to the picnics, ITLA rounded out Black Pride Weekend with workshops and panel discussions at Center Stage Theater, church services, poetry readings, and evening parties at Black owned or operated nightclubs and restaurants, such as the Marquette, Festival Lounge, Pear Garden, TRAXX, and Texas (Lee 2020; Washington 2022).

CONCLUSION

During the 1997 municipal elections, Cathy Woolard was elected to the Atlanta City Council, unseating longtime incumbent Mary Davis for the Sixth District seat, which included Midtown. A former president of the Lesbian and Gay Rights Chapter of the ACLU, where she had been very involved with the Atlanta Citizen's Review Board, and board member of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, Woolard became the first openly LGBTQ+ candidate elected to political office in Georgia (Hill 1989b; Helton and Crenshaw 1997:B1). Her win served as a milestone achievement in the nearly 30-year history of the LGBTQ+ civil rights movement in Atlanta that began to take its first, tentative steps in the days

following the *Lonesome Cowboys* raid at the Ansley Mall Mini-Cinema in August 1969.

The Atlanta Pride Parade on June 25, 2000, represented the thirtieth anniversary of the event and drew more than 300,000 people to the city. A concert by the Athens, Georgia band, The B-52s, closed out the Pride weekend celebrations, which enjoyed corporate sponsorship from such brands as Coors, Pepsi, Jose Cuervo, Stolichnaya, and Showtime. Meanwhile, by the early 2000s, Atlanta Black Gay Pride was also attracting thousands of people to Atlanta over Labor Day weekend and had grown to become one of the largest pride celebrations for LGBTQ+ African Americans in the world. All of this was a far cry from the early 1970s, when most marchers were white, gay males, some of whom wore bags over their heads for fear of being recognized (Atlanta History Center 2019). Despite these successes, challenges persisted into the new millennium as traditionally underrepresented members of Atlanta's LGBTQ+ communities, most notably Black, Asian, Latin, and transgender people, including transgender activist Cheryl Courtney-Evans, continued to fight for political and economic equality and assert their civil rights (Saunders 2016).

NRHP ELIGIBILITY STANDARDS

THEME: POLITICAL ACTIVISM IN ATLANTA’S LGBTQ+ COMMUNITIES

Associated Property Functions/Uses: The table below is intended to provide guidance on the types of properties that are expected to be associated with the theme Political Activism in Atlanta’s LGBTQ+ Communities. This list is not to be considered comprehensive, as it was developed in tandem with the research conducted for the development of the theme’s history. This list does not preclude other properties with differing functions and uses that could have associations with the theme, pending future research.

Property Description: Associated property types may include commercial buildings or residential buildings that were used to house grassroots

LGBTQ+ political and activist organizations. These resources may not have been originally built for the purposes of housing a LGBTQ+ associated political organization. Properties associated with the theme may be civic buildings where protest events took place, or parks or parade routes that were used for political organizations to gather and garner attention for LGBTQ+ civil rights.

Property Significance: Those properties identified as significant under the Political Activism in Atlanta’s LGBTQ+ Communities theme should have a documented association with an organization, person(s), or event(s) that made important contributions to the history of LGBTQ+ politics and activism in Atlanta. Some properties may be associated with a person considered an important leader in the Atlanta LGBTQ+ civil rights movement. This would be a property that best represents that person’s productive life. If a building is no longer extant, or the organization moved frequently, consideration of eligibility for the individual’s residence as an NRHP-eligible property can be

Property Function or Use	Common Subcategories
Building: Residential	Apartment Duplex Residential Hotel Single-Family Residence
Building: Commercial	Bar Retail
Building: Civic	City Hall County, State, and Federal buildings Courthouse
District	Commercial Landscape Residential
Sites/Landscapes	Park Plaza Parade Route

made. Additionally, consideration should be made for the potential significance of parks, parade routes, convention centers, and other sites of political protest and celebration under this theme.

Geographic Locations: The city limits of Atlanta.

Areas of Significance:

- Ethnic Heritage: Black
- Politics/Government
- Social History: Civil Rights
- Social History: LGBTQ+ History
- Social History: Women’s History

Criteria: NRHP Criteria A and B, Criteria Consideration G

For Criterion B, the significant individual must have lived or worked in the property during the period in which they achieved significance - i.e., the period in which they created their productive body of work.

Properties associated with institutions or individuals that date from the last 50 years must possess exceptional importance, following the requirements of Criteria Consideration G.

Period of Significance: 1969-2000

Period of Significance Justification: The period of significance is recommended as beginning in 1969, the year when the pivotal *Lonesome Cowboys* raid took place at Ansley Mall that galvanized the LGBTQ+ community to organize and demand their civil rights in the City of Atlanta and the elimination of the state’s sodomy law. The period of significance ends in 2000, the end of the period of study for this context statement. The end of the period of significance is 2000, the end of the study period for the thematic context. In general, if the

period of significance continues to the present, the end of the study period is the recommended end date.

Eligibility Standards:

- Resources must have a documented association with a business, organization, institution, or event that made important contributions to Atlanta’s LGBTQ+ civil rights movement.
- Resources may also be associated with the life of an important individual or individuals who played a significant role in Atlanta’s LGBTQ+ civil rights movement.

Character Defining Features

- A significant space associated with the Theme: Political Activism in Atlanta’s LGBTQ+ Communities may be located in a building designed for another use, reflecting the grassroots organizing that took place in the early LGBTQ+ rights movement when new political organizations used a variety of available spaces in a wide range of building types to host and plan events.
- The business, organization, or institution associated with Political Activism in Atlanta’s LGBTQ+ Communities theme must have occupied the property during the period in which it achieved significance.
- The resource should retain most of the essential character defining features from the period the organization/business or individual occupied the property or when the event took place.

Integrity Considerations

Overall integrity should be assessed within the time frame the resource gained significance.

The most important aspects of integrity for this theme and area of significance should be Location, Feeling, Association, and Design. A significant property associated with the theme should be in its original location. It should retain recognizable features from its period of significance that contribute to its integrity of design, feeling, and association. Property specific research should aim to identify important interior features (or important features in the historic setting in the case of an event at a park or plaza) that may have impacted the spaces and how they were used.

Integrity of Materials and Workmanship, while important, may not be crucial for meeting the

integrity threshold for this theme and area of significance under Criteria A and B. Many buildings in the Inventory have experienced alterations and may not retain all of their original materials. Research and firsthand accounts of people using the space during the period of significance can provide greater detail on what important features existed for the property, and which features are most important to be intact for consideration for eligibility.

In most cases, integrity of setting should be considered in terms of urban versus suburban setting and assess whether newer infill is, or is not, in keeping with the property's historic period of development



This two-story frame Queen Anne House is located in the NRHP-listed Candler Park Historic District. The house was the first home to the Atlanta

Lesbian Feminist Alliance (ALFA), a separatist, lesbian-feminist organization formed on June 23, 1972. According to co-founder Lorraine Fontana,

CASE STUDY

RESOURCE: ALFA HOUSE, 1190 MANSFIELD AVENUE NE

Note: This case study is a starting point for National Register eligibility analysis for this and related resources. Interiors of case study properties were not accessed during the creation of this context document, however, a thorough analysis of interior integrity would be required as part of any formal assessment of this property's eligibility for the National Register of Historic Places. Furthermore, these are not the official opinions of HPD and are provided here as starting points and models for additional analysis. Formal eligibility would need to be determined via in-depth analysis at the time of nomination.

the decision to form the group was motivated by ALFA members feeling increasingly unwelcome in some of Atlanta's primarily heterosexual and anti-gay, socialist and feminist organizations and no longer willing to tolerate the male-dominated leadership of the GGLF. An early mission statement published in the August 21, 1972, edition of *The Great Speckled Bird*, declared ALFA would be "a political action group of gay sisters...and an umbrella group for Women's projects and gay Women's projects" that would also "serve as a communications center for all these groups." However, the founding members' vision for ALFA extended beyond just political activism and encompassed social support along with a broad range of educational and artistic opportunities for all lesbian women in Atlanta. Nicknamed the "Edge of Night," the original ALFA House was the first women's only space in Georgia and contained rooms used for meetings, educational events, and a lending library.

The property is significant at the local level under Criterion A in the areas of Politics/Government, Social History: LGBTQ+ History, and Social History: Women's History because ALFA played key roles in the fight for racial equality, LGBTQ+ civil rights, anti-war movement, and feminism in Atlanta. Along with serving as a co-sponsor and organizer of the Atlanta Gay Pride March in 1973, ALFA members also established a protest of the *Atlanta Constitution and Journal* that year after management at both newspapers refused to print information about the group's events. The group co-founded the Georgians for ERA (Equal Rights Amendment) in 1973 and was the first openly lesbian organization in Georgia to participate in the January 1974 protest march at the State Capitol in support of the state's passage of the amendment.

National Register Criteria: Criterion A

Area(s) of Significance: Social History: LGBTQ+ History and Women's History

Period of Significance: 1972-1973

Integrity: The ALFA House remains on the sites of its original construction and retains integrity of location. The property is surrounded by other historic houses from the 1920s and 1930s, with the exception of a non-historic townhouse development to its north that was built at a context sensitive scale. Therefore, the property retains integrity of setting. The house has a high degree of integrity of design, materials, and workmanship. It appears to have received the addition of a gable-roof dormer in circa 2016. Despite this, the house remains recognizable from the period of significance, thus maintaining integrity of association and feeling.

Character Defining Features:

- Direct association with the theme Political Activism in the Atlanta LGBTQ+ Community as it served as the first location of ALFA.
- Retains essential physical features from the period of significance including the two-story, Queen Anne house type, and interior rooms used for meeting spaces, a lending library, and education events.
- Further oral history interviews conducted with ALFA members with knowledge of the property may help identify additional character defining features from the period of significance.

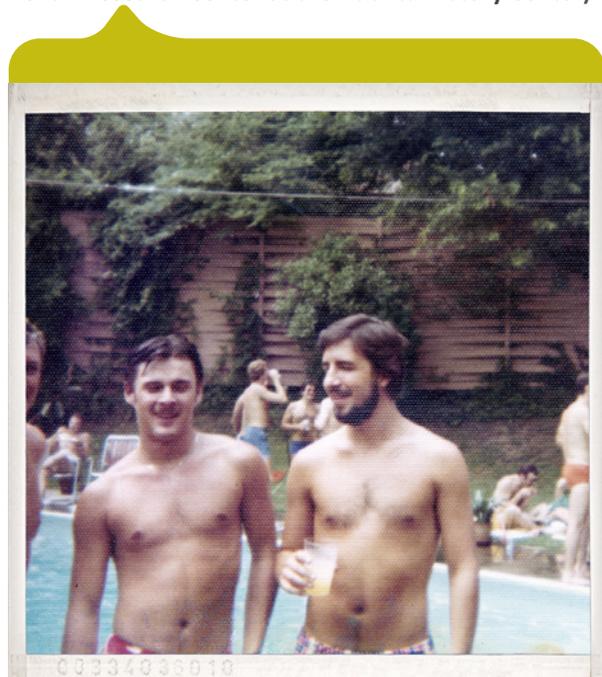
LGBTQ+ COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

In the late twentieth century, LGBTQ+ Atlantans established non-profit, community organizations to specifically address the needs of the LGBTQ+ population at a time when they were either ignored or actively excluded from the larger, straight society. Although they primarily functioned as information centers, safe spaces for meetings, and occasionally as business incubators, these organizations also offered a broad range of services, including mental and physical healthcare counseling, referrals, and screenings, office services, and housing. The city's LGBTQ+ residents also formed numerous social groups centered around recreational activities and sports, common business or community interests, gender, ethnicity or racial affiliation, and schools. As a result, this chapter has been organized to discuss the histories of these groups by their general associations, rather than chronologically, as is done in other chapters of the document. Also, unlike the LGBTQ+ community organizations, most social groups did not generally own, rent, or maintain long term physical locations. Instead, these groups typically used existing spaces located throughout the city for weekly or monthly meetings, such as LGBTQ+ owned or friendly businesses, churches, libraries, and community buildings. Finally, many LGBTQ+ community organizations and social groups commonly addressed issues involving art, healthcare, and political or racial equity, or religion. Several of these groups are also discussed in other chapters of this context.

THE APOLLO SOCIAL CLUB

Six charter members founded the Apollo Social Club in 1972 as one of the earliest private gay recreational clubs in Atlanta. Ostensibly organized to promote artistic and literary pursuits among its exclusive, white, gay male members, the Apollo Social Club commonly hosted large brunch and cocktail parties, holiday banquets, and sponsored group vacations. Membership was limited to 200 men who paid \$25 in annual dues (Ledgerwood 2013; Sears 2001:80).

Apollo Social Club Pool Party, Date Unknown (Source: Atlanta Lesbian and Gay History Thing Collection. Kenan Research Center at the Atlanta History Center)



COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS – THE ATLANTA GAY CENTER AND THE LAMBDA COMMUNITY CENTER

The original incarnation of the Atlanta Gay Center was founded in 1976 by local gay activists and operated on the second floor of a converted

apartment house located at 20 4th Street NE (no longer extant). The original center generally functioned as a meeting space for discussion groups and planning for political events and pride marches. Volunteers also operated a help and information line for gay men in Atlanta (Robison 1976:1, 14; 2022).

The reorganized Atlanta Gay Center (later renamed the Atlanta Gay and Lesbian Center or AGC) began operation in February 1979 at 972 Peachtree Street NE (no longer extant). According to co-founder Gil Robison, the new center “was much more professionally run and they had quite a few more services than the first one did. The first one was mostly politically active and community service or public health or issues like that...weren’t really in the forefront” (Atlanta Gay Center 1978a; Robison 2022).

The AGC provided assembly space for various LGBTQ+ support groups, including a gay Alcoholics Anonymous group, maintained a library stocked with LGBTQ+ books and periodicals, and published its own newsletter, the *Atlanta Gay Central* (Atlanta Gay Center 1978b). In addition to its function as a recreational and social meeting space, it was the first agency in the city to provide healthcare services and counseling for LGBTQ+ residents (see Theme: LGBTQ+ Healthcare and Advocacy).

In 1980, the AGC moved into a converted dwelling at 931 Ponce de Leon Avenue NE. This location housed LGBTQ+ owned and operated businesses that included an art gallery, bookstore, and a coffee house. The new facility also provided legal counseling, and secretarial services, and rental apartments on the first floor and basement levels of the building (Atlanta Gay Center 1980). Despite expectations the property on Ponce de Leon Avenue would serve as the AGC’s permanent home,



Atlanta Gay Center, 931 Ponce de Leon Avenue NE, 1981 (Source: *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* Photographic Archives. Special Collections and Archives, Georgia State University Library)

the organization signed a lease to move into a new location on the third floor of a commercial property at 848 Peachtree Street NE (no longer extant) in May 1982. Adequate meeting and storage space, along with cheaper utilities and additional parking, were among the stated reasons for the change and AGC briefly shared space in this location with the first office of AID Atlanta (Atlanta Gay Center 1982).

During the mid-to late 1980s, the AGC experienced numerous changes in leadership and locations. The center sought to establish an HIV/AIDS testing and counseling facility in a house at 525 Parkway Drive NE in the Bedford-Pines/Old Fourth Ward neighborhood. However, community leaders strongly opposed the move and it was ultimately voted down by the Atlanta City Council in October

1988 (Denmark 1988:2). According to notices published in the *Southern Voice* and various other LGBTQ+ periodicals, the AGC operated out of three adjacent addresses at 63, 67-71 12th Street NE (no longer extant) from 1989 to 1996. In this location, the center hosted workshops on HIV/AIDS, self-defense, anonymous HIV/STD testing, coming out, and young adult support groups for gay men and lesbians.

The center was briefly housed in the office tower of the United Methodist Center located at 159 Ralph McGill Boulevard NE (formerly Forrest Avenue) in circa 2000. The AGC eventually closed its doors in 2007 (Fox 2008:K2). Andrew Wood's recollection likely mirrored the experience of thousands other gay men in Atlanta who visited the Atlanta Gay Center during the organization's almost 30 years of operation in various locations throughout the city:

"It was a safe place with people like me, and they had a library with books that I could read about gay subjects and gay sexuality and gay sex. Just about everything. They were so kind to me, and they took me under their wing. I did a little bit of volunteering there: not a lot – I was a kid. But a lot of my life began to center around the gay center, as I started having more friends who were gay. That just changed everything. All of a sudden, I wasn't alone." Andrew Wood, June 24, 2014 (Georgia State University Library 2022).

THE ATLANTA LAMBDA COMMUNITY CENTER

Two groups of organizers headed by Marcia Okula, Joan Garner, and Jeff Corrigan established the

Atlanta Lambda Community Center in 1992. The purpose of the new community center was to create an inclusive shared space for both lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people of all races and religions. It was also in response to concerns the existing LGBTQ+ organizations in the city, particularly the Atlanta Gay Center, had become "too splintered" and were no longer effective in their advocacy of LGBTQ+ issues. The organizers' envisioned the new center would act as a "clearinghouse" and referral network for various groups, in addition to its function as a meeting space for community activities (Wildmoon 1992). AALGA, BWMT, LEGAL, GAPAC, and Fourth Tuesday were among the various groups who voiced support of the Lambda Community Center. Following a two-year fundraising drive, the center eventually opened in 1994 in a three-story International Style office building located at 828 West Peachtree Street NW (no longer extant). During the 1990s, the Lambda Community Center provided meeting and recreational space for over 90 LGBTQ+ volunteer organizations in the city (Atlanta Lambda Center 1993; Marini 2018)

RECREATIONAL SPORTS LEAGUES AND TEAMS

Athletics and team sports provided some of the earliest outlets for LGBTQ+ people in Atlanta to develop relationships and bond in a social setting. While not exclusively lesbian in composition, the all-women Lorelei Ladies and Atlanta Tomboys softball teams, which began play in 1939 and 1944, respectively, were "in the center of gay life in Atlanta" in the decades before to the start of the LGBTQ+ rights movement in the 1970s according to longtime player, Barbara Vogel. Both teams were sponsored by automotive companies and competed against other clubs throughout the country (Chenault and Braukman 2008:53).

ALFA OMEGAS

“ TWO BITS, FOUR BITS, SIX BITS,
A DOLLAR. ALL FOR THE QUEERS,
STAND UP AND HOLLER!”

– Cheer for the ALFA Omega softball
team (Sears 2001:177)

In 1974, members of the Atlanta Lesbian Feminist Alliance, or ALFA (see Theme: Political Activism in Atlanta’s LGBTQ+ Communities) decided to form the first “out lesbian, racially integrated” women’s softball team in the City League. Cleverly (and classically) named as the ALFA Omegas, the club played in public parks throughout Atlanta and often held their postgame parties at the Tower Lounge at 735 Ralph McGill Boulevard NE. After losing their first game, the original Omegas won the rest and made it all the way to the league championship in their first season of existence (Gelfand 2020). Despite their success on the diamond, the Omegas were ultimately about supporting each other and establishing bonds among the ALFA members, recalled Gabriner, “We had some women who were incredible athletes and other people, like myself, who weren’t. We played in a very supportive way with each other—and we won our games!” (Sears 2001:177). With a heightened interest in the city, ALFA was able to field two teams the following year and also sponsored the First Annual ALFA Invitational All Women’s Softball Tournament at Piedmont Park in August 1975 with sanctioning by the Amateur Softball Association (Smith 1975:14).

ATLANTA VENTURE SPORTS AND THE DOGWOOD INVITATIONAL BOWLING CLASSIC

Atlanta Venture Sports (AVS) was founded in 1977 as a popular non-profit organization dedicated

to creating recreational and social events for lesbian and gay amateur athletes. New members needed to be sponsored by current members and AVS held large New Year’s Eve parties at the Fox Egyptian Ballroom and Colony Square Hotel to help fundraise for the group (Smith 2022). In addition to fielding LGBTQ+ bowling, softball, and volleyball teams, AVS also sponsored camping trips and the Buffalo Chips, a gay male clogging group that performed at the 1982 World’s Fair in Knoxville, Tennessee (Chenault and Braukman 2008:82).

Other bowling leagues joined AVS in 1977. These included Atlas and the Lambda Bowling League, which claimed to be the largest in the city (*Cruise Weekly* 1982c). The three leagues all bowled on separate evenings at the Midtown Bowl (formerly Express Bowling and Brunswick Lanes) located at 1936 Piedmont Circle NE. AVS and the Lambda League sponsored the first Dixie Invitational Bowling Tournament at the bowling alley in April 1981. More than 200 men and women bowlers from throughout the United States and Canada attended the event, making it the largest LGBTQ+ bowling tournament held up to that date (*Cruise Weekly* 1981). Now known as the Dogwood Invitational Bowling Classic, it is the oldest continuous regional LGBTQ+ bowling tournament in the world (Dogwood Invitational Bowling Classic 2023).

HOTLANTA SOFTBALL LEAGUE

Henry Vara of Backstreet, along with Greg Troia, a manager of the Armory, and David Francis were among the key organizers of the Hotlanta Softball League (HSL) in May 1981. The purpose of the HSL was to create a welcoming, organized recreational softball league for LGBTQ+ people in Atlanta. Among the establishments to field early teams in the league were the Armory, Backstreet, Bulldogs, Illusions, Mrs. P’s, the Pharr Library, and



The Armory Softball Team of the Hotlanta Softball League, 1983 (Source: *Cruise Weekly Arts & Entertainment Magazine*, 1983. Atlanta Lesbian and Gay History Thing Collection. Kenan Research Center at the Atlanta History Center

the Texas Drilling Company (*Cruise Weekly* 1982b). Backstreet represented Team Atlanta at the 1981 Gay Softball World Series in Toronto, Canada. The following year, the North American Gay Amateur Athletics Alliance (NAGAAA), which sponsored of the Gay Softball World Series (first held in 1977), formally accepted the league as a member of the alliance (*Cruise Weekly* 1982a).

ATLANTA ARMORY CLASSIC

The Atlanta Armory Classic Softball Tournament, a multi-day competition sponsored by the Armory bar and typically held over the Fourth of July weekend, began in 1983. All lesbian, gay, and co-ed softball teams from Atlanta, Birmingham, Alabama, and Houston, Texas participated in the first

tournament (Atlanta's Armory Classic Committee 1987). The games were played at the Softball Country Club (now known as the Atlanta Southside Sports Complex) located at 3460 Jonesboro Road SE, and by the early 1990s, the Armory Classic Softball Tournament had grown into one of the largest LGBTQ+ softball tournaments in the United States. Organizers expanded the event to include soccer, billiards, and bodybuilding in 1993 and renamed it the Armory Sports Classic to reflect the inclusion of the new sports. Soccer games were played at Piedmont Park, while the billiard and bodybuilding competitions were held at Colony Square (Schwarz 1993:19).

THE 1989 AND 1998 GAY SOFTBALL WORLD SERIES

Atlanta first played host to the Gay Softball World Series in 1989. Organized by the Hotlanta Softball League in coordination with the NAGAAA, the

week-long tournament was held at the Atlanta Southside Sports Complex on Jonesboro Road from August 22 through 26 and attracted between three and five thousand players and fans from across the U.S. and Canada (Fowler 1989:1, 20). The World Series returned to Atlanta and the Southside Sports Complex in 1998. The tournament was held that year between August 9-15. The Los Angeles Stray Cats took home the championship for the A Division, while the Dallas Sting and Boston Southenders topped the B and C divisions, respectively (Rock 2017).

BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

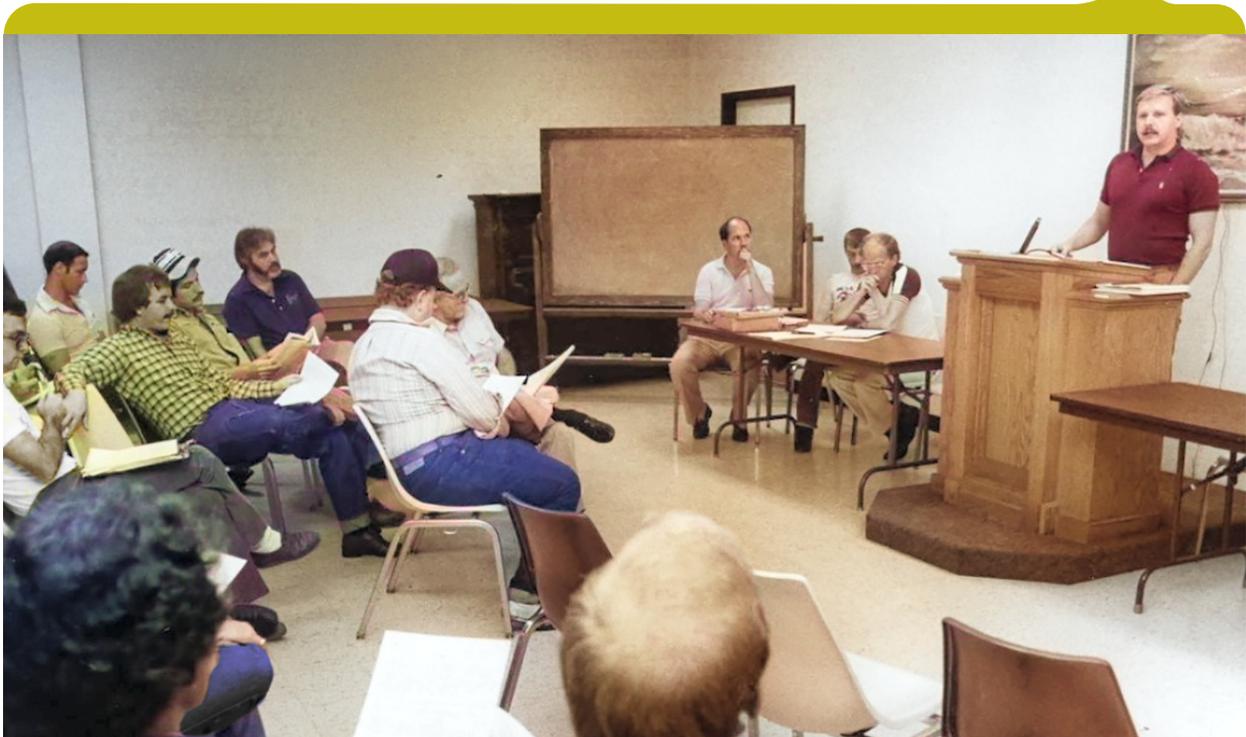
Beginning with the late 1970s, LGBTQ+ business owners began organizing professional associations to provide opportunities for networking, promote other LGBTQ+ companies, and to collectively advocate for LGBTQ+ political and economic interests. The developments of these groups revealed the economic strength of the Midtown

district, which served as a foundation for the growing influence of the Atlanta LGBTQ+ private sector in local politics from the 1980s to the present (Fleischmann and Hardman 2004).

ATLANTA BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONAL GUILD

The Atlanta Business and Professional Guild was established in 1978 as a non-profit service corporation by a group of bar owners in Midtown who were concerned over issues with the city's liquor licensing process for LGBTQ+ drinking establishments. Organized "to promote, protect, nurture, and advance the interests of gay and lesbian professionals and business owners in the Greater Atlanta area," the Guild published a directory of lesbian and gay-owned and operated businesses and effectively served as the city's

Atlanta Business and Professional Guild Meeting Conducted by President John Austin, 1978 (Source: *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* Photographic Archives, Special Collections and Archives, Georgia State University Library)



“gay chamber of commerce” The organization’s meetings were often held the second Tuesday of each month in member businesses or other public locations in Midtown. Just three years after its founding, the Atlanta Business and Professional Guild had established a credit union and legal defense fund for its nearly 300 members (Atlanta Business & Professional Guild 1989). Early in its existence, The Guild sponsored monthly dinners with guest lecturers, hosted fundraisers and special holiday parties, and assisted with organizing the Atlanta Pride events. Beginning in 1983, it sponsored the Midtown Classic charity road race and later helped finance several non-profit HIV/AIDS education and healthcare services in the city (Atlanta Business & Professional Guild 1986).

FOURTH TUESDAY

Fourth Tuesday was founded in 1982 as a lesbian networking and professional organization that held monthly luncheons and special events at LGBTQ+ owned or welcoming locations throughout the city. The group’s name was derived from its first meeting on the fourth Tuesday of October 1982 and for the code word for a place to gather and socialize in a safe space with other lesbians (Fourth Tuesday n.d; *The Georgia Voice* Editors 2010). Fourth Tuesday published its own newsletter and was the primary sponsor of the Business Expo ’89 in collaboration with the Atlanta Business and Professional Guild. Held at the Holiday Inn in Downtown Atlanta in March 1989, the Expo (later renamed the Atlanta Gay & Lesbian Business Expo) provided a showcase for 50 LGBTQ+ businesses and organizations from metropolitan Atlanta (Fourth Tuesday 1989; *Southern Voice* 1989:4). By the mid-1990s, Fourth Tuesday’s membership had grown to more than 500 people throughout the metropolitan Atlanta area. Beginning in 1992 the group started the Pat Hoban Memorial

Scholarship for lesbian college students and in 1995 established the Fourth Tuesday Lesbian Cancer Project to provide advocacy, educational, and health support services for lesbians living with cancer (Fourth Tuesday 1989).

METROPOLITAN ATLANTA COUNCIL OF GAY AND LESBIAN ORGANIZATIONS

In 1985, LGBTQ+ activists formed the Metropolitan Atlanta Council of Gay and Lesbian Organizations, commonly referred to as MACGLO, or the Metro Council, to serve as a unified community response organization for LGBTQ+ interests in the city following several police raids on bathhouses and other gay businesses and spaces in Midtown. MACGLO originally contained approximately 20 members that included political organizations, businesses, churches, social groups, and HIV/AIDS advocacy and service agencies. The Metro Council typically met every third Tuesday of the month at the Peachtree Branch Library located at 1315 Peachtree St NE and billed itself as “a forum for the exchange of ideas and events among member organizations and coordinating group” (MACGLO 1988; Marini 2018:371). During its six-year existence from 1985 to 1991, MACGLO was heavily involved in organizing events surrounding the 1988 Democratic National Convention in Atlanta and candidate forums during the 1989 Atlanta municipal elections (see Theme: Political Activism in Atlanta’s LGBTQ+ Communities).

THE ATLANTA EXECUTIVE NETWORK AND THE ATLANTA GAY & LESBIAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

The Atlanta Executive Network formed in 1991 by a group of lesbian and gay business professionals who sought to establish new networking opportunities in the Atlanta corporate and

government sectors. The AEN originally kept the sexual orientation of most of its membership private. By 1994, AEN counted 600 members, making it the largest business association in the city. That same year, AEN's leadership went public that it was a majority LGBTQ+ organization and it embarked on a mentoring campaign for younger lesbian and gay businesspeople and combating employment discrimination against LGBTQ+ workers (Fitch 1994:1, 4).

Fourth Tuesday's involvement with the Atlanta Gay & Lesbian Business Expo continued into the 1990s. In 1994, the group partnered with the Atlanta Executive Network to create the non-profit Greater Atlanta Business Coalition (GABC). GABC held its first meeting at the 14th Street Playhouse in November of 1994. Pat Murphy served as the first chairperson of the new organization, which was credited as being the first LGBTQ+ Chamber of Commerce in the United States. GABC later changed its name to the Atlanta Gay & Lesbian Chamber of Commerce in 2003 when it joined the National Gay & Lesbian Chamber of Commerce (NGLCC) as a local affiliate (Atlanta Gay & Lesbian Chamber of Commerce 2019; Newton 1994:25).

RACIAL AND ETHNIC SOCIAL GROUPS

The Gay Atlanta Minorities Association (GAMA) was the first Black gay organization in Atlanta when Greg Worthy, Melvin Ross, and Gene Holloway founded the group in 1979. While social gatherings played a large part in GAMA, its primary purpose was combatting racism and white supremacy within the city's gay population and "working toward social and political change in Atlanta for black gays and other gay minorities" (Marini 2018:202). The Atlanta chapter of Black and White Men Together (BWMT) took up this work after

it was organized in 1981 followed by the African American Lesbian/Gay Alliance, Atlanta's first co-gender Black LGBTQ group established by local activists in 1986 (see Theme: Political Activism in Atlanta's LGBTQ+ Communities). Long before and after the creation of these early lesbian and gay organizations, Black churches often served as the primary social spaces for African American LGBTQ+ Atlantans, even though they were not always welcoming to those who were openly gay (Quinn et al. 2016).

BWMT and AALGA were the main local sponsors of the third annual National Black Gay and Lesbian Conference, which was held at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Atlanta the weekend of February 16-19, 1990. Conference organizers selected Atlanta as the host city because of its reputation as "The Black Mecca of the South" and its progressive and dynamic character. Despite these positive attributes, the organizers also noted the local Black LGBTQ+ community still lacked vital professional and social connections, both within itself and to Atlanta's wider Black population that were often present in other large cities in the U.S. (Kaupman 1990:4).

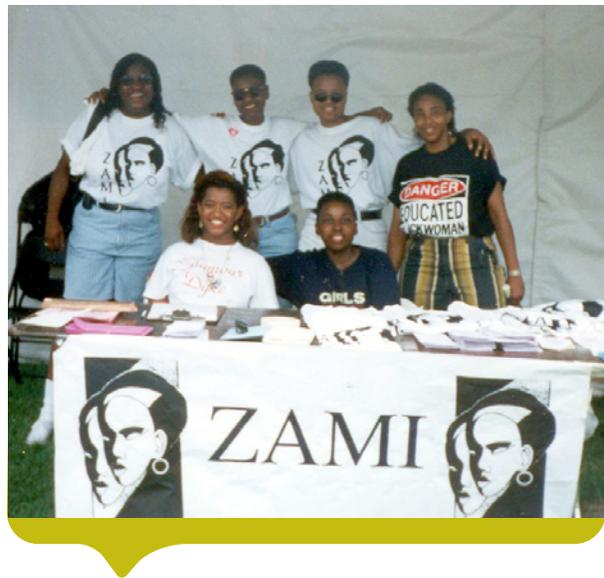
ZAMI

In the months after the National Black and Gay Lesbian Conference, a group of African American lesbians who formed the Women of Color Caucus (WOCC) within AALGA broke away from the organization to form ZAMI, which was named in honor of writer Audre Lorde's pioneering 1982 book, *Zami: A New Spelling of My Name*, and translates to "women who work together as friends and lovers" within the patios dialect of the Island of Carriacou in the Caribbean Sea. ZAMI originated as a confidential support and discussion group that provided "affirmation, comfort, and emotional nurturance" for all Black lesbians in

metropolitan Atlanta (ZAMI n.d). By 1992, ZAMI counted approximately 30 active members.

Over the course of the 1990s and early 2000s, ZAMI emerged as a prominent advocacy and social group for African American lesbians in the city. ZAMI members participated in the Atlanta Pride parade and Atlanta Black Pride events, hosted workshops on women’s health and domestic violence, and held public readings by Black lesbian writers, activists, and organizers at various locations throughout the city. The group also forged close relationships with Black students at Spelman College and other schools within the Atlanta University Center (AUC). ZAMI worked in partnership with Afrekete, the Spelman College lesbian and bisexual student organization, to host the first lesbian and gay Black History Celebration on campus and forum discussions involving homosexuality and spirituality within the African American community. Beginning in 1995, ZAMI established the Audre Lorde Scholarship Fund to provide financial assistance to activist Black lesbian students wishing to further their secondary education. Under the program, ZAMI awarded scholarships of \$1,000 each to 15 students between 1997 and 2000 (ZAMI 1999). Additionally, when members of Afrekete were threatened with homophobic abuse, ZAMI formed the “Just AU Women” program that allowed the students who didn’t feel safe on the Spelman and AUC campus to socialize and network in a safe space located in Decatur (Adams 2022).

According to co-founding member and ZAMI president, Mary Anne Adams, the organization like many other LGBTQ+ groups in Atlanta, dealt with “house insecurity,” and did not maintain a permanent office or meeting space. In addition to members’ houses and the Texas Restaurant at 10 Park Place SE (also known as 10 Pryor Street SE), which was popular among Black lesbians



Zami Members at the 1996 Atlanta Pride Festival (Source: Zami Records. Auburn Avenue Research Library on African-American Culture and History)

in the 1990s, ZAMI often hosted its biweekly Sunday meetings and events in locations that included Charis Bookstore, the First Existentialist Church, Indigo Arts at 1850 DeKalb Avenue NE, the second Atlanta Friends Meeting House, and Agnes Scott College in Decatur (Adams 2022). In 1996, ZAMI moved into a space located in the Lambda Community Center at 828 West Peachtree Street NW (no longer extant) provided by the AIDS Survival Project (*Venus Magazine* 1996). In 2001, ZAMI relocated its operations to an office in downtown Decatur prior to eventually ceasing operations in the early 2000s due to sagging membership and a lack of adequate financial support (Adams 2022; ZAMI, Inc. 2005).

SECOND SUNDAY

Dr. Maurice Franklin, a member of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, founded Second Sunday in 1992 to help Black gay men in Atlanta confront and deal with low personal self-esteem resulting from internalized homophobia experienced within the Black community and

racism by white society. Second Sunday's first meeting at Dr. Franklin's house consisted of about nine men talking about their own sexuality as part of the topic discussion, "Does Your Mama Know?" Many of the original members had met through the Cascade United Methodist Church and the group based the name "Second Sunday" after the date when the church's male choir commonly sang. Subsequent monthly meetings took place at potluck dinners hosted in members' houses. Second Sunday's early membership was entirely based on word of mouth and grew rapidly in the years after its founding (Washington 1996).

By 1996, Second Sunday published a newsletter and maintained an active mailing list of 120 people. Between 40 and 60 men regularly attended the monthly meetings, which continued to be held in member's houses. That same year, the group hosted its first "Where the Boys Are" annual Labor Day picnic fundraiser. The rise in membership necessitated the establishment of a more formal organizational structure and Second Sunday began hosting meetings in the MCC in the Virginia-Highland neighborhood, although the potluck dinners continued to be a mainstay of the gatherings (Washington 1996; Stephens 2018). By the late 1990s, Second Sunday's active membership had grown to approximately 300 members and the group had become heavily involved in outreach programs for the prevention of HIV/AIDS in the Black gay and bisexual communities (Hooks 1999; Atlanta History Center et al. 2022).

IN THE LIFE ATLANTA

In The Life Atlanta (ITLA) formed in 1996 as a coalition of Black LGBTQ+ groups to coordinate events associated with the Annual Labor Day Black Pride Celebration in Atlanta (see Theme: Political Activism in Atlanta's LGBTQ+ Communities). The

group took its name from the phrase "In the Life" that had been used as a self-identifying term for African American LGBTQ+ people since the Harlem Renaissance of the 1920s (In The Life Atlanta 1997).

OTHER NOTABLE BLACK LGBTQ+ SOCIAL GROUPS

Black LGBTQ+ Atlantans established several other social clubs and organizations during the 1990s. Business partners Jocelyn Lyles, Cindy Joshua, and Charlotte Shaw formed Hospitality Atlanta in 1992 as an entertainment and social group for the city's Black lesbian community, including a bowling league and dance parties hosted at the Texas Restaurant in downtown Atlanta (Atlanta African American Gay & Lesbian Community Directory 1996). In 1993, a multi-racial group of LGBTQ+ activists formed the Atlanta chapter of Southerners on New Ground (SONG) following the creation of the parent political and social advocacy organization at the National LGBTQ Task Force Creating Change conference in Durham, North Carolina (Southerners on New Ground 2023).

LATINOS EN ACCIÓN

Puerto Rican activist Aida Rentas and José Gutiérrez, a native of Mexico, formed Latinos En Acción in Atlanta in 1991 as an advocacy and support group to serve the growing LGBTQ+ Latin American population in the metropolitan Atlanta area. The pair had both been involved with educational outreach programs at AID Atlanta and had grown frustrated by the general lack of attention and treatment given to LGBTQ+ Latinos and Latinas, particularly regarding those living with HIV/AIDS. The organization was operated out of an apartment in the Peachtree Towers Condominiums, located at 300 Peachtree Street NE, and originally had approximately 20 working- and middle-class

members, some of whom were still not open about their sexual orientation. Latinos En Acción sought to increase visibility of LGBTQ+ Latin Americans through participation in the Atlanta Pride parade and became involved in HIV prevention educational work for the city's Latin American residents. The organization also published "One" newsletter for lesbian, gay, and trans children of color (Gomez et al. 2015:183–185; Johnson 2018:209–211; Latinos En Accion n.d.).

TRIKONE ATLANTA

In the mid-1990s, a small group of South Asians and those of South Asian descent from countries such as Afghanistan, Burma, India, Nepal, and Pakistan, established an Atlanta chapter of Trikone, a support group for LGBTQ+ South Asians. Among the founding members of Trikone Atlanta were Deepali Gokhale and Janak Desai (Khabar 2005). The local group was affiliated with the national non-profit Trikone organization founded by Arvind Kumar, Ashok Jethanandani, and Suvir Das in San Francisco in 1986 (Rai 2023; Sahoo and Hedge 2017). During the first 10 years of its existence Trikone Atlanta remained relatively unstructured with the approximate 70 volunteer members getting together at monthly social meetings, online discussions, and taking part in the Atlanta Pride parade and Pride Week events. Since 2001, Trikone Atlanta has partnered with Raksha, Inc., another South Asian support group in Atlanta, to hold monthly "Chai House" talks on subjects related to the South Asian and LGBTQ+ communities (Raksha, Inc. n.d.; Trikone Atlanta n.d.).

COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY STUDENT GROUPS

Although outside activists and students sought both to establish LGBTQ+ student organizations at

the predominantly white Atlanta area colleges and universities during the 1970s, these groups were not able to achieve any measure of permanence until the 1980s. Antipathy toward student LGBTQ+ groups by the various student government associations and school administrations, combined with varying levels of student engagement, contributed to the inability to establish or maintain these organizations. Similar factors hindered the establishment and growth of LGBTQ+ student groups at Atlanta's historically Black colleges of Atlanta University, Morehouse, and Spelman into the 1990s.

EMORY UNIVERSITY

Steve Abbott and Berl Boykin, two of the co-founders of the Georgia Gay Liberation Front in 1971, both attended Emory University in the late 1960s; however, the school didn't have an active or organized LGBTQ+ student group until the 1980s. Although the Emory Student Government Association (SGA) helped fund a gay student organization in the early 1980s, the identities of the members were kept secret to avoid negative reactions among the larger student body. Emory Lesbian/Gay Organization (ELGO) was the first open social and support group at Emory University to serve lesbian and gay students, faculty, and staff at the school. Founded in the mid-1980s, ELGO primarily only held meetings and social gatherings for the small number of members. After being excluded from participating in an SGA-sponsored high-school recruiting event, the group pushed to include sexual orientation as one of the categories protected under Emory University's Equal Opportunity Policy (Morse 1988:13). It also conducted a survey of lesbian and gay students, faculty, and staff to gauge their experiences at the school. The results of the survey found that many LGBTQ+ students at the school lived "in a world of secretiveness and fear" (*Emory Magazine* 2002;

Lameiras 2014). In response, graduate student Donna Smith and other students helped to organize the original Office of Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Student Life (later renamed the Office of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Life in 1998) in 1991 with the support of the University's administration. The Office of LGBT Life originally maintained a two-person staff consisting of Smith and another graduate student, Rev. Michael Wyatt, but its operations were expanded after protests erupted on campus over the harassment of two gay students who were kissing. Saralyn Chestnut was hired as the first full-time director of the Office in 1993. Under Chestnut's 15-year tenure, the school expanded the Equal Opportunity Policy, held its first Pride Banquet, and established the Coming Out Support Group (Emory University 2023).

THE GEORGIA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

Students at the Georgia Institute of Technology (Georgia Tech) first organized the Georgia Tech Gay Academic Alliance in 1977; however, the

group's charter was revoked in 1983 after a period of prolonged inactivity. In 1988, Tech students formed a new LGBTQ+ group, the Gay and Lesbian Alliance (GALA), which received its charter by the school following a contentious debate and ballot by the Georgia Tech SGA that approved the club by only one vote. GALA was later renamed the Pride Alliance in 2002 and the organization's mission was expanded to serve the school's LGBTQ+ and ally student population (Georgia Tech Pride Alliance 2023).

GEORGIA STATE UNIVERSITY

Bill Smith, a leading figure of the Georgia Gay Liberation Front (GGLF) and a key organizer of Atlanta's first Pride marches in 1971 and 1972, was a graduate of Georgia State University (GSU). Students at GSU first attempted to create a lesbian and gay student group affiliated with the GGLF in 1972; however their efforts were thwarted

Original Members of the Georgia State University Gay Student Alliance, 1982 (Source: *Rampway*, 1982. Georgia State University Library Digital Collections)



by school administrators and the GSU SGA (Lambert and Cutler 1972:4–5; *The Signal* 1972:5). Subsequent attempts to form similar organizations also failed to materialize in the mid-to-late 1970s. Finally, a small group of students first organized the Gay Student Alliance (GSA) in the winter quarter of 1981, following a series of articles published in *The Signal* student newspaper that expressed hostility toward lesbian and gay people. After receiving its charter in 1982, the GSA quickly became involved with lesbian, gay, and bisexual student rights at GSU and also expressed support and equal rights for all women, men, and minority groups (Georgia State University 1982). By 1983, the GSA had a total of 30 members; however the group was denied funding of activity fees by the GSU SGA, which stated the group did not have an adequate following “because people are not relating [to] the cause” (Teske 1983:1). Despite the contentious beginning, the GSA continued to thrive and grow. Now known as the Alliance for Sexual and Gender Diversity, it is the oldest LGBTQ+ student groups in Georgia and one of the largest chartered organizations on the GSU campus with more than 1,000 active members (Alliance for Sexual and Gender Diversity 2023).

MOREHOUSE COLLEGE

In November 1995, the Morehouse College SGA begrudgingly voted to issue a limited charter to Adodi as the first gay and bisexual student organization at the school. Detroit, Michigan native, Keiron Williams, was a driving force behind the formation of the club and served as Adodi’s first president. Unlike other organizational charters at Morehouse, the SGA denied Adodi a representative seat in the Student Senate and did not allow the group to participate in homecoming activities (Miller 1995:3). Morehouse Adodi was based on the principles of Adodi (a Yoruba word

for describing a man who loves another man), a Black gay organization founded by Clifford Rowlands in Philadelphia Pennsylvania in 1983 (ADODI 2023). Following anti-gay protests on campus, the Student Senate ultimately voted to deny Williams the Adodi charter by a unanimous vote of 48-0 (Stephens 2018; Anderson 2019). In the aftermath of the failed charter for Adodi, the Williams renamed the group the Morehouse Alliance. The Alliance continued to operate as an unsanctioned support group for gay and bisexual students at Morehouse into the late 1990s (Atlanta African American Gay & Lesbian Community Directory 1996).

SPELMAN COLLEGE

While some accounts indicate informal lesbian groups existed at Spelman since the 1960s, plans to establish an official lesbian and bisexual student organization at Spelman College began in November 1990, following an on-campus panel discussion among 100 students and members of AALGA. The Spelman College Counseling Services Department and the group Alternatives, an organization for lesbian, bisexual and questioning women, sponsored the talk, which involved topics of sexuality, family, and the discrimination toward lesbian and gay individuals within the Black community (*Southern Voice* 1990:3; Wildmoon 1994:17). Spelman students organized the original Spelman Lesbian and Bisexual Alliance (LBA) the following year and secretly met in the school’s counseling center. Spelman College officially chartered the organization in 1993 (Swann 2020:3–4). The primary goals of the organization were to provide a safe space on campus for African American lesbian and bisexual students to meet bimonthly and to educate the larger Spelman College community and to dispel stereotypes about lesbian and bisexual women

(Spelman Spotlight 1993:6). The LBA, and the administration's support for the organization, created a backlash against the students among the larger student body and alumni that forced the group to often hold meetings off campus (Adams 2022; Ingram 1994:3).

Occasional acts of violence against members, a lack of support by some administrators and staff, and the graduation of student leaders resulted in the LBA temporarily becoming inactive during the mid-1990s. In 1997, the LBA changed its name to Afrekete, after a character in Audre Lorde's 1982 book *Zami: A New Spelling of My Name*, in part to keep a lower profile as it continued to face ongoing homophobic incidents. As Afrekete, the group also expanded its mission to include lesbian and bisexual members and their straight allies who sought to build supportive LGBTQ+ community spaces and dialogue at Spelman College and the Atlanta University Center. Afrekete remains the only LGBTQ+ social support group at Spelman College and organizes a number of events and activities for queer students, including campus Pride week and invitations of guest speakers (Fant 1999:1; Spelman College 2022; Swann 2020:4).

CONCLUSION

According to activist and writer, Charles Stephens, the Black LGBTQ+ student movement at the AUC, and other schools, including GSU and Agnes Scott, was reenergized in response to the murder of Greg Love, a gay Morehouse student, in 2002 (Stephens 2018). The first decade of the new millennium brought additional changes to LGBTQ+ community organizations in Atlanta with the closure of the Atlanta Gay Center and the Lambda Community Center. The Philip Rush Center helped to temporarily fill the void when it opened in 2008 but it too later closed in 2020. While several LGBTQ+ social groups, including Venture Sports, Latins En Acción, and ZAMI ceased operations in the early 2000s, other activities and organizations, such as the Dogwood Invitational Bowling Classic, the Hotlanta Softball League, Trikone Atlanta, the Atlanta Lesbian and Gay Chamber of Commerce, and several student groups continue to thrive. Even ZAMI returned in a different form in 2011 when founder and director Mary Anne Adams established ZAMI National Organization of Black Lesbians on Aging (NOBLA) to advocate for the healthcare and social support of elder Black lesbians in the U.S.

NRHP ELIGIBILITY STANDARDS

THEME: LGBTQ+ COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

Associated Property Functions/Uses: The table below is intended to provide guidance on the types of properties that are expected to be associated with the theme LGBTQ+ Community Organizations. This list is not to be considered comprehensive, as it was developed in tandem with the research conducted for the development of the theme’s history. This list does not preclude other properties with differing functions and uses that could have associations with the theme, pending future research.

Property Description: Associated property types may include commercial buildings or residential buildings that have been converted into commercial use. These resources may not have been originally built for the purposes of housing a LGBTQ+ associated community organization or social group. Residential buildings that are not

necessarily functioning as commercial spaces or are commercially zoned may also be included if they are identified as having been an important gathering space for LGBTQ+ people in Atlanta in the past. The history shows that LGBTQ+ people used any available spaces to create safe social spaces, and not necessarily in the traditional sense of establishing a business or nonprofit organization. The theme reveals that educational buildings, primarily in the city’s major campuses, may have significance under this theme as well.

Property Significance: Those properties identified as significant under the LGBTQ+ Community Organizations theme should have a documented significant association with an organization that had a demonstrable impact associated with LGBTQ+ representation, expression, and/or reflection of identity in Atlanta. Some buildings may be associated with a person considered an important leader in one or multiple Atlanta LGBTQ+ community organizations. In order to be eligible under Criterion B, this would need to be a property that best represents that person’s productive life. If a building is no longer extant, consideration of eligibility for the individual’s residence as NRHP-eligible can be made.

Property Function or Use	Common Subcategories
Building: Residential	Apartment Duplex Single-Family Residence
Building: Commercial	Bar Retail
Building: Education	College/University
District	Campus Commercial
Sites/Landscapes	Park Plaza Parade Route

Geographic Locations: The city limits of Atlanta, particularly Midtown and Downtown areas, and the Atlanta University Center, Emory University, Georgia Tech, and Georgia State University campuses.

Areas of Significance:

- Education
- Entertainment/Recreation
- Ethnic Heritage: Asian
- Ethnic Heritage: Black
- Ethnic Heritage: Hispanic
- Social History: LGBTQ+ History
- Social History: Women’s History

Criteria: NRHP Criteria A and B, Criteria Consideration G

For Criterion B, the significant individual must have lived or worked in the property during the period in which they achieved significance - i.e., the period in which they created their productive body of work.

Properties associated with institutions or individuals that date from the last 50 years must possess exceptional importance and meet the requirements of Criteria Consideration G.

Period of Significance: 1972-2000

Period of Significance Justification: The period of significance is recommended as beginning in 1972 when research indicates LGBTQ+ social groups began forming in the city (the Apollo Social Club formed in 1972, however an extant place associated with the group is unknown at this time). Further research may reveal additional extant places with documented associations with the LGBTQ+ Community Organizations and Social Groups theme. The period of significance ends

in 2000, the end of the period of study for this context statement. In general, if the period of significance continues to the present, the end of the study period is the recommended end date.

Eligibility Standards:

- Resources must have a documented significant association with an impactful LGBTQ+ social group or organization, or significant event related to one of these groups.
- Resources may also be associated with the life of an important individual or individuals who played a significant role in LGBTQ+ social groups or organizations.

Character Defining Features:

- A significant space associated with LGBTQ+ Community Organizations and Social Groups may be located in a building designed for another use.
- The business, organization, or institution associated with LGBTQ+ Community Organizations and Social Groups must have occupied the property during the period in which it achieved significance.

Integrity Considerations

- Overall integrity should be assessed within the time frame the resource gained significance.
- The resource should retain most of the essential character defining features dating from the period the organization/group or individual occupied the property or when an event took place.
- The most important aspects of integrity for this theme and area of significance are Location, Feeling, Association, and Design. A

resource that is significant under the LGBTQ+ Community Organizations and Social Groups theme should be in its original location. It should retain recognizable interior and exterior features from its period of significance that contribute to its integrity of design, feeling, and association. Property specific research should aim to identify important interior features that may have divided spaces and how they were used.

- Integrity of Materials and Workmanship, while important, may not be crucial for meeting the integrity threshold for this theme and area of significance under Criteria A and B. Many

buildings in the Inventory have experienced alterations and may not retain all of their original materials. Research and firsthand accounts of people using the space during the period of significance can provide greater detail on what important features existed for the property, and which features are most important to be intact for consideration for eligibility.

- In most cases, integrity of setting should be considered in terms of urban versus a suburban setting and assess whether newer infill is, or is not, in keeping with the property's historic period of development.



CASE STUDY

RESOURCE: ATLANTA GAY CENTER, 931 PONCE DE LEON AVENUE NE

Note: This case study is a starting point for National Register eligibility analysis for this and related resources. Interiors of case study properties were not accessed during the creation of

Atlanta Gay Center, 841 Ponce de Leon Avenue NE (Source: New South Associates, 2022)

this context document, however, a thorough analysis of interior integrity would be required as part of any formal assessment of this property's eligibility for the National Register of Historic Places. Furthermore, these are not the official opinions of HPD and are provided here as starting points and models for additional analysis. Formal eligibility would need to be determined via in-depth analysis at the time of nomination.

The original incarnation of the Atlanta Gay Center (AGC) was founded in 1976 by local gay activists and operated on the second floor of a converted apartment house located at 20 4th Street NW (no longer extant). The original center generally functioned as a meeting space for discussion groups and planning for political events and pride marches. Volunteers also operated a help and information help line for gay men in Atlanta.

The historic apartment house, clad in a historic simulated stone veneer, is two-stories in height with a basement level. It has a gable-on-hip-roof supported by decorative knee braces; the knee braces and multi-light-over-single-light windows lend a Craftsman style influence to the building. A one-story hip-roof porch supported by square columns shelters the single-door entry that contains sidelights and transom. Two interior brick chimneys are located on each side elevation. The building is surrounded by a paved surface parking lot.

The reorganized AGC began operation in February 1979 at 972 Peachtree Street NE (no longer extant). In 1980, the AGC moved into a converted circa 1915 house at 931 Ponce de Leon Avenue NE. The organization provided assembly space for various LGBTQ+ support groups, including a gay Alcoholics Anonymous group, maintained a library stocked with LGBTQ+ books and periodicals, and published its own newsletter, *Atlanta Gay Central*. In addition to its function as a recreational and social meeting space, it was the first agency in the city to provide healthcare services and counseling for LGBTQ+ residents.

The 931 Ponce de Leon Avenue NE location of the AGC also housed LGBTQ+ owned and operated businesses that included an art gallery, bookstore, and a coffee house. In addition, the new facility

provided legal counseling, secretarial services, and rental apartments on the first floor and basement levels of the building. Despite expectations the property on Ponce de Leon Avenue would serve as the AGC's permanent home, the organization was ultimately unable to purchase the property and later moved in a new location on Peachtree Street in 1982.

The property is significant at the local level under Criterion A in the area of Social History: LGBTQ+ History because it is the earliest extant location of the Atlanta Gay Center, an important and early LGBTQ+ community space in Atlanta. Because, at the time of this study, the resource's period of significance is less than 50 years of age, it must also meet Criteria Consideration G. As the earliest extant property related to the important Atlanta Gay Center, which provided much needed services and support to the city's LGBTQ+ community, 931 Ponce de Leon Avenue NE meets Criteria Consideration G.

National Register Criteria: Criterion A, Criteria Consideration G

Area(s) of Significance: Social History: LGBTQ+ History

Period of Significance: 1980-1982

Integrity: The Atlanta Gay Center building on Ponce de Leon Avenue occupies the original site of construction and retains integrity of location. The house no longer retains its original historic residential setting, but because its period of significance is 1980-1982, the current setting along Ponce de Leon Avenue features a mixture of historic and older commercial buildings, historic apartment buildings, and infill that dates to the period of significance. Therefore, the property retains integrity of setting. The building has a

high degree of design and material integrity as it has not been enlarged and maintains its historic footprint, massing, height and fenestration pattern. Most original or historic exterior materials are also intact, and it continues to convey the architectural characteristics and integrity of workmanship as expressed in its original frame construction and interplay of the multi-light over single light windows, simulated stone veneer siding, (which is not original but was extant during the resource's period of significance under this context) hip-roof front porch, and interior chimneys. As a result, it has integrity of feeling as a circa 1915 historic residential building that was later converted for commercial purposes and it maintains integrity of association with its use as the Atlanta Gay Center during the early 1980s.

Character Defining Features:

- Direct association with the theme LGBTQ+ Community Organizations and Social Groups as it is the earliest extant location of an important LGBTQ+ organization, the Atlanta Gay Center.
- The Atlanta Gay Center occupied the property during the resource's period of significance.
- Retains essential character defining features that were present during the resource's period of significance including its massing as a two-story apartment building, multi-light over single-light windows, simulated stone veneer, hip-roof front porch, and gable-on-hip roof.
- As the earliest extant property related to the important Atlanta Gay Center, which provided much needed services and support to the city's LGBTQ+ community, 931 Ponce de Leon Avenue NE meets Criteria Consideration G.



ACT UP Protest at Grady Memorial Hospital, 1991 (Source: *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* Photographic Archives, Special Collections and Archives, Georgia State University Library)

LGBTQ+ HEALTHCARE AND ADVOCACY

This chapter identifies the significant people, places and themes historically associated with the healthcare area of significance for Atlanta’s LGBTQ+ residents in the late twentieth century. Prior to the American Psychiatric Association’s (APA) declassification of homosexuality as a mental disorder in 1973, an untold number of white and Black LGBTQ+ Georgians were commonly diagnosed by medical professionals as suffering from a “constitutional psychopathological state” based on their sexual behaviors, paranoia, or alcoholism, and institutionalized at the Georgia State Sanitarium (later known as the Central State Hospital) in Milledgeville, Georgia (Drescher 2015; Segrest 2013:163–165). The national HIV/AIDS epidemic of the 1980s and 1990s exposed the often hostile or indifferent attitudes held by many in the private and public healthcare sectors toward LGBTQ+ people. These problems and disparities were compounded for women, racial minorities, transgender people, or those who were from low-income populations. In addition to the suffering felt by many, the crises also forged a resiliency within Atlanta’s LGBTQ+ communities to take it upon themselves to provide the leadership, grassroots organizations, funding, and political agency necessary to meet their healthcare challenges and needs (Andriote 2013).

INITIAL LGBTQ+ HEALTHCARE OPTIONS IN THE 1970S AND EARLY 1980S

When the LGBTQ+ Movement first began to take shape in Atlanta during the early 1970s,

very few knowledgeable and welcoming medical professionals and organizations existed that could meet the mental and physical healthcare needs of the city’s lesbian, gay, and transgender residents. One of the earliest welcoming lesbian and gay healthcare facilities in Atlanta was the Community Crisis Center (CCC), which served both gay and straight counterculture residents of “The Strip” in Midtown from its founding in 1969 through the mid-1970s (Christensen 1972:9A). Formerly located at 1013 Peachtree Street NE (no longer extant) the CCC operated on a volunteer basis. Primary services included: a 24-hour crisis intervention hotline; a free medical clinic with sexually transmitted infection (STI) testing, pregnancy testing, birth-control, and abortion counseling and referrals. It also provided walk-in outreach service for after-hours medical emergencies, food, and clothing pickups. In addition to its medical and support functions, the CCC served as a meeting space and hosted early gatherings of the GGLF shortly after the group was founded in February 1971 (*Atlanta Barb* 1974:9).

The Feminist Women’s Health Center was another early LGBTQ+ welcoming healthcare organization in Atlanta when it opened in 1976 at its original location at 580 14th Street NW. The Atlanta clinic was originally part of the Federation of Feminist Women’s Health Centers (FFWHC), which began in Los Angeles following the U.S. Supreme Court’s ruling that legalized abortion in all 50 states in 1973. The Center provided free pregnancy screening, STI testing, healthcare referrals, and safe abortion services for all women in the metropolitan area. Over time, the Feminist Women’s Health Center would expand its mission to include healthcare services for Atlanta’s LGBTQ+ communities, such as a donor insemination program for lesbian and straight women that began operation in 1988, the Chrysalis Project,



Community Crisis Center on Peachtree Street, 1972
(Source: Dr. L. William Wood, Jr.)

and the Trans Health Initiative (described in more detail below) in the 1990s and 2000s (Feminist Women's Health Center 2018, 2022).

Dr. Stuart Strenger, a former Chief Psychologist at the Emory School of Medicine, was a well-known medical professional in Atlanta during the 1970s. He was fired from his position after coming out as a gay man in 1975 and becoming active in the city's early lesbian and gay civil rights campaigns (Taylor 1975:1A, 8A; *The Barb* 1977:1; *The Barb News Service* 1977:1, 5). Afterwards, Dr. Strenger became the Chief Psychologist at Grady Hospital and continued fighting against anti-gay media representation and discrimination (see Theme: Political Activism in Atlanta's LGBTQ+ Communities). He later opened his own clinical psychology practice in unincorporated DeKalb County that provided medical help to both LGBTQ+

and straight patients until his retirement in the early 2000s (Strenger 1983; White 1985:1B, 4B).

EARLY TRANSGENDER HEALTHCARE AND SUPPORT: THE GEORGIA MENTAL HEALTH INSTITUTE AND THE MONTGOMERY MEDICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL INSTITUTE

Psychiatrists and endocrinologists with Emory University and the Georgia Mental Health Institute (GMHI) at 1256 Briarcliff Road NE (located outside the City of Atlanta limits) established a gender study clinic at the Institute during the late 1960s and early 1970s. Unlike other early university-affiliated gender identity clinics that performed gender-affirming surgeries, such as Johns Hopkins University in Maryland and Vanderbilt University in Tennessee, the Atlanta clinic only provided mental health and hormones treatment for transgender and gender nonbinary individuals. However,

the provision of such care established it as the first “transgender-specific service or support organization for trans people in Atlanta” (Denny 2015, 2022; Fritz and Mulkey 2021).

The joint program was quietly shuttered in 1976 during the public outcry after it was revealed two Georgians underwent gender affirming surgery in Jacksonville, Florida that was funded with \$13,000 in state and federal money under the auspices of the Vocational Rehabilitation Division of the Georgia DHR (Lieberman and Stewart 1976). The state’s later refusal to authorize Medicaid benefits for the gender affirming surgery of a third person in Atlanta, known by the pseudonym “Carolyn Rush,” lead to the filing of a series lawsuits by Rush to compel the DHR to provide the funding, arguing it violated her Fourteenth Amendment right to equal protection (Drag 1976:5; Palmer and Seabrook 1976:1A, 3A). After nine years of legal challenges, Rush’s lawsuit was ultimately denied by the Fifth

U.S. District Court of Appeals, which declared “there is no consensus in the professional medical community that the surgery is effective treatment for transsexualism” (Thompson 1983:26A).

Although more of a peer support group than a healthcare organization, the Montgomery Medical and Psychological Institute was the only organization in metropolitan Atlanta, and one of the very few in the Southeast, to provide medical information and assistance to transgender people in the 1970s and 1980s. Jerry Montgomery, a transgender man, and his wife Lynn, who worked as a nurse at the GMHI, established the Montgomery Medical and Psychological Institute in the mid-1970s. With the motto “We work in solutions, not problems,” the couple operated the organization out of their single-family house in the Decatur area (address unknown),

Georgia Mental Health Institute, 2018 (Source: Counce, Creative Commons Licence, 2018)



publishing a newsletter, titled Insight, building local relationships among the Atlanta lesbian, gay, and transgender communities, and establishing networks with medical professionals involved with gender identity studies and transgender healthcare (Montgomery and Montgomery 1990:4; Denny 2015, 2022).

THE ATLANTA GAY CENTER TESTING CLINIC

The second Atlanta Gay Center (AGC; later renamed the Atlanta Gay and Lesbian Center), which began operation in February 1979 under the leadership of Executive Director Diane D. Stephenson, was the first LGBTQ+ support organization in the city to provide healthcare education and services specifically for lesbians, gay men, and “other sexual minorities” in the city. Largely organized by the leadership of the Atlanta Coalition for Human Rights and financed through fundraising for the protests against anti-LGBTQ+ activist Anita Bryant in June 1978 (see Theme: Political Activism in Atlanta’s LGBTQ+ Communities), the new incarnation of the AGC was more professionally managed and service oriented than the original incarnation that operated in a former house at 20 4th Street NW (no longer extant) in 1976 (Atlanta Gay Center 1978a; Robinson 1976:1, 14).

During its first year of operation in 1979 at 972 Peachtree Street NE (no longer extant), the reorganized AGC established a health services program that included a volunteer-staffed telephone crises helpline; an STI testing clinic; mental and physical counseling; and patient referrals. Along with these efforts, the Center also worked to establish relationships with local, state, and federal health-related agencies to improve LGBTQ+ access to medical services (Atlanta Gay Center 1978b). In addition to serving

as an educational and healthcare center, the AGC also functioned as a recreational and social space (see Theme: Atlanta’s LGBTQ+ Community Organizations).

By 1981, the AGC had relocated to 931 Ponce de Leon Avenue NE. That same year, the AGC co-sponsored a Mental Health Symposium entitled “Gay in the 80’s” with the Buckhead Psychological Center. Over 180 people attended the one-day event on November 14th, which focused on developing a positive self-image through physical activity and community involvement. The symposium included talks by Dr. Stuart Strenger of the Buckhead Psychological Center, Ed Nix of the Unitarian Universalist Church, AGC Executive Director, Ray J. Kluka, and the keynote speaker, Atlanta City Councilmember Elaine Wiggins Lester (Atlanta Gay Center 1981). Following the outbreak of the HIV/AIDS epidemic in 1981, anonymous HIV/AIDS testing and counseling emerged as the AGC’s core healthcare support services over the course of the decade.

OUTBREAK OF THE HIV/AIDS EPIDEMIC AND EARLY RESPONSES IN ATLANTA, 1981-1985

The June 5, 1981, edition of the Centers for Disease Control’s *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR)* provided a diagnosis of what would later be officially designated as Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome, or AIDS, which was caused by Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) that attacks the immune system and interferes with the body’s ability to ward off infections. The LGBTQ+ communities and medical institutions in Atlanta did not immediately feel the effects of HIV/AIDS, which quickly ravaged the gay male populations in the Northeast and West Coast cities

of New York, San Francisco, and Los Angeles. By the year's end, a reported 234 people had died from contracting HIV in the United States (Raimondo 1997:332–334).

State public health officials with the Department of Human Resources, Division of Public Health recorded three cases of HIV/AIDS in Georgia (all men) in 1981. The following year produced eight reported infections and six deaths. Toward the end of 1983, the number of reported HIV/AIDS infections in Georgia stood at 29 cases. Of that number, 25 people lived in Atlanta and 10 had already died from the effects of the chronic immune system virus. Meanwhile more than 1,000 people throughout the country had contracted HIV/AIDS and the number of deaths had climbed to 400 (Wilber et al.; Raimondo 1997:350).

AID ATLANTA

Alarmed by the lack of any concerted public or private response to the growing epidemic at the local, state, or national levels, a small group of activists and medical professionals, including Dr. Jesse Peel and Bruce Garner, established AID Atlanta, the city's first AIDS service organization, in 1983 in a small office building at 1801 Piedmont Avenue NE (Carr 2007; D. Hayward, personal communication, March 22, 2023). LGBTQ+ business owners affiliated through the Atlanta Business and Professional Guild delivered initial funding for the group's two-person staff, consisting of President Graham Bruton and an administrative assistant, and 25 volunteers who later operated out of a shared office space with the Atlanta

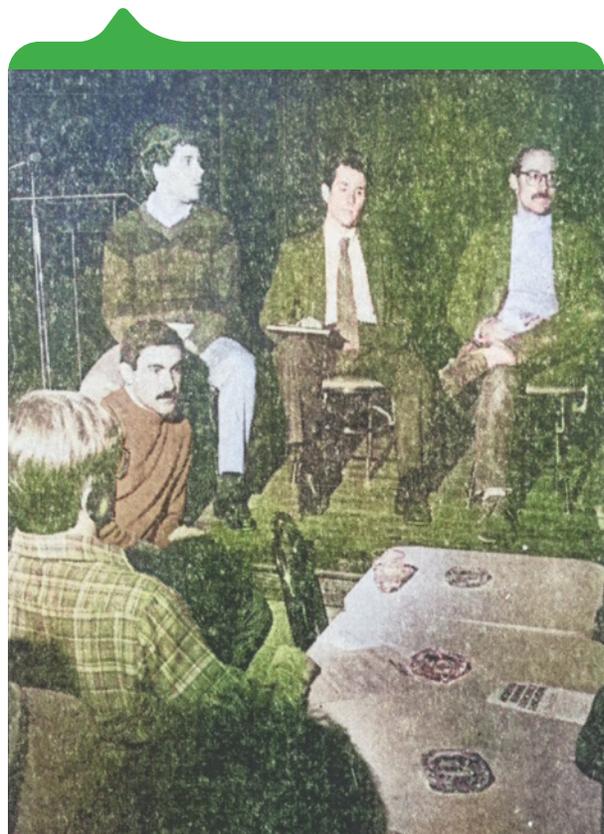
“ AIDS REALLY GALVANIZED THE GAY COMMUNITY... THERE REALLY WERE NO ADVOCACY OR SUPPORT GROUPS AT THE TIME, SO WE FORMED OUR OWN TO CARE FOR EACH OTHER. WE ALL VOLUNTEERED BECAUSE YOU COULDN'T NOT DO SOMETHING.”

– Dr. Jesse Peel
(Henry 2011:16–17).

Gay Center on the third floor of a building located at 848 Peachtree Street NE (no longer extant). The original mission of AID Atlanta was to provide HIV/AIDS training for health care workers, volunteers, religious groups, and community groups along with healthcare and AIDS 101 prevention workshops for high-risk individuals. A 19-member Board of Directors comprised of physicians, healthcare workers, religious leaders, public sector agency

heads, and individuals with AIDS provided the governing structure for the organization (*Atlanta After Dark* 1985:10).

AID Atlanta AIDS Prevention Workshop, 1983 (Source: Michael Pugh, *Atlanta Constitution*, February 13, 1983)



Congress passed the first federal funding bill for AIDS research and treatment in 1983 (National Institutes of Health 2022). That same year, AID Atlanta approached the Atlanta City Council and Fulton County Board of Commissioners to request \$10,000 in public funding to establish an AIDS information hotline and testing clinic. The group also requested the Fulton County Health Department designate AIDS as a public health emergency in the city. While the city tabled the spending measure, the Fulton County Board of Health recommended funding the AID Atlanta prevention program, making it the first government response to the epidemic in the city (Raimondo 1997:350). During the 1980s, the Fulton County Department of Health and Wellness at 99 Butler Street SE (now Jesse Hill, Jr. Drive; no longer extant) and the DeKalb County Health Department operated the only two, public HIV/AIDS testing clinics in the metropolitan Atlanta area (Mangan 1987:2B).

In 1985, Georgia reported nearly 175 cases of HIV/AIDS in the state and fear of the virus began to take hold in Atlanta's gay community and the public at large (Skelton 2010). AID Atlanta remained a grassroots organization with an annual budget of \$200,000 that had grown under executive director Rev. Ken South to a four member staff and a network of 200 volunteers, several of whom were also involved with the Atlanta Chapter of Black and White Men Together (BWMT). The AIDS service organization now maintained a four-unit apartment in the Candler Park neighborhood to house to the growing number of HIV/AIDS patients who had become financially destitute and effectively homeless as a result of the sickness, healthcare costs, or abandonment by their families (exact location and status unknown). The group had also established or assisted with various support

groups, including the Women's Task Force for AIDS (*Atlanta After Dark* 1985:10; Taylor 1985:1A, 12A).

THE FIRST INTERNATIONAL AIDS CONFERENCE, GEORGIA TASK FORCE ON AIDS, AND GEORGIA AIDS ACTION COMMITTEE, 1985

Because metropolitan Atlanta was home to the CDC, the First International AIDS Conference (IAC) was held at the Georgia World Congress Center the weekend of April 15-17, 1985. By this time, the HIV/AIDS epidemic had moved into the forefront of the American public consciousness following the story of Ryan White, an Indiana teenager who contracted HIV through a contaminated blood transfusion in 1984 and the news of film star Rock Hudson's diagnosis with AIDS (which eventually claimed his life in October of 1985). Approximately 1,000 scientists and public health officials from around the world attended the conference, which was sponsored by the CDC; the National Institutes of Health; the Food and Drug Administration; the Alcohol, Drug Abuse, and Mental Health Administration; the Health Resources and Services Administration; and the World Health Organization (*Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report* 1984; HIV.gov 2012).

In the months following the IAC, AID Atlanta helped initiate the creation of the Georgia Task Force on AIDS, which held its first meeting on October 1, 1985. The 22-member group was composed of various representatives from state medical associations, public health, business, and religious groups, academic organizations, and legislators at the local and state levels. Its primary purpose was to serve an advisory role to the state Board of Human Resources, the Department of Human Resources, and the Georgia Division of

Public Health in the development of statewide strategies to combat the spread of HIV/AIDS (Georgia Task Force On Aids 1985).

One of the Task Force's first recommendations was \$100,000 in state funding to establish an AIDS outpatient clinic in Atlanta (*Atlanta Constitution* 1985:8). The state legislature responded with an appropriation for \$350,000 to open a 24-hour AIDS clinic at Grady Hospital to provide treatment for victims statewide (Horton 1986:10D; Fitch 1993:7, 10). Other recommendations included the passage of anti-discrimination legislation that would prohibit workers infected with HIV from being excluded from their places of employment and schools. The members also fought against routine testing for occupational and recreational groups and pushed for increased funding for voluntary counseling, testing, and healthcare services to treat those with living with AIDS (Martin 2008:1–2).

In addition to the Georgia Task Force, a group of activists, lobbyists, and state legislators organized the Georgia AIDS Action Committee (GAAC) in 1985 and the Georgia AIDS Coalition (GAC) in 1986 to advocate for state funding of AIDS research and healthcare and guard against anti-LGBTQ+ legislation in the General Assembly. Among the groups' early work was a push for AIDS-related legislation that created a durable power of attorney document allowing an individual dying of HIV/AIDS to designate another person, such as their partner, who was not related by blood or marriage, to be able to make healthcare and funeral arrangement decisions on their behalf. Members of the committee and coalition included lobbyists Christopher Hagin, Jim Harlow, Murray Weil, and Gil Robison of GAPAC, attorney Pat McCrary, and state legislator Jim Martin, among others (Martin 2008).

John Howell served as the first acting chair of GAAC until he was forced to step away due to his illness associated with HIV/AIDS that eventually claimed his life in June 1988. In addition to his work as a cofounder of the Georgia AIDS Action Committee, Howell was member of the Lesbian/Gay Chapter of the Georgia ACLU and SAME, a cofounder of Georgians Against Archaic Laws (GOAL) and LEGAL and served two terms as president of the Virginia-Highland Civic Association. John Howell Memorial Park, a 2.8-acre park located at 797 Virginia Avenue NE in the Virginia-Highland neighborhood is named in his honor (*Southern Voice* 1988d:13).

INTRODUCTION OF PRIVATE AND PUBLIC FUNDING TO FIGHT HIV/AIDS, 1986-1990

In 1986, the number of people recorded with AIDS in the state had risen to just over 320 cases. With money provided by the state the previous year, Grady Hospital became the first hospital in Georgia to establish an Infectious Disease Clinic (IDC) to treat HIV/AIDS patients when it opened in 1987. The clinic originally operated on an outpatient basis and consisted of nothing more than one office and a treatment room; however, the public hospital soon was caring for approximately 60 percent of all patients in Georgia who were infected or dying with HIV/AIDS and by 1987 was struggling to provide beds for homeless patients still suffering from AIDS but no longer requiring daily care (Sternberg 1987:1A, 12A).

Azidothymidine (AZT), an early antiretroviral drug, was first made publicly available in 1987 to help treat HIV with the start of the federal AZT Drug Reimbursement Program. Georgia received only \$587,000 of the \$30 million in federal money allocated to the states to assist with the purchase

of AZT for those without private insurance or Medicaid (National Institutes of Health 2022; Bronstein 1987:4C). In June 1988, the state legislature passed the Omnibus AIDS Bill after heavy lobbying and negotiations by the GAC and the GAAC. *The Southern Voice* referred to the bill as the “ominous Omnibus” and called it “the most comprehensive AIDS legislation to come before the GA General Assembly.” While the house version of the legislation contained poison pills that included criminal sanctions for transmission and solicitation of prostitution, sodomy and adultery, a more “acceptable” Senate version was ultimately passed by the state legislature. Considered by the Georgia AIDS Action Committee and many other LGBTQ+ activists as an imperfect first step, the bill cut the DHR budget from \$2.7 million to \$600,000 and struck a clause protecting persons with AIDS (PWAs) from housing discrimination but established confidentiality of unauthorized disclosure of HIV/AIDS testing results and provided \$100,000 in direct state funding to AID Atlanta (*Southern Voice* 1988a; Martin 2008; *Southern Voice* 1988c:12).

An influx of private grant money helped offset the still paltry public expenditures by the state and federal governments for HIV/AIDS prevention and healthcare. The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation funded a four-year \$1.6 million grant to AID Atlanta to administer the AIDS Health Services Program in 1988. However, operation of the program became mired in controversy stemming from AID Atlanta’s management of the money and poor record of outreach to affected minority communities in the city—problems that were eventually rectified following the resignation of AID Atlanta’s director and board (Duncan and VanderEls 1988:1, 3). That same year, the Heartstrings Fund of the Metropolitan Atlanta Community Foundation (MACF), awarded \$200,000 in funding to AID Atlanta for use towards

AIDS education and prevention programs, housing of PWAs, HIV/AIDS-related social services, and administrative costs. Meanwhile, the Atlanta Gay Center received \$10,000 in Heartstrings Grants to maintain operation of its three-night, HIV/STI testing clinic and support group program, which began in 1987 (Duncan 1988:1).

PROJECT OPEN HAND/ATLANTA AND THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF PEOPLE WITH AIDS

Working with AID Atlanta, Michael Edwards established what would eventually become Project Open Hand/Atlanta in 1986, preparing and delivering nutritious meals for those suffering from AIDS. The local organization was modeled after the first Project Open Hand operation founded by Ruth Brinker in San Francisco, California in 1985. Funded entirely by private donations, Edwards and his original team of 10 volunteers first prepared meals for 14 PWAs within metro area. In 1988, the group became an official Project Open Hand chapter and provided meals to 109 people, working out of an annex kitchen building at St. Bartholomew’s Episcopal Church (1790 Lavista Road) in the Toco Hills neighborhood located just outside the City of Atlanta limits. By 1990, Project Open Hand/Atlanta’s volunteer staff had grown 550 people who served more than 600 meals daily to 300 AIDS and HIV recipients (Project Open Hand/Atlanta 1989; King 1991:1).

The Atlanta Chapter of the National Association of People with AIDS (NAPWA) opened its local chapter in the city in 1987 with Jim Leys as the first president. The non-profit advocacy organization is credited as being the oldest national AIDS organization and was started in Denver, Colorado in 1983 to empower those with HIV/AIDS to live and die with dignity by assisting with decisions

regarding healthcare and housing, as well as AIDS research, education, and prevention (Hiskey 1987:6F). NAPWA/Atlanta established its branch offices in the former Gulf Oil Building designed by architect, I.M. Pei, at 131 Ponce de Leon Avenue NE (no longer extant) in 1988.

THE AIDS MEMORIAL QUILT

In an outpouring of grief, more than 20,000 Atlantans viewed the NAMES Project Foundation AIDS Memorial Quilt when it was first exhibited at the Georgia World Congress Center over Memorial Day weekend in 1988. Of the total 1,920 names of people displayed on the quilt at the time, 92 were from Atlanta and Georgia. Approximately 70 percent of the more than \$30,000 raised in donations and ticket sales from the event was donated to AID Atlanta, with the remaining 30 percent distributed among other organizations in the city and state that provided services for those living with HIV/AIDS (*Southern Voice* 1988b:12). Four hundred panels from the AIDS Memorial Quilt returned to Atlanta for a three-day display in August 1989 at the First Metropolitan Community Church in Virginia-Highland neighborhood and the Trolley Barn in Inman Park (Sibley 1989:1F).

AIDS RESEARCH CONSORTIUM OF ATLANTA AND THE ATLANTA INTERFAITH AIDS NETWORK

The AIDS Research Consortium of Atlanta (ARCA) began operation in 1989. The non-profit coalition of healthcare and medical professionals was founded by Dr. Melanie Thompson in the second story of an apartment house, located at 965 Virginia Avenue NE, in the Virginia-Highland neighborhood (the group would later move into the office building at 131 Ponce de Leon Avenue NE, which is no longer extant). ARCA originated

as a study group that investigated and sponsored new drug therapy trials and treatment options for the city's HIV/AIDS residents (*Southern Voice* 1988e; Anderson 1989). According to Thompson, the impetus to establish ARCA was born out a shared exasperation in the slow pace of HIV/AIDS therapy research, ARCA later developed into a full-fledged clinical research center—the first to be established in Atlanta. Over its significant 32-year history, ARCA sponsored more than 15,000 city residents in more than 300 clinical HIV drug trials and contributed to the licensing of 25 HIV/AIDS treatments by the U.S. Food & Drug Administration (FDA) (Saunders 2020).

“ WE WERE BECOMING ALL FRUSTRATED...
THE UNDERGROUND OF MEDICAL
THERAPIES WAS JUST BEGINNING TO COME
TO ATLANTA. LIKE LITTLE KIDS GETTING
TOGETHER—‘HEY LET’S DO A SHOW, WE
CAN USE MY DAD’S GARAGE!’—WE HAD TO
LEARN THE HARD WAY WHAT IT TAKES TO
DO STUDIES.”

— **Dr. Melanie Thompson**, President of ARCA
(Fraker 1992:13)

The Atlanta AIDS Interfaith Network (AIAN) was also established in 1989. The coalition originally consisted of 72 churches, synagogues, and temples located throughout the Atlanta metropolitan area that came together “to address the AIDS crisis from a faith perspective.” Under AIAN, volunteer congregations established Common Ground, a spiritually based emotional support group for people living with HIV/AIDS. In 1994, the coalition founded Faithful Care, a volunteer community organization dedicated to providing support care for homebound people with AIDS (Atlanta Interfaith AIDS Network n.d.).



Original Office of the AIDS Research Consortium of Atlanta, 965 Virginia Avenue NE (Source: New South Associates)

MINORITY OUTREACH OF AIDS SERVICES IN ATLANTA, 1986-1990

In 1989 the MACF distributed \$500,000 in grant money through the newly established Atlanta AIDS Fund to 12 AIDS organizations in the city (McGuire 1989:3). The following year, the state provided \$2.7 million for AIDS programs for the 1990 fiscal year. Much of that money went to DHR staff and administrative costs, the Grady Infectious Disease Clinic, Grady's new pediatric AIDS program, AID Atlanta, and the Savannah regional AIDS clinic (Sternberg 1990:D1, D3). This

increase in public and private funding for HIV/AIDS-related health services helped to establish a growing network of agencies and volunteer organizations in Atlanta in the late 1980s and early 1990s that was dedicated to combating the epidemic and its growing impact on the city's residents.

The expansion of AIDS service organizations in Atlanta coincided with the rising number of HIV/AIDS infections in Georgia. Between 1986 and 1989, the number of recorded cases more than tripled in the state (Table 1). By 1990, only New York, New Jersey, Florida, and California reported higher rates than Georgia (Sternberg 1990:D1, D3). Angered by the mounting death toll and the lack of coordinated policies to curb the crisis, activists with ACT UP/Atlanta and

other local groups began engaging in direct action demonstrations at the Georgia Capitol, the Governor’s Mansion, and the CDC to demand greater access to healthcare treatments and increased state and federal funding (see Theme: Political Activism in Atlanta’s LGBTQ+ Communities).

Table 1. Incident cases of AIDS by race in Georgia, 1981-1989

Year	Black	White	Other-Race/Unknown
1981	1	2	0
1982	2	6	0
1983	9	19	1
1984	18	146	2
1985	53	116	5
1986	87	224	11
1987	189	337	18
1988	330	463	26
1989	516	613	24

(Wilber et al.)

Although still popularly perceived at the time as a “white, gay male disease,” HIV/AIDS rates also began to soar within Black and Latin communities. While Black and Latin residents comprised only 17 percent of the country’s total population, they accounted for 38 percent of all new infection cases in 1988. In addition, 80 percent of all children and 75 percent of all women with AIDS in the U.S. were Black or Latin (Morris 1988:10E). In Georgia, the number of incident AIDS cases among Black residents exploded over a three-year span from 87 recorded infections in 1986 to 516 in 1989 (see Table 1). Meanwhile, the number of women with HIV/AIDS jumped during this same period from 17 to 88 cases (Wilber et al.).

High-risk, intravenous drug users and sparse educational outreach were credited for the precipitous rise in HIV/AIDS rates among Black

Atlantans, women, and children during the late 1980s and early 1990s. Furthermore, the city’s sizable population of gay and bisexual Black men who were not openly LGBTQ+ were not as accessible to public health outreach. The CDC and AID Atlanta, which still maintained a mostly all-white staff, were singled out for criticism in failing to adequately address the broadening crises (Sternberg 1990:D1, D3). In response, several local and national AIDS-related service agencies were organized and funded in the late 1980s to better serve the city’s diverse demographics (Chenault 2012; Moline 1989:1).

NATIONAL BLACK WOMEN’S HEALTH PROJECT

As with the Community Crisis Center and the Feminist Women’s Health Clinic before it, the National Black Women’s Health Project (NWHP; now known as the Black Women’s Health Imperative) was a LGBTQ+ welcoming healthcare advocacy and education organization. Activist Bylle Y. Avery founded the National Black Women’s Health Project at a conference for Black women healthcare workers held at Spelman College in Atlanta in 1983. Under Avery’s leadership, the grassroots organization was dedicated towards eliminating the healthcare disparities facing Black women and girls in the United States (Black Women’s Health Imperative). Originally headquartered in Atlanta, the NWHP also maintained offices in Brooklyn, New York and the Bay Area of California. During the 1980s, the NWHP became involved with combatting rising AIDS cases among Black women at the local, national, and international levels. NWHP executive board member Mary Lu Lewis also served as the coordinator of the National Lesbian Conference that was held in Atlanta in November 1991.

OUTREACH, INC.

Sandra S. McDonald established OUTREACH, Inc. in March 1986 as a non-profit, grassroots organization that provided AIDS awareness and prevention services among Black residents of Atlanta. McDonald was a former administrator with the Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority (MARTA), and special assistant to Rev. Joseph Lowery, president of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), who started to recognize the growing threat of AIDS within the city's African American population in the mid-1980s. During her first year, McDonald joined the executive board of AID Atlanta and OUTREACH, Inc. and relied on private funding for operations. She largely worked out of her car, making visits to Sunday church services, various community meetings, and local health clinics to hand out educational materials and appeal for greater AIDS prevention methods within Atlanta's Black community—particularly among intravenous drug users (Thomas 1987:1B, 4B). In 1987, OUTREACH, Inc. was the recipient of state and federal grant money provided by the Georgia DHR and the CDC, respectively, and McDonald partnered with two gay Black men living with AIDS, Dwayne Mack and Marquis Delano Walker, a founding member of the African American Lesbian/Gay Alliance, or AALGA (see Theme: Political Activism in Atlanta's LGBTQ+ Communities) to help conduct the organization's educational workshop programming. OUTREACH, Inc. received a \$75,000 grant from the Morehouse School of Medicine to help expand the service model in other

Georgia cities and was also the recipient of state funding through the 1988 Omnibus AIDS Bill. By 1990, the group supported a staff of 23 people and developed a coalition with Grady Memorial Hospital to monitor and improve patient compliance rates for recovering drug users (Moline 1989:1; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention 1990:11–13).

NATIONAL TASK FORCE ON AIDS PREVENTION

In 1988, the National Association of Black and White Men Together (NABWMT) established the National Task Force on AIDS Prevention (NTFAP) as a non-profit AIDS-education, prevention, and support program for “gay and bisexual men of color,” and tapped Duncan Teague to develop and administer the program's Atlanta office. Prior to joining NTFAP, Teague had gotten his start in local activism and HIV/AIDS education as a volunteer with AID Atlanta in the mid-1980s, shortly after relocating to Atlanta from his hometown of Kansas City (Teague 2022; University of California, San Francisco 2022). He was also active in the local chapter of BWMT and was a founding member and later co-chair of

“ BY THE END OF '84, '85, '86 WE'RE STARTING TO SEE IT (HIV/AIDS), AND WE'RE STARTING TO SEE IT AMONG OUR FRIENDS...THE LATE EIGHTIES, IT WAS HORRIFIC. AND BECAUSE I WORKED IN HIV AND AIDS, I COULDN'T GET AWAY FROM IT, AND I DIDN'T WANT TO. I THOUGHT I WAS DOING GOOD WORK.”

– **Rev. Duncan E. Teague,**
(Teague 2013)

AALGA (see Theme: Political Activism in Atlanta's LGBTQ+ Communities). According to Teague, NTFAP brought a level of professional program development and was the first to tailor it toward Atlanta's Black lesbian, gay, and bisexual residents at a time when these groups were either castigated or neglected by the city's Black churches, political establishment, and the white lesbian and gay communities. By conducting workshops in people's homes with titles such

as, “Hot, Horny, and Healthy!” Teague and NTFAP sought to provide fun, positive, and supportive educational programming to build a measure of self-esteem for Black participants. Teague later expanded his role and his reach, working as a health educator and researcher on behalf of NTFAP and BWMT in cities throughout the Southeast before taking on work with ARCA as part of the group’s tenofovir trial studies (Teague 2013) The NTFAP maintained operations until 1998 (Denmark 1991:1).

OUR COMMON WELFARE AND SISTERLOVE

Additional groups providing AIDS-related services for Atlanta’s Black population were established in the late 1980s and early 1990s. In 1989, Faye Brown, a statistician with the state DHR, and Charles Sperling founded Our Common Welfare, a support group for drug addicts living with HIV/AIDS. The group met once a week in an Atlanta recreation center located near Atlanta-Fulton County Stadium, offering informative classes about HIV/AIDS, its transmission, working to rebuild self-esteem among those living with AIDS, and providing referrals for other HIV/AIDS assistance organizations (Elmore 1989:8).

Dázon Dixon Diallo, a Spelman graduate and consultant on AIDS policy with the National Black Women’s Health Project, founded SisterLove, Inc. (originally known as SisterLove Women’s AIDS Project) as a volunteer AIDS service group for Black women in 1989 with financing from a small grant by the Fund for Southern Communities. Originally operating out of the AID Atlanta office, SisterLove’s was the first organization in the Southeastern U.S. to serve Black women and other women of color in the areas of AIDS and STI prevention, women’s education, and reproductive healthcare rights

(Sinclair 1990:19). SisterLove, Inc. continues to work in Atlanta and Africa as a service organization dedicated to the eradication of HIV/AIDS and advocating for reproductive justice and human rights for women and their families (SisterLove, Inc. 2023).

WEATHERING THE HIV/AIDS CRISIS IN THE 1990s

In July of 1990, Congress enacted the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) that prohibited discrimination against people with disabilities, including those living with HIV/AIDS. The following month, Congress passed the Ryan White Comprehensive AIDS Resources Emergency (CARE) Act, which was named after the Indiana teenager who contracted HIV/AIDS through a blood transfusion and who died in April earlier that same year. In its first year of funding, the legislation provided \$220.5 million in federal aid for AIDS community healthcare and treatment services, making it the largest federal grant program dedicated toward combating HIV/AIDS (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services 2022). Atlanta-based HIV/AIDS healthcare and service organizations only received \$900,000 in funding from the legislation, despite the Metro Atlanta HIV Planning Council originally requesting \$5.6 million. The largest recipients of federal money in the metropolitan area included the Infections Disease and Pediatric clinics at Grady Hospital, the DeKalb and Fulton county health departments, the Visiting Nurses Association, Project Open Hand, and AID Atlanta (Wildmoon 1991:2). Among the other AIDS-related service groups funded through the Ryan White CARE Act was the AIDS Legal Project, a program developed by Atlanta Legal Aid that provided pro-bono legal work for low-income people living with AIDS. The AIDS Legal Project

originally operated out of Atlanta Legal Aid’s offices at 151 Spring Street NE (Atlanta Legal Aid 2022).

The First AIDS Walk was held just over a year later in Atlanta on September 8, 1991, to raise awareness and funding for local AIDS organizations in the city. Musician Elton John and Mayor Maynard Jackson led the crowd of approximately 22,000 walkers, which also included U.S. Representative John Lewis and the Indigo Girls, on the 3.2-mile route around Piedmont Park. The event far exceeded the organizers’ estimates and raised more than \$565,000 for AID Atlanta and other groups (Holly Morris 1991:B1).

Infections from HIV/AIDS in Georgia continued to climb during the first few of years of the 1990s as the epidemic continued to exact a physical, emotional, and spiritual toll on Atlanta’s LGBTQ+ community (Wendy Morris 1991). However, death rates during this same period began to fall, marking a turning point for many as new breakthroughs in drugs and treatment therapies meant that infection with HIV/AIDS no longer meant a guaranteed death sentence (Table 2).

Table 2. Reported Cases of AIDS and Case-Fatality Rates in Georgia (Aggregated by Year of Diagnosis)

Year of Diagnosis	Number of Cases	Number of Deaths	Case-Fatality Rate
1990	1,426	996	70 percent
1991	1,756	938	53.4 percent
1992	1,784	546	30.2 percent
1993	1,355	179	12.4 percent

(AIDS Surveillance 1994)

RESIDENTIAL FACILITIES FOR PEOPLE WITH AIDS

Despite these positive developments, homelessness among those living with AIDS

became more acute. In the late 1980s, AID Atlanta was providing housing for approximately 32 people with AIDS in houses and apartments at undisclosed sites throughout the city. In 1986, Evelyn Ullman and Father Chester Gray of St. Bartholomew’s Episcopal Church first approached Dr. Joseph Wilber, medical director of the Georgia Department of Human Resources (DHR) AIDS program, to establish a residence for approximately 20 to 30 individuals (Cowles 1988:12A). Despite strong opposition from those in the surrounding Druid Hills neighborhood, the Jerusalem House opened in August 1989 with five residents living in a converted circa 1925 two-story, Italian Renaissance Revival style house located at 831 Briarcliff Road NE (North Druid Hills Property Owners 1986). The building was later enlarged with a three-story rear addition in 1992 to provide shelter and care for 23 unhoused people living with AIDS. The Red Cross assisted with training for volunteers working at the facility while Project Open Hand provided meals for residents (Morris 1992:B1, B4).

With Georgia ranking eighth for pediatric AIDS cases in the nation, a group of pediatricians and volunteers worked with the Georgia Department of Family and Children’s Services (DFCS) to open the first Childkind foster home in South Atlanta in March 1989. Childkind provided temporary housing and healthcare for six children born with HIV/AIDS, some of whom had been abandoned at Grady Memorial Hospital (Sternberg and Hill 1989:1A,9A; Childkind). By the mid-1990s, several other groups had opened permanent and transitional housing facilities for people with HIV/AIDS in Atlanta and the surrounding metro area. These included Matthew’s Place, a 27-unit complex operated by Antioch Urban Ministries and the Southside Integrated Care Program, which built and maintained a 24-bed facility in Southwest Atlanta, while Our Common



Jerusalem House, 1989 (Source: *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* Photographic Archives. Special Collections and Archives, Georgia State University Library)

Welfare, and SisterLove were among the groups that operated residential facilities for men, women, and children living with HIV/AIDS in areas outside the city limits (*Southern Voice* 1994; Wildmoon 1994:14).

THE GRADY MEMORIAL HOSPITAL INFECTIOUS DISEASE CLINIC, PONCE DE LEON CENTER

From the moment it opened in 1987, the Grady Memorial Hospital IDC suffered from a lack of adequate equipment, space, and staff to properly treat patients with HIV/AIDS at its cramped location in the main hospital complex located in downtown Atlanta. By 1991, those living with AIDS and wishing

to receive preventative medication at the IDC faced a six month wait to schedule an appointment, which prompted a “die-in” demonstration by ACT UP/Atlanta in front of Grady Hospital to protest the condition and management of the clinic in late May of that year (ACT UP/Atlanta 1991). In the wake of the protest, hospital officials with the Fulton-DeKalb Hospital Authority, the governing body that manages Grady Hospital, began searching for a new site to build a larger clinic that could meet the needs of the large number of people living with AIDS in the metropolitan Atlanta area. After originally considering sites such as the former Sears warehouse building (now the site of Ponce City Market, 675 Ponce de Leon Avenue NE), the hospital authority entered into a secret agreement with the Presbyterian Church (USA) to purchase the church’s vacant Presbyterian Center office property, located at 341 Ponce de Leon



Grady Hospital, Ponce de Leon Center, 341 Ponce de Leon Avenue NE (Source: Jonah Jackalope, Creative Commons License, 2020)

Avenue NE, for conversion and use as a new and expanded IDC (Fitch 1993:7, 10).

Despite vocal opposition by some neighboring business owners along the Ponce de Leon Avenue corridor, Grady Hospital completed the purchase of the site in 1991 and poured \$3 million into converting the existing office complex. The new Grady IDC opened to the public on October 14, 1993, with 500 people, including part-time Atlanta resident Elton John, attending the dedication ceremonies. With an annual budget of \$3 million in funding provided by the federal Ryan White CARE ACT, the “state of the art” combined research and treatment facility employed approximately 150 permanent medical staff and was designed to support a caseload of 5,000 patients, that included adults as well as children suffering from HIV/AIDS (Shumate 1993:3). Now known as the Ponce de Leon Center, it is one of the most advanced and

largest medical facilities in the U.S. dedicated toward the eradication and treatment of HIV/AIDS. The center provides a range of services and research work that includes dentistry/oral health, infusion therapy, pharmaceuticals, imaging, and an infectious disease laboratory (Grady Health 2023).

In 1995, the CDC reported a total of 13,343 people in Georgia had been diagnosed with AIDS since 1981 and approximately 5,000 people living with AIDS resided in the state (Raimondo 1997:359). By this period HIV/AIDS-related education, prevention, and care services, which had largely been performed by a network of community-based, grassroots organizations during the early years of the epidemic, became increasingly managed by well-funded medical professionals, national non-profits, and large public and private healthcare groups (Teague 2022). The mid-1990s also represented the peak of new AIDS cases in the

United States and a clear decline in AIDS incidences and deaths due to better prevention, surveillance, and the widespread introduction of effective antiretroviral therapy. The number of diagnosed AIDS cases and deaths would eventually level off toward the end of the decade; however, most cases occurred within the country's Black population during this period, while rates also increased among Hispanic, Asian, and American Indian ethnic groups (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Department of Health and Human Services 2001).

THE CHRYSALIS PROJECT AND THE ATLANTA LESBIAN CANCER INITIATIVE

While the response to the HIV/AIDS epidemic was the primary focal point of LGBTQ+ health care advocacy and treatment in Atlanta during most of the 1980s and into the 1990s, activists and medical professionals began creating new care groups that addressed the mental and physical well-being of lesbians in the city. In 1989, registered psychologist Lynne Magner and counselor Drue Waible founded the Chrysalis Project and Partners in Health. Affiliated with the Feminist Women's Health Center, the Chrysalis Project provided a social and support center for all women but with a sensitivity to the issues confronting lesbians. By 1990, the number of Chrysalis partners had expanded to six women consisting of three psychologists, a chiropractor, a registered counselor, and a meditation expert, who operated in a converted residence located at 2045 Manchester Street NE. The Chrysalis Project ceased operations in 2003 (Akins 1990:5; Feminist Women's Health Center 2018).

In June 1996, Dennie Doucher, Sherry Hale, and Linda McGhee founded the Atlanta Lesbian Cancer Initiative (ALCI), and by October of that year, the ALCI created the first cancer support group for

lesbians in Georgia and received support from the Georgia Division of the American Cancer Society. Two years later, co-founder Dennie Doucher died from breast cancer and Linda McGhee became the agency's part time executive director. Under McGhee, ALCI published its first Lesbian, Gay, and Bi-Sexual Friendly List. Linda Ellis succeeded McGhee in 2002, becoming the group's first full-time executive director (*Georgia Voice* 2011). The ALCI changed its name to the Atlanta Lesbian Health Initiative in 2005 and was later known as the Health Initiative and the Rush Center (located at 1520 DeKalb Avenue NE) prior to ceasing operations in 2020 (Project Q Atlanta Staff 2020).

TRANSGENDER HEALTHCARE ADVOCACY AND SUPPORT IN THE 1990S

According to transgender activist and educator, Dallas Denny, despite the earlier work of the Montgomery Medical and Psychological Institute, no formal healthcare network existed for transgender people in Atlanta prior to the 1990s. Awareness and visits to transgender-friendly doctors was all conducted through word of mouth and the medical staffs of the doctors were often not sensitive or even welcoming to the healthcare needs of transgender individuals (Denny 2022). In 1990, Denny founded the American Educational Gender Information Service (AEGIS; later known as Gender Education and Advocacy, or GEA in 1998), which she operated out of her houses in unincorporated DeKalb County and Pine Lake. The non-profit advocacy organization provided information through its publication, the *Chrysalis Quarterly journal*, about gender dysphoria and referrals for transgender friendly medical and legal professionals, gender clinics, churches, support groups.

In 1991, Denny co-founded the annual Southern Comfort Conference, a social and educational

conference for transgender people from throughout the Southeast. The first conference was held in Atlanta at the former La Quinta Inn at 2115 Piedmont Road NE (no longer extant) and the city continued to host the event until it relocated to Fort Lauderdale, Florida in 2014 (Denny 2022; Online Archive of California 2022). Prior to the move, organizers with the Southern Comfort Conference invited staff from the Atlanta Feminist Women's Health Center in 2000 to provide low-cost gynecological medical care to trans men at the conference. The annual Men's Health Clinic at the conference was dedicated in honor of Robert Eads, a trans man who died of cervical cancer in 1999 and whose life was chronicled in the 2001 documentary film, *Southern Comfort*. In 2008, the Atlanta Feminist Women's Health Center expanded the clinic expanded into the Trans Health Initiative (THI). The year-round program operates at the Center's second location in DeKalb County, just outside the Atlanta city limits, and provides educational and medical services to transgender and on-conforming patients throughout the Southeast.

CONCLUSION

Prior to the outbreak of the HIV/AIDS epidemic in Atlanta in the mid-1980s, the city generally lacked any type of healthcare infrastructure designed for LGBTQ+ clients. As the crisis intensified and coordinated public policy responses lagged, individual activists, medical professionals, and armies of volunteers took it upon themselves to advocate and coordinate for desperately needed funding and health services to meet the needs of the growing number men, women, and children living and dying with AIDS. While the introduction of federal and private funding in the late 1980s and 1990s resulted in a greater number of drug treatment methods and professional healthcare agencies better positioned to fight the HIV/AIDS epidemic, new grassroots organizations emerged to address other unmet medical needs in the city's often underserved lesbian, minority, and transgender communities.

NRHP ELIGIBILITY STANDARDS

THEME: LGBTQ+ HEALTHCARE AND ADVOCACY

Associated Property Type: The table below is intended to provide guidance on the types of properties that are expected to be associated with the theme LGBTQ+ Healthcare and Advocacy. This list is not to be considered comprehensive, as it was developed in tandem with the research conducted for the development of the theme’s history. This list does not preclude other properties with differing functions and uses that could have associations with the theme, pending future research.

Property Description: Associated property types may include a variety of buildings of various types and uses and may not have been purpose built for healthcare purposes. This is because LGBTQ+ healthcare, which emerged during the 1970s and 1980s, was a grassroots community effort and health clinics and support services and organization offices were placed into existing buildings as needed. Such healthcare associated endeavors commonly occupied existing or converted residences, commercial buildings, office towers, and churches, among others. Additionally, existing hospitals (such as Grady Memorial Hospital) and private and publicly operated health clinics housed LGBTQ+ health services. Major healthcare events such as national conventions also took place in Atlanta, in convention centers and plazas. Additionally, significant properties

Property Function or Use	Common Subcategories
Building: Residential	Apartment Residential Hotel Single-Family Residence
Building: Commercial	Bar Service Station
Building: Civic	Capitol Hospital Public Health Clinic Public Health Complex
Building: Education	College/University Research Facility
Building/Site: Funerary	Cemetery Mortuary
Building: Religious	Church Synagogue Temple
District	Residential Commercial Landscape
Sites/Landscapes	Park Plaza

associated with this theme may include residences that served as housing for those living with AIDS or were homes and offices of prominent LGBTQ+ healthcare leaders.

Property Significance: Those properties identified as significant under the Healthcare and Advocacy theme should have a documented association with an organization, institution, or facility that had a significant and demonstrable impact on LGBTQ+ healthcare in Atlanta. Some buildings may also be associated with a person who has been documented as an important healthcare or advocacy leader in Atlanta. Such properties would need to best represent that person's productive life in medical, health education, or health services fields. If a building is no longer extant consideration of eligibility under Criterion B for an individual's residence can be made. Healthcare complexes, convention centers, or plazas where significant events related to the theme may be considered as well.

Geographic Locations: The city limits of Atlanta, particularly Midtown, Downtown, and Intown Neighborhoods including the Atlanta University Center area, Candler Park, Druid Hills, and Virginia-Highland.

Areas of Significance:

- Ethnic Heritage: Black
- Ethnic Heritage: Hispanic
- Health/Medicine
- Social History: LGBTQ+ History
- Social History: Women's History

Levels of Significance: Most properties demonstrating a direct association with the theme would likely be eligible at the local (city) level of significance unless a property has significance with

events or individual(s) that made a noted impact to the history of LGBTQ+ healthcare that resonated at the state, or even national levels. Atlanta was the location of many first and early events in relation to LGBTQ+ healthcare and healthcare advocacy that drew state and national attention.

Criteria: NRHP Criteria A and B, Criteria Consideration

For Criterion B, the significant individual must have lived or worked in the property during the period in which they achieved significance - i.e., the period in which they created their productive body of work.

For National Register eligibility, properties associated with this theme that are less than 50 years of age must possess exceptional importance and meet the requirements of Criteria Consideration G. This would also apply even to properties that are more than 50 years of age but did not attain significance until a period less than 50 years ago. Properties achieving exceptional significance should demonstrate a direct association with a notable LGBTQ+ healthcare or health care advocacy event, such as the HIV/AIDS epidemic and retain recognizable features from its period of significance.

Period of Significance: 1969-2000

Period of Significance Justification: The period of significance is recommended as beginning in 1969, when the earliest known documented healthcare facility in Atlanta that catered to the LGBTQ+ community, the Community Crisis Center (CCC), opened. Although the CCC building is no longer standing, research indicates that late 1960s and early 1970s, with the rise of the city's counterculture, provided a more accepting atmosphere for healthcare facilities to provide

certain services to LGBTQ+ people. The period of significance ends in 2000, the end of the period of study for this context statement because in particular, the healthcare for HIV/AIDS, as well as trans healthcare continued to be important issues through the decade of the 1990s. In general, if the period of significance continues to the present, the end of the study period is the recommended end date.

Eligibility Standards:

- Resources must have a documented association with a business, organization, or institution that made important contributions to healthcare and healthcare advocacy for Atlanta's LGBTQ+ community.
- Resources may also be associated with the life of an important individual or individuals who played a significant role in healthcare and healthcare advocacy for Atlanta's LGBTQ+ community.

Character Defining Features

- A significant space associated with healthcare and healthcare advocacy for Atlanta's LGBTQ+ community may be located in a building designed for another use.
- The business, organization, or institution associated with healthcare and healthcare advocacy for Atlanta's LGBTQ+ community

must have occupied the property during the period in which it achieved significance.

Integrity Considerations

- Overall integrity should be assessed within the time frame the resource gained significance.
- The most important aspects of integrity for this theme and area of significance should be Location, Feeling, Association, and Design.
- Integrity of Materials and Workmanship, while important, may not be crucial for meeting the integrity threshold for this theme and area of significance under Criteria A and B. Many buildings in the Inventory have experienced alterations and may not retain all of their original materials. Other buildings associated with this theme may also have been altered in order to accommodate healthcare uses, and most buildings related to this theme did not originally have a healthcare use.
- The resource should retain most of the essential character defining features from the period the organization/business or individual occupied the property.
- In most cases, integrity of setting should be considered in terms of urban versus suburban setting and assess whether newer infill is or is not in keeping with the property's historic period of development.



CASE STUDY

RESOURCE: THE JERUSALEM HOUSE, 831 BRIARCLIFF ROAD NE

Note: This case study is a starting point for National Register eligibility analysis for this and related resources. Interiors of case study properties were not accessed during the creation of this context document, however, a thorough analysis of interior integrity would be required as part of any formal assessment of this property's eligibility for the National Register of Historic Places. Furthermore, these are not the official opinions of HPD and are provided here as starting points and models for additional analysis. Formal eligibility would need to be determined via in-depth analysis at the time of nomination.

The Jerusalem House was the first interfaith effort to establish a non-profit, residential care center for homeless and low-income people living with AIDS in Atlanta, a problem that had reached crises proportions in the city during the late 1980s. Evelyn Ullman and Father Chester Gray of St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church worked

with Dr. Joseph Wilber, medical director of the Georgia Department of Human Resources (DHR) AIDS program to establish a residence that could house approximately 20 to 30 individuals. Despite opposition from those living in the surrounding Druid Hills neighborhood, the Jerusalem House opened in 1989 caring for five people in a converted circa 1925 two-story, single-family house. The building was later renovated and expanded in 1992 to provide adequate housing and care for 24 people living with AIDS. The Red Cross assisted with training for volunteers working at the facility while Project Open Hand provided meals for residents.

The building was originally constructed as a single-family residence in the Druid Hills neighborhood. When it was converted into the Jerusalem House, the full length of the near one-acre linear parcel was utilized for the construction of the two-story, multi-unit apartments built onto the rear of the dwelling to house the residents.

The Jerusalem House, while located within the Druid Hills National Register Historic District, is

not identified as a contributing property in the nomination materials. Therefore, the building is evaluated on its individual merits relative to this theme under Criterion A in the areas of Health/Medicine and Social: LGBTQ+ History. If NRHP listing is pursued for this property, it would need to be under a separate individual listing from the Druif Hills District. The property is associated with LGBTQ+ Healthcare and Advocacy and served, at its establishment, as the largest residential facility in the state for people living with AIDS or symptomatic HIV. The facility has operated in this location since 1989, providing housing, meals, medical services, and companionship for AIDS patients in the city. At the time of this study, the property's period of significance for association with this theme is less than 50 years of age. Therefore, it must also meet the requirements of Criteria Consideration G. It is important to note that the AIDS epidemic is considered an important piece of Georgia's history, but its timeline did not begin until the early 1980s. The enormity of the history of the AIDS epidemic in the state is understood by historians as significant as evidenced by the thematic context. As the largest residential facility serving gay men with AIDS and HIV in Georgia, the Jerusalem House should be considered exceptionally significant and meets Criteria Consideration G.

National Register Criteria: Criterion A, Criteria Consideration G

Area(s) of Significance: Health/Medicine, Social History: LGBTQ+ History

Period of Significance: 1989-2000 (Beginning with the opening of the Jerusalem House until the end of the study period) as evidenced by its continued operation as an important HIV/AIDS healthcare facility during the height of the epidemic.

Integrity: The Jerusalem House is in its original location and retains integrity of location. Although the facility is a heavily altered and renovated circa 1925 house, the work conducted to make the Jerusalem House into a residential facility occurred during the period of significance. The property has integrity of setting, as it has remained in a low-scale residential suburban area and most infill occurred in the setting during the property's period of significance. The building has not been altered since its original renovation effort in 1992 and therefore retains integrity of design, materials, and workmanship during its period of significance under this context. The property is recognizable from the period of significance, and it thus maintains integrity of association and feeling.

Character Defining Features

- Direct association with the theme LGBTQ+ Healthcare and Advocacy as it served as the state's largest residential center for indigent gay men living with AIDS.
- Served as the Jerusalem House during the resource's period of significance.
- Retains essential character defining features including: two-story Italian Renaissance Revival style house with a two-story attached wing with apartments in the rear that appears as traditional single-family residence from the street; informally landscaped yard; paved driveway leading to apartment wing along the side of the building; interior spaces feature kitchen and medical support spaces, community spaces.
- As the largest residential facility serving gay men with AIDS and HIV in Georgia, the Jerusalem House should be considered exceptionally significant and meets Criteria Consideration G.



St. Mark United Methodist Church, 2019. (Source: JJonahJackalope, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/> Category:CC-BY-SA-4.0)

THEME: LGBTQ+ ATLANTANS AND RELIGION/ SPIRITUALITY

Though modern perceptions of the relationship between LGBTQ+ people and organized religion, particularly Christianity, in the Southern United States typically focus on the persecution that the LGBTQ+ community has historically faced, historians of Southern LGBTQ+ culture have argued that the public tension between these two groups is largely a product of the growing visibility of LGBTQ+ communities and organizations during the second half of the twentieth century. LGBTQ+ historians Wesley Chenault and Jodie Talley have found that prior to the Lavender Scare of the 1940s and 1950s and the rise of fundamentalist Christianity in the 1960s and 1970s, Southern culture was more accepting of individual difference or eccentricity. They argue that in Christian communities, being gay was accepted as an “open secret,” where a person’s difference was known but was not articulated.

RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCES IN THE SOUTH PRIOR TO THE MID-TWENTIETH CENTURY

Though LGBTQ+ persons were not able to be “out” or label themselves as LGBTQ+, their individual difference was generally tolerated as long as they did not upset the greater group order. Within the setting of the church in the pre-1950s Southern United States, congregations likely knew there were LGBTQ+ people among their members but generally accepted them on an individual level and did not publicly vocalize their difference

(Chenault 2008:29–31; Talley 2006:33–36, 72–73). While there may have been greater acceptance for individual difference and less direct anti-gay activism within religious organizations during this period, the climate of the “open secret” also maintained the cis-gendered heteronormative culture that barred LGBTQ+ people from creating communities that would allow identity formation, expression, and open, public acceptance by others.

THE EUCHARISTIC CATHOLIC CHURCH

The oldest known gay-affirming church in the United States, the Eucharistic Catholic Church, was established in Atlanta in 1946 by George Hyde. Hyde was a former Catholic seminarian who left seminary after being accused of homosexuality (White 2008). The congregation of Eucharistic Catholic Church was partially formed by parishioners from Sacred Heart Catholic Church in downtown Atlanta, who, along with Hyde, defended a young man who was denied the sacrament after confessing his homosexuality. By confessing his homosexuality, he had spoken aloud the “open secret,” and the other parishioners’ defense of his confession challenged the status quo. The priest of Sacred Heart passed over both the young man and those who stood with him, and after several weeks, Hyde suggested the group form their own congregation. They held their first service in a rented meeting room at the Winecoff Hotel at 176 Peachtree Street NW in downtown Atlanta. According to Hyde, approximately 30 people attended the first service, representing a mixture of sexual orientations and races. The Winecoff was also home to the Cotton Blossom, a bar popular with gay men at the time. Management of the hotel and bar helped finance the rented space for the church until Hyde was able to find a more permanent home for the congregation (Hyde 2005).



The entrance of the Winecoff Hotel on December 7, 1946. The hotel had burned earlier in the morning, prior to this photo being taken. Though the Eucharistic Catholic Church was transitioning from the hotel to a nearby house during this period, a sign depicting a double-barred cross, a Christian cross variant commonly used by Orthodox Catholic churches, is visible on the canopy over the entrance to the hotel. (Source: *Atlanta Journal-Constitution Photographic Archives. Special Collections and Archives, Georgia State University Library*)

During preparations for the new church, Hyde asked John Kazantks, a suspended Greek Orthodox bishop who moved to the United States from Greece after being accused of homosexuality, to lead the worship services. Kazantks declined Hyde's request but offered to ordain Hyde instead, which would allow Hyde to serve as the new church's priest on his own. Hyde agreed, and Kazantks conducted the ordination on July 1, 1946. The new congregation christened the church Blessed Sacrament to reflect the congregation's regained access to communion. After realizing that

two other churches in Atlanta shared that name, the congregation decided to change the name to Holy Eucharist, though most people referred to it as the Eucharistic Catholic Church (Hyde 2005).

By December 1946, the congregation began renting a house on Baker Street in downtown Atlanta to use as a church (Chenault 2008:64). One-half of the house served as an office and living quarters, and the other half housed an area for worship services. The exact location and status of this house is currently unknown. The church held its first formal liturgy on December 24, 1946. Following the service, a group of people attacked the attendees as they were leaving by throwing rocks (Hyde 2005). The congregation's interracial makeup and gay-affirming stance were unusual in 1940s Atlanta, making it the target of hate-fueled attacks throughout its operation, including smashed windows and more thrown rocks. Through the late 1940s, Hyde continued to

operate the Eucharistic Catholic Church in Atlanta and ministered to people across northern Georgia. Hyde relocated to Washington, D.C. in 1950, and though he continued his work with the Eucharistic Catholic Church, the presence of the church in the Atlanta area appears to have been reduced after this time (Hyde 2005).

RELIGION AND LGBTQ+ OPPRESSION IN ATLANTA DURING THE MID-TO-LATE TWENTIETH CENTURY

After Hyde departed from Atlanta in 1950, there were no openly gay-affirming churches in the city until the early 1970s. During this two-decade gap, the quiet acceptance of individual differences by religious groups waned as LGBTQ+ people became more visible. In the 1950s and 1960s, Christian precepts shaped public policy regarding sexuality, and Atlanta-area religious leaders began to speak out publicly against homosexuality. In 1954, the Atlanta Association of Baptist Churches (AABC), with representatives from 128 Atlanta-area congregations, authored a report stating their disapproval of the city's 1953 ordinance to allow nighttime parking at Piedmont Park, which was utilized for public intimacy by both heterosexual and homosexual people. The AABC's 1954 report argued that the ordinance legalized the activities of "sex perverts," and a year later, the AABC, along with the Atlanta Methodist Ministerial Association and other secular organizations, began protesting for more lighting in the park to deter people from cruising in cars and on foot (Howard 1997:116).

The Atlanta City Council quickly responded to the churches' demands, and by early 1956, the city had erected \$30,000 of lighting in Piedmont Park (Howard 1997:114–120). By the early 1970s, Atlanta's churches had a reputation among the

city's LGBTQ+ communities for oppressing gay people. Reflecting this, the Georgia Gay Liberation Front routed the city's first Pride march, held on a Sunday in June 1971, past the intersection of Peachtree Street and 4th Street, which was home to two of Atlanta's largest churches (Hallerman 2021; Marini 2018:87–89).

In the 1970s and 1980s, as LGBTQ+ people began organizing to end discrimination, Christian-based anti-gay activism increased in Atlanta and across the country. Local examples include the creation of the Citizens for a Decent Atlanta, a conservative Christian anti-gay group that called for the resignation of Mayor Maynard Jackson after he declared Gay Pride Day in Atlanta in 1976, and the appearance of Anita Bryant, a singer and anti-gay activist from Florida, at the Southern Baptist Convention at the World Congress Center in 1978 (see Theme: Political Activism in Atlanta's LGBTQ+ Communities) (Marini 2018:166–169; 193–194). During this same period, religious LGBTQ+ people in Atlanta began creating their own groups or carving out spaces in mildly accepting existing religious places.

THE RISE OF LGBTQ+-AFFIRMING RELIGIOUS CONGREGATIONS AND ORGANIZATIONS, 1970S AND 1980S

THE METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY CHURCH

In 1968, a gay-affirming church, the Metropolitan Community Church (MCC), was created in Los Angeles, California by Troy Perry. Perry was a Pentecostal pastor who was dismissed from the Pentecostal Church in the mid-1960s after the church learned he was homosexual (Metropolitan



Entrance of the Metropolitan Community Church at 800 North Highland Avenue NE, in 1978. At this time, the building retained features from its original use as the Hilan Theater, including the marquee, ticket booth, and interior theater seating. (Source: *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* Photographic Archives. Special Collections and Archives, Georgia State University Library)

Community Church n.d.). Perry's new church quickly spread to other cities across the country, and in 1972, MCC established a congregation in Atlanta, with Reverend John Gill serving as the first pastor. In early 1972, services were temporarily held at the Unitarian-Universalist Church on Cliff Valley Way while the church searched for a permanent home. MCC's first official location in the Atlanta area opened in the Decatur Theater in downtown Decatur in July 1972. In September 1973, MCC Atlanta hosted the 4th annual MCC general conference at their Decatur location

(*Atlanta Constitution* 1973). In March 1974, the church relocated to 800 North Highland Avenue NE in another repurposed theater (*Atlanta Barb* 1974; Snow 1974). A second MCC church, All Saints MCC, opened in the Grant Park neighborhood in the mid-1980s, and after this, the original Atlanta MCC became known as First MCC. Through the 1980s, both churches supported HIV/AIDS awareness and education through workshops (*Atlanta Constitution* 1987b, 1989). In 1993, First MCC relocated to 1379 Tullie Road NE (no longer extant), near the North Druid Hills Road overpass over Interstate 85 (*Atlanta Constitution* 1996; First Metropolitan Community Church of Atlanta 1993). In 2015, First MCC was renamed City of Light and relocated to a property on Cliff Valley Way. Since that time, the church has moved to 3125 Presidential Parkway (City of Light 2017; Hennie 2015).

DIGNITY

Another California-based religious organization established a presence in Atlanta in 1974. Dignity, a Catholic religious and social organization for gay people, was created by Father Patrick X. Nidorf in San Diego in early 1969 before relocating the group to Los Angeles later that year (DignityUSA 2009). By the early 1970s, Dignity began to spread across the country, and in 1973, moved its headquarters to Boston. A chapter was established in Atlanta in the spring of 1974. Initially, Dignity members hosted the meetings in their homes (*The Atlanta Barb* 1974a). By December of that year, the congregation of St. Thomas More Catholic Church at 624 W Ponce de Leon Avenue in Decatur opened their church to Dignity to utilize for Mass. The article announcing Dignity's new meeting location in Atlanta instructed readers to contact either Reverend Liam Tuffy of St. Thomas More or Reverend Joe Cavallo, listed at 717 Glenridge Drive NE in Atlanta, which is the address of St. Jude the

Apostle (*The Barb* 1974). The chapter opened an office at 972 Peachtree Street NE, Suite 202 (no longer extant), in October 1977 (Edwards 1977). Dignity, now known as DignityUSA, continued to operate its Atlanta chapter through the late 1980s.

INTEGRITY

In 1976, another Christian organization for gay people, Integrity, established a chapter in Atlanta. Integrity, an Episcopalian gay religious and social organization, developed from meetings spurred by a newsletter, *Integrity: Gay Episcopalian Forum*. The newsletter was created by Louie Crew Clay of Fort Valley, Georgia, which is located approximately 85 miles southwest of Atlanta. Clay began publishing the newsletter in late 1974 after being rejected by Episcopal churches in both Fort Valley, Georgia, and San Francisco, California, because he was gay and in an interracial relationship (Hall 2013:47–49). In 1973, Clay (then Crew) divorced his wife and met his future husband, Ernest Clay, in the elevator of the Atlanta YMCA. The two married in early 1974, though the government and the church did not recognize their union (Clay 2014).

By January 1975, Clay's newsletter had 120 subscriptions, and that month, he incorporated Integrity as an organization (Hill and Watson 2006). According to the classifieds section of the October 1975 edition of *The Barb*, members of Integrity were meeting in Atlanta by the autumn of that year, though no address was provided for the gatherings (*The Barb* 1975). In March 1976, *The Barb* reported that the Atlanta chapter of Integrity had officially formed after several attempts since the autumn of 1975, and it would hold meetings on the second and fourth Sundays of the month at St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church at 1790 LaVista Road (*The Barb* 1976).

CONGREGATION BET HAVERIM

Before the mid-1980s, there were no gay-affirming Jewish congregations in the Atlanta area. On the first night of Passover in 1985, four gay men formed Congregation Bet Haverim in the home of Gary Piccola (Congregation Bet Haverim 2016). Through the late 1980s, the congregation met in rented spaces around the Little Five Points and Candler Park neighborhoods of Atlanta. The congregation steadily grew, and by 1988, there were over 70 members. Events and services were held at the First Existentialist Church at 470 Candler Park Drive NE and the Atlanta Friends Meeting House at 1384 Fairview Road NE. According to a 1988 article in *The Atlanta Constitution*, Bet Haverim had been contacted by both the Reconstructionist and Reformist branches of Judaism, and by the time of publishing the article, the congregation had aligned with the Reconstructionist branch (*The Atlanta Constitution* 1987a, 1988). In 1989, Congregation Bet Haverim applied to join the Synagogue Council of Atlanta, but the council rejected their application in November of that year (Chenault 2012). The congregation bought its first synagogue in 2014 after “wandering and renting” for almost thirty years (Congregation Bet Haverim 2016).

THE FORMATION OF LGBTQ+-AFFIRMING BLACK CHURCHES IN ATLANTA

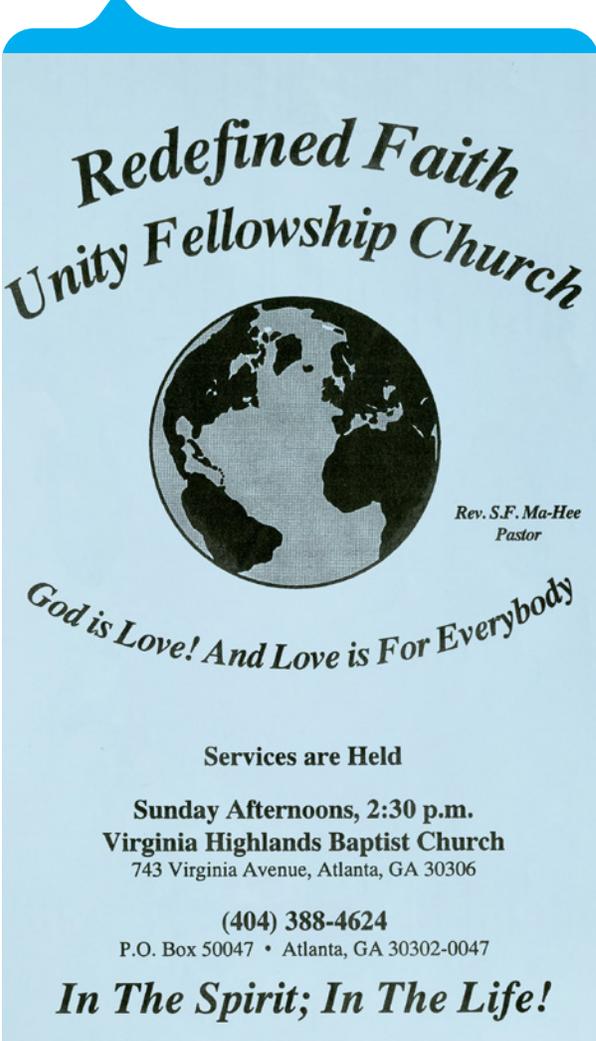
Black LGBTQ+ experiences with religion likely differed from white experiences in twentieth-century Atlanta. According to minister and HIV/AIDS Activist Duncan Teague, Black LGBTQ+ people, and particularly Black gay men in the South, during the mid-to-late twentieth century had strong connections with their

churches. Many of these churches did not accept homosexuality, which forced Black LGBTQ+ people to remain closeted or discrete. Nevertheless, Duncan argues that Black LGBTQ+ people were often accepted as an “integral part of Black community and church life” as long as they were not open about their sexuality (Washington 2013:73–77).

Black LGBTQ+ religious groups began to form in Atlanta in the mid-1990s. The earliest documented LGBTQ+-affirming Black religious group in Atlanta was Home Free Ministry, created by Kamau Ifoma and active by January 1995. Advertisements in *Venus* magazine did not include an address for the organization, and by the summer of 1996, Home Free Ministry was no longer listed on the magazine’s organizations page (*Venus Magazine* 1995a, 1996). *Venus* published information about a second Black LGBTQ+-affirming religious group, Redefined Faith Unity Fellowship Church (RFUFC), beginning in the summer of 1995, and an advertisement for the church listed Reverend S.F. Ma-Hee as the pastor. The advertisement included the text “God is Love and Love is for Everybody” and listed the American Legion Hall at 1071 Piedmont Avenue NE as the meeting place (*Venus Magazine* 1995b, 1995c). RFUFC was likely the first church opened specifically for Black LGBTQ+ people in Atlanta, and the name and slogan suggest that it was part of the greater Unity Fellowship Church, which was established in Los Angeles in 1982 by Archbishop Carl Bean (*Sentinel News Wire* 2019). Between 1995 and 2002, RFUFC’s name was changed to the Redefined Faith Worship Center, and it began operating out of the Virginia-Highland Church at 743 Virginia Avenue NE (Levinson 2002; Ma-Hee 2004).

A second Unity Fellowship Church was established in Atlanta by Reverend Antonio Jones in 1997.

Advertisement for Redefined Faith Unity Fellowship Church from August 1995, after the church began meeting at Virginia-Highland Baptist Church. (Source: *Venus Magazine* for Lesbians and Gays of Color, Volume 1, Number 8, African American Lesbian and Gay Print Culture Collection, Archives Division, Auburn Avenue Research Library on African American Culture and History, Atlanta-Fulton Public Library System)



**Redefined Faith
Unity Fellowship Church**



Rev. S.F. Ma-Hee
Pastor

God is Love! And Love is For Everybody

Services are Held

Sunday Afternoons, 2:30 p.m.
Virginia Highlands Baptist Church
743 Virginia Avenue, Atlanta, GA 30306

(404) 388-4624
P.O. Box 50047 • Atlanta, GA 30302-0047

In The Spirit; In The Life!

Unity Fellowship Church, Atlanta (UFC, Atlanta) began with nine members, and in 2002, it was located at 828 West Peachtree Street NW (no longer extant) (Aaron 2021; Levinson 2002). Reverend Jones retired in 2014, and the church’s current pastor, Reverend Maressa Pendermon, was selected to replace him. In 2015, UFC Atlanta was reincorporated and rechartered as Unity Fellowship of Christ Church, Greater Atlanta, and

now holds services at First Christian Church of Decatur at 601 West Ponce de Leon Avenue (Unity Fellowship Christ Church, Greater Atlanta 2020).

LGBTQ+ SPIRITUAL GROUPS IN ATLANTA

Two related gay spiritual groups, the Radical Faeries and Gay Spirit Visions (GSV), were also present in the Atlanta area during the late-twentieth century. These groups provided LGBTQ+ people with access to spiritual spaces and experiences that were outside of the more mainstream religious organizations and churches. Though both the Radical Faeries and GSV utilized places in North Carolina for their larger meetings, the initial development of the first group, the Radical Faeries of Running Water Farm, occurred at the 1978 Southeastern Conference of Lesbians and Gay Men held at the Georgian Terrace in Atlanta (see Theme: Political Activism in Atlanta's LGBTQ+ Communities) (Gay Spirit Visions 2014). At the conclusion of the conference, many lesbians decided to form a women-only caucus, leading the men to consider doing the same. Mikel Wilson, the owner of Running Water Farm, attended the conference and invited several of the men to come to his farm for the first meeting of the men-only caucus (Caulkins 2011).

Running Water Farm was located in Bakersville, North Carolina, on Roan Mountain, approximately 200 miles northeast of Atlanta (Olsen 2012). The initial meeting at Running Water Farm was held in June 1978, and gatherings continued twice a year through 1988. Many of the attendees of the Running Water Farm gatherings were members of the Radical Faeries, an international gay spiritual group that formed in Los Angeles, California in 1979 (Gay Spirit Visions 2014). Several of the regular attendees were gay Atlantans,



This page from Ron Lambe's scrapbook includes images from the third Running Water Farm gathering that was held in the summer of 1979. Lambe was one of the four men who purchased Running Water Farm from Mikel Wilson in 1979, and he was also involved in the creation of Gay Spirit Visions with Raven Wolfdancer in the in the late 1980s and through the 1990s. (Source: Ron Lambe collection, Archives for Research on Women and Gender. Special Collections and Archives, Georgia State University)

including Franklin Abbott, Terry Barfield, and Raven Wolfdancer. All three of these men were all present at the first Running Water Farm gathering in 1978 (Abbott 2011:00:52:00; Caulkins 2011). In the late 1980s, development around the farm made the gatherings more difficult, and the owners decided to sell the farm in 1989 (Gay Spirit Visions 2014; Olsen 2012).

After Running Water Farm was sold, Atlantan Raven Wolfdancer proposed that a new group be created to host gatherings so that the connections and energy shared by the group of gay men would not be lost (Caulkins 2011). Raven named the new group Gay Spirit Visions (GSV), “because he thought [the group] should have [their] own spirit vision as gay men: where [they are] going and what [they are] doing with [their] own spirituality” (Lambe and Kendrick 2019:00:25:20). GSV operated as a more structured spiritual organization than the Radical Faeries. Conferences were held at the Mountain, a gay-affirming Unitarian Universalist retreat center near Highlands, North Carolina. Though the gatherings were held in North Carolina, GSV was headquartered in Decatur, Georgia, and several members lived in the Atlanta area (Gay Spirit Visions 2014). In the mid-1990s, GSV hosted many of its events at the Friends Meeting House at 704 West Howard Avenue in Decatur (Gay Spirit Visions 1995). The organization is still active today, and they host three gatherings at the Mountain each year.

ACCEPTANCE BY ESTABLISHED ATLANTA’S CHRISTIAN CONGREGATIONS

Established Christian congregations in Atlanta began to openly accept LGBTQ+ people in the early 1990s, starting with Saint Mark Methodist Church on Peachtree Street. Saint Mark is located

at 781 Peachtree Street NE, and before the turn of the twenty-first century, it shared the stretch of Peachtree Street, between 4th and 5th streets, with the First Baptist Church of Atlanta, which was located at 754 Peachtree Street NE (no longer extant) (Atlanta History Center 2006). In 1986, the pastor of First Baptist, Reverend Charles Stanley, stated in an interview with the *San Francisco Examiner* that God created AIDS to punish humans for accepting homosexuality. His remarks led to protests outside the church and a long period of resentment toward the congregation by members of Atlanta’s LGBTQ+ communities (United Press International 1986). In the years following his comments, the portion of the Pride march along Peachtree Street, between 4th and 5th streets, developed into a section of negative emotions, where LGBTQ+ people would shout “shame!” and express anger toward both First Baptist and organized religion as a whole (Talley 2006:135–136).

In 1990, Saint Mark United Methodist was a dying church. The congregation was assigned a new pastor, Reverend Dr. Mike Cordle, whose first day in the pulpit aligned with the Sunday Pride march down Peachtree Street on June 24, 1990. After witnessing the mixed reactions of the crowd marching down Peachtree as they passed the corridor between the churches, Cordle returned to the congregation and proposed they open the church to gay members. The members of the church enthusiastically agreed, and on the Sunday of Pride in 1991, the congregation erected a sign that read “everybody is welcome at Saint Mark” (Talley 2006:139) They also stayed after their church service to hand out water to the marchers, which participants in the Pride parade that year remembered (Talley 2006:135–143). Since 1991, the attendance at Saint Mark has increased significantly, and in 2014, the church had over



Members of the congregation at Saint Mark United Methodist Church handing out flyers and inviting marchers to come worship during an early 1990s Pride parade. (Source: Pride, undated (slides) W149_08_13, LGBTQ Institute's Jim Allen papers, Archives for Gender and Sexuality, Georgia State University)

1,800 members. The church still serves as one of Atlanta's most inclusive congregations and is one of the largest gay-affirming congregations in the country (Saunders 2014).

Throughout the 1990s, other established churches in Atlanta began opening their doors to the LGBTQ+ community. Similar to Saint Mark, Virginia-Highland Baptist Church at 743 Virginia Avenue NE, now

known as Virginia Highland Church, also began welcoming LGBTQ+ people to their congregation in 1990 (Virginia-Highland Church 2022). During the early 1990s, Virginia-Highland Baptist Church made their buildings available to LGBTQ+ organizations for meetings and events, including the Black gay men's group Second Sunday and the Atlanta Gay Men's Chorus (see Theme: Atlanta's LGBTQ+ Community Organizations and Theme: LGBTQ+ Arts in Atlanta). The church also ordained a gay congregation member as a deacon and began renting their sanctuary out for same-sex union ceremonies (Atlanta History Center et al. 2022; Religion News Service 1998; Virginia-Highland Church 2022).

In 1999, the Georgia Baptist Convention voted to exclude Virginia-Highland Baptist Church, alongside Oakhurst Baptist Church of Decatur, from the convention for accepting and affirming homosexual people rather than asking them to repent for their sexuality. According to contemporary reports, the event was the first time a church had been removed from the convention (White 1999a, 1999b). The media coverage strengthened Virginia-Highland Baptist Church's welcoming reputation in the LGBTQ+ communities of Atlanta, and their LGBTQ+ membership continued to grow into the twenty-first century (Virginia-Highland Church 2022).

At the turn of the twenty-first century, established churches in Atlanta continued to become more open and accepting of LGBTQ+ people. One such church is St. John's Lutheran Church at 1014 Ponce de Leon Avenue NE, which hired an openly gay pastor, Bradley Schmeling, in 2000 (Dell'Orto 2007). Many of the gay-affirming religious organizations and congregations established in Atlanta during the late-twentieth century still have a presence in the area as well, including Bet Haverim, City of

Light (First MCC), Unity Fellowship of Christ Church, and Greater Atlanta. In 2012, Saint Mark United Methodist Church reported to *The Georgia Voice* that approximately 90% of their congregation was LGBTQ+ (*The Georgia Voice* 2012).

TRANS REPRESENTATION IN RELIGIOUS SPACES IN ATLANTA

Erin Swenson, an Atlantan, is the first person known to transition and retain their ordination from a mainstream church. Swenson was born in 1947 in Buffalo, New York and was identified as male at birth. In 1957, her family relocated to Atlanta, where she has lived most of her life (Swenson 2004). Swenson attended Columbia Theological Seminary in nearby Decatur, Georgia, where she received a master's degree in Ministry in 1973. Following graduation, she was ordained in the Presbyterian Church, and in the late 1970s, she returned to Columbia Theological Seminary to obtain a Master of Theology degree in Pastoral Counseling, which she completed in 1981 (Swenson 2020b; Swenson 2004). Between the early 1970s and the mid-1980s, Erin held several ministry and counseling jobs, including serving as a minister of education, a clinical chaplain, and a pastoral psychotherapist. By the late 1980s, she was working as a marriage and family therapist (Swenson 2004). In 1987, she co-founded the Brookwood Center for Psychotherapy and established an office at 1708 Peachtree Street NE in the Brookwood Exchange Building, where she operated a private practice (*Atlanta Constitution* 1989). Swenson enrolled in Columbia Pacific University in the late 1980s and graduated in 1989 with a Ph.D. in Psychological Services (Swenson 2004).

Swenson began experiencing gender dysphoria in the sixth grade and struggled with her gender

identity through the mid-1990s (Swenson 2020a). She hoped that her gender dysphoria would disappear when she married her wife, Sigrid, in the late 1960s but her feelings remained. During the early 1990s, Swenson revealed her feelings to her wife and began to see a gender identity therapist (Swenson 2020c). Between 1995 and 1996, she transitioned from male to female. Following her transition, Swenson requested that the Presbyterian Church change her name from her birth name to her new name, Erin, in the official register of ordained ministers (Pedersen 1996). Instead, the Presbytery of Greater Atlanta, the governing body for Atlanta-area Presbyterian churches, asked their Committee on Ministry to investigate whether Swenson should be allowed to maintain her ordination after transitioning.

In 1995, the committee recommended the church allow Swenson to retain her ordination. Their recommendation was initially declined by the Presbytery after members voiced concerns that the decision had national theological implications, and the church asked the committee to investigate the matter further. In September 1996, the committee again recommended that the Presbytery allow Swenson to retain her ordination (*Atlanta Constitution* 1996). The Presbytery met at Shallowford Presbyterian Church at 2375 Shallowford Road on October 22, 1996, and, in a close decision, voted 186 to 161 to uphold Swenson's ordination in the Presbyterian Church (Blake 1996). During the late 1990s, Swenson began to specialize in gender identity counseling, and she continues to work as a gender specialist in Atlanta today (Swenson 2004, 2022).

CONCLUSION

Beginning with the founding of the Eucharistic Catholic Church in Atlanta in 1946, which is com-

monly credited as the oldest known gay-affirming church in the United States, the city has often served as a beacon for LGBTQ+ religious life in the state and throughout the South. Early LGBTQ+-affirming Christian churches and religious groups, including the Metropolitan Community Church, Dignity, and Integrity, sought to fulfill the spiritual needs of their members and were also at the forefront in the struggle for LGBTQ+ civil rights in the city and combatting anti-LGBTQ+ bigotry by conservative churches. In the 1980s and 1990s, they were

joined by Jewish and Black LGBTQ+ congregations, such as the Congregation Bet Haverim, Home Free Ministry, Redefined Faith Unity Fellowship Church, and the Unity Fellowship of Christ Church. Finally, several established, mainstream congregations started to welcome and embrace LGBTQ+ members and ministers, including St. Mark Methodist Church and Virginia-Highland Baptist Church, a religious and social trend that has become more widespread throughout Atlanta during the early twenty-first century.

NRHP ELIGIBILITY STANDARDS

THEME: LGBTQ+ ATLANTANS AND RELIGION/SPIRITUALITY

Associated Property Functions/Uses: The table below is intended to provide guidance on the types of properties that are expected to be associated with the theme LGBTQ+ Atlantans and Religion/Spirituality. This list is not to be considered comprehensive, as it was developed in tandem with the research conducted for the development of the theme’s history. This list does not preclude other properties with differing functions and uses that could have associations with the theme, pending future research.

Property Description: Associated property types may include churches, synagogues, commercial buildings, residences, and community centers/meeting spaces. These resources may be associated with early or longstanding religious and spiritual history of the LGBTQ+ Atlanta community and may be associated with religious and/or

spiritual meetings over a specific period of time. Some of the associated buildings may not have been originally built for religious purposes and are commercial or residential in character. Because many established churches did not open their doors to LGBTQ+ people in the city, some LGBTQ+ people established their own religious and spiritual spaces wherever they were available, whether inside a hotel, or a house, or a church. Additionally, some buildings or resources may be associated with important religious and/or spiritual leaders within the city’s LGBTQ+ community.

Property Significance: Properties that have significance for their association with the religious/spiritual history of the Atlanta LGBTQ+ community must have played an important role in the religious and spiritual lives of the city’s LGBTQ+ residents. Some buildings may be associated with a significant religious or spiritual leader in the community. Such properties may likely be the building in which they led religious meetings, or it may their personal residence, whichever meets the NRHP Criterion B.

Geographic Locations: The city limits of Atlanta, particularly the Midtown and Downtown areas.

Property Function or Use	Common Subcategories
Building: Residential	Apartment Single-Family Residence
Building: Commercial	Hotel Retail Theater/Auditorium
Building: Religious	Church Synagogue Temple
District	Commercial Residential Landscape

Areas of Significance

- Religion
- Social History: LGBTQ+ History
- Ethnic Heritage: Black

Levels of Significance: Most properties demonstrating a direct association with the theme would likely be eligible at the local (city) level of significance unless a property has significance with events or individual(s) that made a noted impact to LGBTQ+ history that resonated at the state, or even national levels. Local and state religious organizations impacting LGBTQ+ people would be factors in considering the appropriate level of significance.

Criteria: NRHP Criteria A or B, Criteria Consideration A and G

For Criterion B, the significant individual must have lived or worked in the property during the period in which they achieved significance—i.e. the period during which the person performed their most productive work.

Religious properties nominated for the National Register under Criteria A or B must also meet the requirements of Criteria Consideration A: Religious Properties.

Properties associated with institutions or individuals that date from the last 50 years must possess exceptional importance and meet the requirements of Criteria Consideration G.

Period of Significance: 1946-2000

Period of Significance Justification: The earliest date for this theme is 1946, when the Eucharistic Catholic Church used a space within the Winecoff Hotel in downtown Atlanta to hold the earliest

known religious services for LGBTQ+ residents in the city. Additional research may reveal earlier extant properties with direct associations with this theme. The end of the period of significance is 2000, the end of the study period for the thematic context. In general, if the period of significance continues to the present, the end of the study period is the recommended end date.

Eligibility Standards

- Resources should be associated with a religious or spiritual organization/institution that played a significant role in the religious and spiritual lives of those in Atlanta's LGBTQ+ community.
- Resources may be associated with the life of an individual or individuals who played a significant role in the religious or spiritual lives of LGBTQ+ people in Atlanta.

Character Defining Features

- A significant space may be located in a building designed for another use or religious institution.
- The organization/Institution associated with the religious/spiritual life of Atlanta's LGBTQ+ community must have occupied the property during the period in which it achieved significance.
- Resources should retain most of the essential character defining features from the period the institution or individual occupied the property.

Integrity Considerations

- Overall integrity should be assessed within the time frame the resource gained significance.
- The most important aspects of integrity for this theme and area of significance should be Location, Design, Feeling, and Association.

- Integrity of Materials and Workmanship, while important, may not be crucial for meeting the Integrity threshold for this theme and area of significance. Many buildings in the Inventory have experienced alterations and may not retain all of their original materials.
- In most cases, integrity of setting should be considered in terms of an urban versus suburban setting and whether newer infill is or is not in keeping with the property's historic period of development.



CASE STUDY

**RESOURCE: WINECOFF
HOTEL, 176 PEACHTREE
STREET NE**

Note: This case study is a starting point for National Register eligibility analysis for this and related resources. Interiors of case study properties were not accessed during the creation of this context document, however, a thorough analysis of interior integrity would be required as part of any formal assessment of this property's eligibility for the National Register of Historic Places. Furthermore, these are not the official opinions of HPD and are provided here as starting points and models for additional analysis. Formal eligibility would need to be determined via in-depth analysis at the time of nomination.

The Winecoff Hotel is a 15-story hotel designed and built in 1913 as a three-part commercial skyscraper with Classical Revival-style details. It was listed in the NRHP in 2008 at the national, state, and local levels in the area of social history because the deadly 1946 fire that occurred in the building resulted in the development of new fire safety codes throughout the U.S. The building was rehabilitated and received historic preservation tax credits for the rehabilitation in 2008. At the time of the nomination's writing, the building's significant history relating to housing the oldest gay-affirming church in the U.S., the Eucharistic Catholic Church was either not known or included. The Eucharistic Catholic Church was established in Atlanta in 1946 by a former Catholic seminarian named George Hyde. The congregation of Eucharistic Catholic Church was partially formed by parishioners from Sacred Heart Catholic Church in downtown Atlanta, who, along with Hyde, defended a young man who was denied the sacrament after confessing his homosexuality. By confessing his

homosexuality, he had spoken aloud the “open secret,” and the other parishioners’ defense of his confession challenged the status quo. The priest of Sacred Heart passed over both the young man and those who stood with him, and after several weeks, Hyde suggested the group form their own congregation. They held their first service in a rented meeting room at the Winecoff Hotel. The Winecoff Hotel was also home to the Cotton Blossom, a bar popular with gay men at the time. According to Hyde, approximately 30 people attended the first service, representing a mixture of sexual orientations and races. Management of the hotel and bar helped to finance the rented space for the church until Hyde was able to find a more permanent home for the congregation, which happened in December 1946.

This case study further analyzes the property for its significance at the local level under Criterion A in the areas of Social History: LGBTQ+ History and Religion. The first services of the Eucharistic Catholic Church, the first gay-affirming religious organization in the U.S., were held at a rented meeting space at the Winecoff Hotel. The Winecoff Hotel meets Criteria Consideration A: Religious Properties because the church services held at the property marked a significant moment in LGBTQ+ and religious history. This was at a time when it could be dangerous to identify as a LGBTQ+ person and when most religious organizations denied LGBTQ+ people to openly worship with them. Therefore, the establishment of the first services for LGBTQ+ people in 1946 marks a significant moment in Atlanta’s LGBTQ+ history.

National Register Criteria: Criterion A, Criteria Consideration A

Area(s) of Significance: Social History: LGBTQ+ History

Period of Significance: 1946

Integrity: The Winecoff Hotel occupies the original site of its construction and retains integrity of location. Although non-historic infill is located in the immediate area surrounding the building, several historic commercial buildings remain adjacent to the hotel. Further, the infill is in keeping with the urban commercial character of downtown Atlanta. Therefore, the building maintains its integrity of setting. The building has not been enlarged and maintains its historic rectangular footprint and 15-story height. The design of the exterior elevations remains consistent with their appearance during the period of significance. The Winecoff Hotel has undergone considerable interior renovation in the lobby and second floor levels where the Eucharistic Catholic Church met in 1946, therefore its integrity of materials and workmanship have been diminished. Meeting spaces continue to be present on the second floor, likely in similar spaces where the church services took place. The building is recognizable from the period of significance, and it thus maintains integrity of association and feeling.

Character Defining Features

- Direct association with the theme LGBTQ+ Atlantans and Religion/Spirituality as it served as the location of the first services of the first gay-affirming church in the U.S.
- Retains essential character defining features including: high-rise commercial building; classical Revival exterior elevations; historic metal porch at second level exterior, where the Eucharistic Catholic Church posted a religious sign marking its presence.

20¢ The Great speckled Bird

25¢ outside
Atlanta

The Christopher Street Story

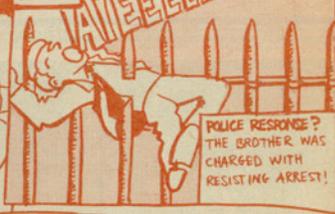
Cops have been busting and harrassing Gays for years.



ONE DAY IN JUNE, 1969, GAYS DECIDED TO FIGHT BACK. FOR HOURS THERE WAS A FULL SCALE RIOT ON CHRISTOPHER STREET IN NEW YORK. MANY WERE STILL BUSTED HOWEVER.



ONE BROTHER ARRESTED, FEARING PUBLIC EXPOSURE, JUMPED OUT OF THE PIG STATION WINDOW. HE WAS IMPALED ON THE FENCE BELOW.



POLICE RESPONSE? THE BROTHER WAS CHARGED WITH RESISTING ARREST!



WHEN NEWS OF THIS STREET ACTION & MARTYRDOM GOT OUT, GAYS DID WHAT THEY HAD NEVER DONE BEFORE. THOUSANDS MARCHED IN PROTEST— OLD AS WELL AS YOUNG, CONSERVATIVE AS WELL AS RADICAL. THUS GAY PRIDE WEEK AND THE GAY LIBERATION FRONT WAS BORN.

GAY SISTERS AND BROTHERS ARE OPPRESSED IN ATLANTA, GA. TOO.



... BY THE CHURCHES



... BY ALMOST EVERYONE



THUS IN ATLANTA, AS ALL OVER THE COUNTRY, GAYS ARE MARCHING AGAIN. WE CALL FOR A REPEAL OF ANTI-GAY LAWS AND FOR AN END TO JOB DISCRIMINATION.



STRAIGHT-IDENTIFIED SISTERS AND BROTHERS ARE JOINING HANDS WITH US IN SOLIDARITY. YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE GAY TO MARCH AGAINST GAY OPPRESSION.

MARCH JUN 27

SUNDAY 12 NOON

STARTS 7th & PEACHTREE TO PIEDMONT PARK RALLY

SMASH GAY OPPRESSION!

See you there!

Front Cover of *The Great Speckled Bird* from June 28, 1971 Promoting the 1971 Gay Rights March (Source: Atlanta Cooperative News Project, Georgia State University Library)

LGBTQ+ MEDIA IN ATLANTA

In the second half of the twentieth century, print media was an important resource for LGBTQ+ people throughout the United States. Before access to internet and smartphones became widespread in the late 1990s and first decade of the 2000s, respectively, magazines, newspapers, and newsletters helped LGBTQ+ people find and stay connected with their communities. Through advertisements and guides, LGBTQ+ people learned the names, addresses, and phone numbers for businesses that welcomed them and organizations that supported them. LGBTQ+ print media also served as important sources of information on a wide range of topics, including health advice, political activities, and coverage of local and national LGBTQ+ events. Around the same time as LGBTQ+ information became available to LGBTQ+ Atlantans through print media, a newly formed radio station began broadcasting shows with LGBTQ+ hosts in the city, giving LGBTQ+ perspectives a platform in Atlanta. In the mid-1980s, LGBTQ+ Atlantans also began to see positive reflections of themselves in television and film. Often, all three of these forms of media were able to reach those who could not participate in LGBTQ+ social life publicly, whether due to age, out status, or other circumstances.

ORIGINS OF LGBTQ+ MEDIA IN ATLANTA DURING THE LATE 1960S AND EARLY 1970S

The earliest LGBTQ+ publications available to Atlantans were national guides and magazines produced in other cities. Gay guides were first published in the mid-1960s and provided the

names and addresses of businesses, typically bars and restaurants, that were welcoming to gay people. Many early guides included coding systems that used letters and acronyms to inform users about the typical clientele and environments found in the places listed. This information helped LGBTQ+ people find others with similar interests (Damron 1967; *Guild Guide*). Though the guides were targeted mostly toward gay men, at least one lesbian bar in Atlanta appeared in guides during the late 1960s (*International Guild Guide* 1969). Examples of these publications include *Directory 43*, the *International Guild Guide*, and the *Bob Damron Address Books*.

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, national and regional magazines that covered information regarding LGBTQ+ events and social life began to be published throughout the United States. The first magazine covering LGBTQ+ life in the southeastern United States was *David*, which was published first in Jacksonville, Florida and then later in Fort Lauderdale. Though it originally began as a newspaper, it quickly developed into a magazine that included advertisements, business lists for cities throughout the country, monthly columns with updates for major cities throughout the southeast, coverage of female impersonation pageants and other events, and articles related to issues facing the LGBTQ+ community. In the early 1970s, it was one of the few sources of information regarding the social lives of LGBTQ+ Atlantans (*David* 1974; Hess 1970).

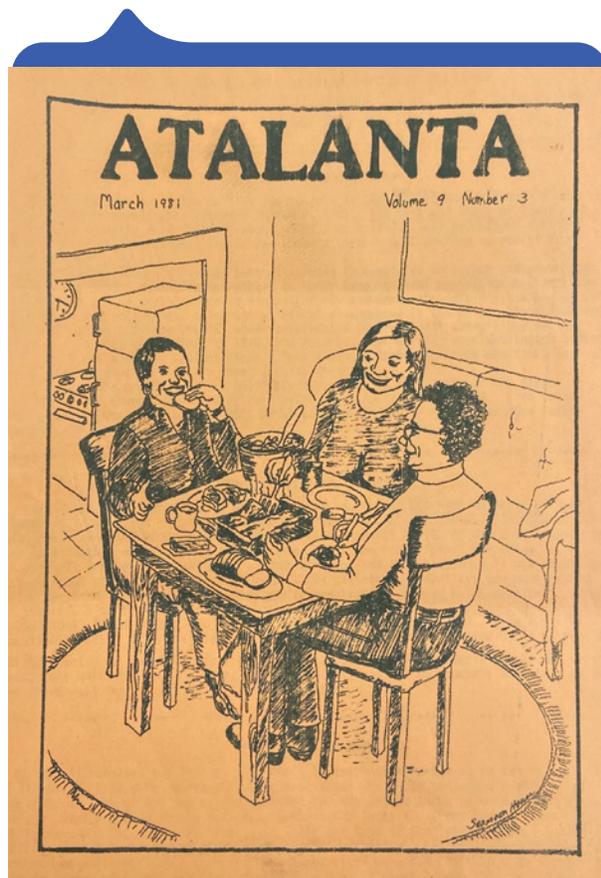
THE GREAT SPECKLED BIRD, THE CHANTICLEER, AND THE ALFA NEWSLETTER (ATLANTA)

The Great Speckled Bird, an Atlanta-based alternative newspaper first published in the late-1960s, also covered some of the earliest LGBTQ+

events in Atlanta. The publication covered many topics and events regarding the counterculture in Atlanta and throughout the country, and the first print mentions of the Georgia Gay Liberation Front (GGLF) and other early LGBTQ+ political organizations were published there. Many of the founding members of GGLF wrote for the paper as well (Abbott 1971; Atlanta Lesbian/Feminist Alliance 1972; Georgia State University Library 2020a; *Great Speckled Bird* 1971).

LGBTQ+ Atlantans began to publish their own magazines and newsletters in the early-to-mid 1970s. The earliest known LGBTQ+ publication to come out of Atlanta was *The Chanticleer*, a digest size magazine that covered LGBTQ+ social life

Front Cover of Atalanta Volume 9, Number 3, March 1981 (Source: Atlanta Lesbian and Gay History Thing Papers and Publications, Kenan Research Center, Atlanta History Center)



in Atlanta and nearby southern cities, including Chattanooga and Nashville, Tennessee and Birmingham, Alabama. Based on the numbering of available copies of the magazine, *The Chanticleer* likely began production between late 1972 and early 1973 (*Chanticleer* 1974, 1975a). Jack Gilley edited and published the magazine from the offices of his printing business, JAGGA Inc (Gilley 1975). Gilley's office relocated several times during the mid-1970s, with locations at 1132 West Peachtree Street NW, Suite 112 (no longer extant), 828 Barnett Street NE, and 1046 North Highland Avenue NE (*Chanticleer* 1973, 1975b, 1976).

Material in *The Chanticleer* included letters to the editor, gossip columns authored by Atlanta-based female impersonator Mickey Day, gay themed crossword puzzles, articles about a possibly fictional Atlantan known as Cypress Street Sam, advertisements for local LGBTQ+ bars and clubs, and a directory of Atlanta-area social spaces. The magazine also covered local events, ranging from public health drives to Thanksgiving celebrations at bars. The last known edition of *The Chanticleer* was published between May and June 1976 (*Chanticleer* 1976).

Another early Atlanta-based LGBTQ+ publication was the *Atlanta Lesbian Feminist Alliance Newsletter*, which was first distributed in September 1973. The newsletter, which was renamed *Atalanta* in January 1977, was created by members of the Atlanta Lesbian Feminist Alliance (ALFA), a radical lesbian feminist group that was organized in Little Five Points in 1972 (Gelfand 2020). Laid out using a typewriter, ALFA's newsletter contained organizational updates, local and national news, information about local events and fundraisers, book and music reviews, and articles that covered subjects such as politics, health, and the discussion of feminist ideas. There

were also sections for advertisements and a calendar of events. ALFA was formed in response to male-centric attitudes toward gay liberation in Atlanta, and the information in their newsletter reflected a lesbian, feminist perspective (see Theme: Political Activism in Atlanta's LGBTQ+ Communities).

WRFG 89.3 FM ATLANTA

Lesbian feminists, most of whom were members of ALFA, were also the first people to bring openly-LGBTQ+ content to radio stations in Atlanta. WRFG 89.3 FM was created in 1973 as a progressive radio station with programming dedicated to giving a voice to communities that were denied access by mainstream stations. They also created space in their programming for music genres that were not represented on other stations in Atlanta. Along with many other underrepresented groups served by WRFG, Atlanta's LGBTQ+ communities were able to create programs that covered topics and issues important to them (*Great Speckled Bird* 1972; WRFG 1972).

Many of the founding hosts were lesbians, and a portion of the funding that supported the creation of the station was gifted to WRFG by a local LGBTQ+ woman (Joye 1993:2). One of the first people to have a show on WRFG was ALFA co-founder Elaine Kolb, who began hosting "Lesbian/Woman" on the station in 1973 (Gerrard 2022). Other gay and lesbian shows on the station include Dave Hayward, Greg James, and James Moody's late-1970s program "Gay Digest" and Maria Helena Dolan's "Lesbian Lip Service," which began airing in 1980. The station was located at 1091 Euclid Avenue NE from its inception until the early 1980s, at which time it relocated to its current home as of 2023 at 1083 Austin Avenue NE. WRFG was one of the first media outlets to

provide LGBTQ+ Atlantans with a platform to share their perspectives and disseminate important information to other LGBTQ+ people (Dolan and Hayward 2018:02:03:29).

THE BARB

The *Atlanta Barb* was Atlanta's first LGBTQ+ newspaper, and its first issue was published in February 1974 by Ray Green. In August 1974, Green changed the newspaper's name to *The Barb*, and the following year he sold the paper to one of its contributing writers, Bill Smith (see additional information about Bill Smith in Theme: Political Activism in Atlanta's LGBTQ+ Communities) (Atlanta History Center 2020). Smith operated *The Barb* out of both his home at 374 5th Street NE and, later, the official office for the paper at 40 Peachtree Place NW (*The Barb* 1976, 15). *The Barb* covered a variety of information, including local and national politics related to LGBTQ+ issues, interviews with local female impersonators and other LGBTQ+ people, events held or attended by members of Atlanta's LGBTQ+ communities, religion and the city's gay-affirming church organizations, music and film updates and reviews, details about LGBTQ+ organizations in Atlanta and throughout the southeast, and other articles touching on a wide range of LGBTQ+ subjects.

Though it was focused on people and events in Atlanta, other southeastern cities were covered as well. In 1975, local drag celebrity and "Atlanta's still living legend," Billy Jones began writing a column in *The Barb* entitled "Phyllis Killer's Nite Notes." In the column, Jones, writing as his drag persona Phyllis Killer, covered local events, information about bars and clubs, and gossip about bar owners, bartenders, and other female impersonators (Killer 1975). Smith established an escort agency known as Youngman to help fund

the paper, but by the autumn of 1977, neither that business nor the ad revenue were enough to pay *The Barb's* expenses. The final issue was published in late 1977 (Padgett 2021:209–210). The information and advertisements in *The Barb* allowed LGBTQ+ people living in Atlanta and across the southeast in the mid-1970s to stay informed about events in the city and region, while also helping them connect with other LGBTQ+ people through social and organizational information.

CRUISE MAGAZINE AND OTHER REGULARLY PUBLISHED LGBTQ+ MEDIA, 1970S AND 1980S

Citing both the growing “gay population and the number of businesses that cater to them” in Atlanta and the need for an up-to-date source of LGBTQ+ event information in the city, Richard Kavanaugh and Bob Swinden began publishing *Cruise*, a monthly bar and travel magazine, in January 1976 (*Cruise* 1976). Kavanaugh and Swinden formed Cavco, Inc. to publish *Cruise*, which included content such as a directory of bars and restaurants, interviews with female impersonators, articles on bars and other destinations, and advertisements for businesses that were welcoming to LGBTQ+ people. Though it initially only covered bars in Atlanta, *Cruise* began covering other southeastern cities and states starting in May 1976. Alongside the information

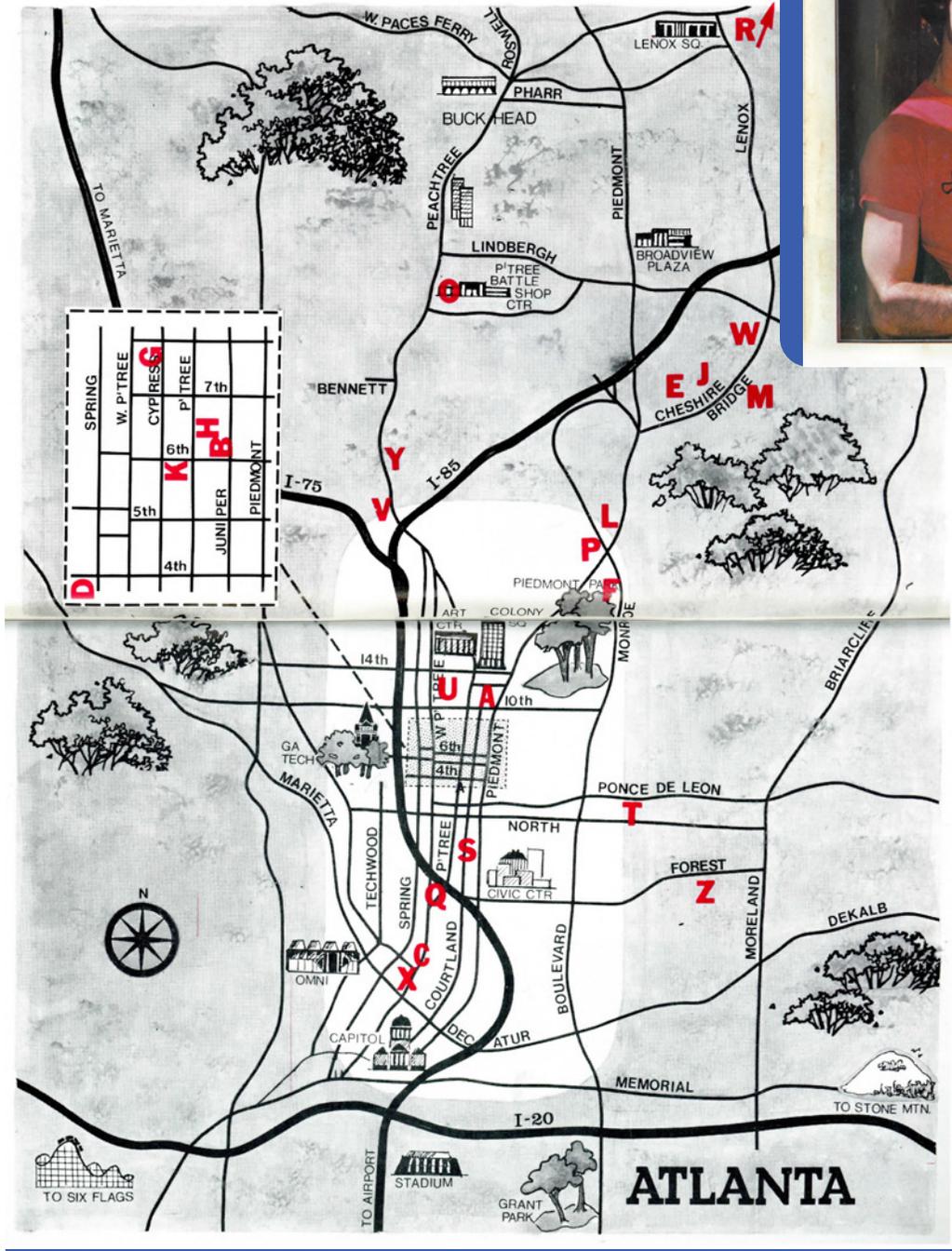
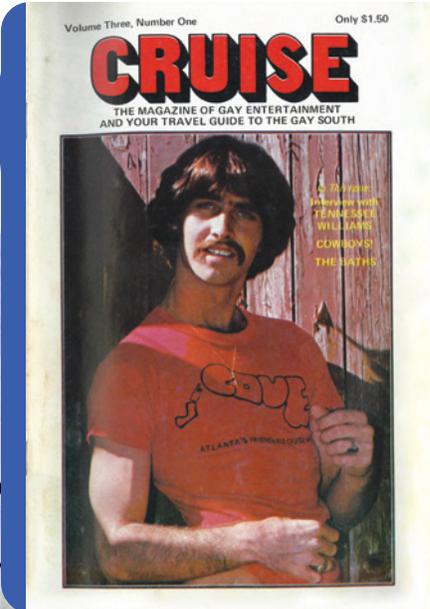
about bars, and often within the advertisements, there were photographs of nude men. These images made the staff of Cavco, Inc. targets of the Atlanta Police Department and the Fulton County Solicitor General, Hinson McAuliffe, due to Georgia’s law prohibiting the distribution of obscene materials (Ayres, Jr. 1977). The original office for Cavco, Inc. was at 3604 Piedmont Road NE (no longer extant). In October 1978, they moved to 572 Armour Circle NE (no longer extant), which was a larger space that was closer to one of the main corridors of gay bars in Atlanta, Cheshire Bridge Road.

Cavco, Inc. continued publishing *Cruise* and other similar magazines through the late 1970s. In August 1976, Cavco, Inc. began distributing a weekly bar and entertainment magazine that listed the events occurring at businesses in Atlanta. Named *Cruise Weekly Calendar*, the digest-size magazine also included a section entitled “Around Town” that featured photographs from events that had occurred the prior week. By July 1978, *Cruise Weekly Calendar* had been renamed *Cruise Weekly* (*Cruise Weekly* 1978).

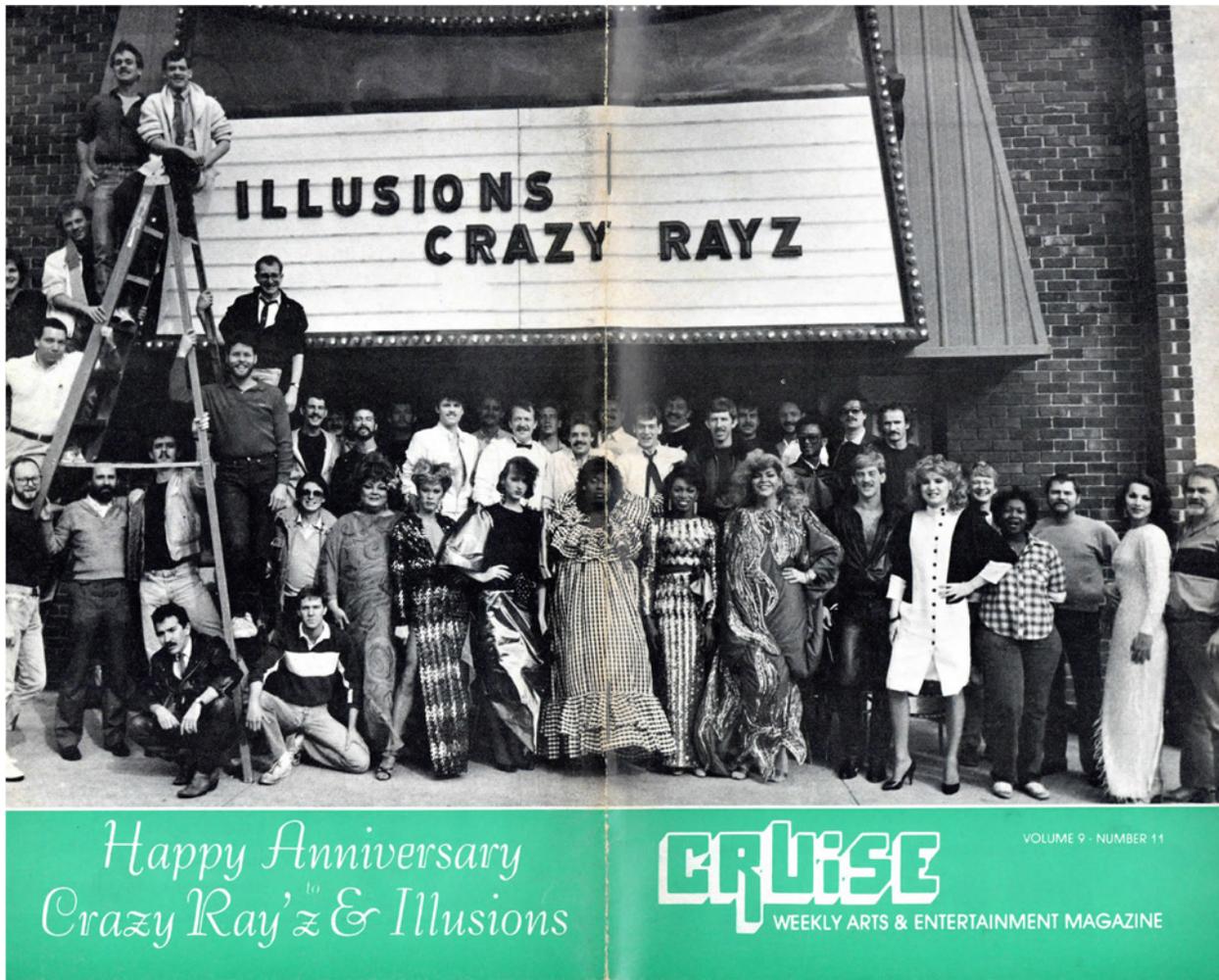
In 1977, they began publishing *Score*, a pornographic magazine that included nude photographs of men, interviews with the models in the photographs, and sections of personal ads that helped LGBTQ+ men make connections with other people. As part of his

Cavco, Inc. published maps of cities with LGBTQ+-friendly destinations marked on them in many of their magazines, including *Cruise*, *Cruise Weekly*, and their annual *Cruise Book of Maps*. They also typically included a copy of the “Cruise Guide,” a list describing the businesses shown on the map. The visual guide helped LGBTQ+ Atlantans and visitors to the city find welcoming spaces to connect with other LGBTQ+ people.

Front Cover of *Cruise* Volume 3, Number 1, January 1978
 (Source: HoustonLGBTHistory.org)



Map of Atlanta from *Cruise* Volume 2, Number 6 from May 1977. Cavco, Inc. regularly published maps such as this one to aid readers in finding places that welcomed LGBTQ+ people (Source: HoustonLGBTHistory.org)



anti-obscenity campaign in Atlanta, McAuliffe arrested Kavanaugh, Swinden, and Bob Benbrook, another staff member of Cavco, Inc., in June 1979 for publishing and distributing *Score* in the city. Though Swinden attempted to sue the Atlanta Police Department for the arrests using funds provided by the Atlanta Gay Center, he was not successful in disputing the charges and all three of the men pled guilty (GPU News 1979; Kavanaugh 2010). Their sentences were suspended, and the publication of *Score* was moved to Charlotte, North Carolina (*Score* 1980).

In the early 1980s, the leadership of the publishing company and the magazine began

Front and Back Covers of *Cruise Weekly Arts & Entertainment Magazine* Volume 9, Number 11, Showing the Cast and Staff of Illusions and Crazy Rays at the Entrance of Illusions (Source: HoustonLGBTHistory.org)

to change. First, Swinden stepped away from the company in January 1980, and Cavco, Inc. changed their name to *Cruise, Inc.* (*Cruise* 1980). In September of that year, Kavanaugh retired as publisher, and Swinden returned to *Cruise* as president of the magazine's new publishing company, R & R Publishing, Inc. (*Cruise Weekly* 1980). By 1981, R & R Publishing, Inc. was a member of the Gay Press Association and had relocated to a new office at 729 Piedmont

Avenue NE (*Cruise Weekly* 1981; Heverly 1981). They continued the publication of *Cruise* and *Cruise Weekly* through the mid-1980s, with *Cruise Weekly* becoming *Cruise Weekly Arts and Entertainment Magazine* in early 1983 (*Cruise Weekly Arts and Entertainment Magazine* 1983).

In 1985, the *Cruise* publications merged with the New Orleans-based weekly bar magazine *Around the Clock* to form *Cruise Around the Clock*, and the format remained similar (*Cruise Around the Clock* 1985). By 1987, both *Cruise* and *Cruise Around the Clock* had ceased publication (Daugherty 2018:Part 00:12:39). *Cruise* and *Cruise Weekly Calendar* not only documented the social lives of LGBTQ+ Atlantans on a monthly, as well as weekly, basis, but it likely also aided in the rapid growth of both the out gay community and the number of LGBTQ+ bars and clubs in Atlanta between the late 1970s and mid-1980s through their regularly published advertisements and event lists.

GAYBRIEL AND THE METROPOLITAN GAZETTE

During the life of *Cruise*, another, more inclusive Atlanta-based weekly bar magazine began circulating in the city. In 1979, Tom Oosterhoudt and Mark Rivers began publishing *Gaybriel*, which covered political topics, LGBTQ+ national and local news, and community gossip alongside information about Atlanta's bars, clubs, and restaurants (*Gaybriel* 1979a). The content of the magazine had more variety than *Cruise's* weekly edition, featuring articles, news sections, and interviews that were similar to those found in the earlier newspaper publication, *The Barb*.

Gaybriel's articles often featured more controversial perspectives than most other weekly magazines (*Gaybriel* 1979e). They published pieces

that highlighted unfavorable actions by powerful bar owners, like Frank Powell, as well as articles discussing the racist and excusatory card policies of LGBTQ+ clubs such as Backstreet (*Gaybriel* 1979b, 1979c). While *Cruise* and its sister publications often covered the mostly-white LGBTQ+ spaces in Atlanta, *Gaybriel* gave significant space in their magazine to Black bars and organizations, such as Club Sheba at 735 Forrest Avenue (now Ralph McGill Boulevard) and the Gay Atlanta Minorities Association (GAMA 1979; *Gaybriel* 1979d). They also provided more coverage of lesbian and women's spaces, including the Sportspage at 2069 Cheshire Bridge Road NE (*Gaybriel* 1979f).

New LGBTQ+ newspapers also appeared in Atlanta in the early 1980s, including the *Metropolitan Gazette*, which was published between 1980 and 1983 and covered local and national news that was about or of interest to LGBTQ+ people. Mike Jameson, who had previously worked at *Cruise*, served as editor of the paper (*Metropolitan Gazette* 1982c). It was originally published under the name the *Gayzette*, and then simply the *Gazette* in 1981 (*Gayzette* 1980; *Gazette* 1981). Alongside the news coverage, local entertainment and other events were advertised and described in the paper, and photographs were published from social events (*Metropolitan Gazette* 1982a). The *Metropolitan Gazette's* office was at 123 10th Street NE (no longer extant), in the heart of Midtown near the then-newly forming "Gay Strip" along Peachtree Street (*Cruise Weekly* 1982a; *Metropolitan Gazette* 1982b).

After the *Metropolitan Gazette* stopped publication in early 1983, R & R Publications began printing *Cruise Newsmagazine* to provide Atlanta's LGBTQ+ communities with a regularly published source of local and national news



Mike Jameson, executive editor of the *Metropolitan Gazette*, entering the newspaper's office on November 16, 1982 (Source: *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* Photographic Archives. Special Collections and Archives, Georgia State University Library)

(*Cruise Newsmagazine* 1983; *CruiseNews* 1983b). The content of *Cruise Newsmagazine* was similar to that of the *Metropolitan Gazette*, including the political coverage, which was not typically found in other *Cruise* publications. In September 1983, the paper was renamed *CruiseNews* and the layout was altered to have square spreads (*CruiseNews* 1983a). There were less advertisements in

CruiseNews than R & R Publishing's other products, and they were not able to support the paper for longer than eight months. The last issue of *CruiseNews* was published in December 1983 (*CruiseNews* 1983b).

THE TRANSSEXUAL VOICE

In 1981, the *Transsexual Voice*, the earliest known periodical written for trans people by a transsexual person, was published in Atlanta by Phoebe Smith (Raj 1989; Zagria 2017b). Smith is a transsexual woman who transitioned in the late-1960s while living in Atlanta. After publishing her first autobiography, *Phoebe*, she began to receive mail from other trans people asking for advice and other information. In order to answer the many requests she was receiving, Smith began publishing the *Transsexual Voice* in 1981 and distributed it nationally through 1995 (Zagria 2017a, 2017b).

Doctors authored articles in the newsletter that provided accurate health information for trans people at a time when sound advice was not often available from most medical professionals. The other content focused on the experiences of trans people, which included discussions of gender identity, transitioning, relationships, and discrimination (Digital Transgender Archive 2020). The final pages of each issue of the newsletter included personal ads to help trans people make connections, mostly for relationships, as well as a section of advertisements for organizations, businesses, and medical professionals that were welcoming or intended for trans people. Though the newsletter had contributors and readers across the country, Atlanta-area events and organizations were often advertised and discussed (*The Transsexual Voice* 1985, 1994). Smith stopped production of the newsletter in 1995 to care for

THE TRANSSEXUAL VOICE

APRIL 1993

\$3.00

GOOD ADVICE

There are two principal phases in "becoming a woman".

The first phase is mostly mental, when you learn what it truly means to live as a woman. You start by going out in public dressed as a woman, and develop your "presentation" to the point that strangers accept you as one. You progress from occasional shopping trips and social events to weekends, and eventually to full-time living. This requires no permission from anybody, at least until you want to get your legal identification changed. It also is completely reversible - unless you are recognized; then you carry the "identification" tag until you leave town.

The reversible aspect is import. You may well find that being female is no great privilege, and you may also discover that your present emotional discomfort isn't related to gender at all, but to other things.

The second phase, actual physical metamorphosis is much more involved. The surgery is expensive if done right, and insurance doesn't cover it. Reputable surgeons won't even talk to you until you have had expensive psychological evaluation and validation (in the early days, many people emerged from surgery to find that wasn't the problem after all - suicide was common).

I don't know how far back on this board you have read, but we have a lively and supportive bunch here. We are at all points on the path; from initial self-discovery to many years past final surgery. We share our triumphs and our pain; and yes, there is a lot of pain.

The biggest price we pay is not financial; we often lose our families and our closest friends and cause them terrible pain and grief in the process. So be prepared. If this is the right path for you, there are great joys to offset the pain. If not, we all hope you will figure that out before you go to far.

Dee McKellar
Prodigy Bulletin Board
Support Group Member
(Printed w/Permission)

her mother, and by that time, several other trans-authored and edited newsletters were also being published in the United States (Zagria 2017b).

FUNTONE USA AND THE AMERICAN MUSIC SHOW

The first weekly show with LGBTQ+ representation came to television in Atlanta in 1981 with *The American Music Show*, a public access program broadcast in Atlanta and created by James Bond, Patsy Duncan, and Dick Richards. Though the creators and cast did not explicitly identify the show as queer, much of the content featured on the show focused on or included LGBTQ+ people and places in Atlanta (Wussy 2017). The types of skits and characters featured on *The American*

Music Show descended from an earlier Atlanta-based comedy troupe known as Red Meat and Sprouts, and many of the founding cast and crew of the *American Music Show* were part of that troupe (Charles 1995:56). In the late 1970s, James Bond, a then-Atlanta city council member, and his brother, Civil Rights activist Julian Bond, successfully advocated for public access television in Atlanta. Together with Richards, who Bond met in the early 1970s, and Duncan, another advocate for public access in the city, as well as members of Red Meat and Sprouts, Bond began producing *The American Music Show* in the West End home of his mother, Julia Bond, at 266 Sunset Avenue

Exterior of the Home of Dick Richards at 1714 Adolphus Street NE, also known as Funtone USA World Headquarters (Source: Patrick Sullivan)



NW (Ditzler 2017b). The show was filmed there for three years before it was moved to Richards' home at 1714 Adolphus Street NE in Candler Park (Richards 1992).

The American Music Show was foundational for many important elements of modern LGBTQ+ culture. The programming was comedic with a southern, queer perspective, which has since influenced the later work of one of the show's regular cast members, RuPaul Charles, as well as Fenton Bailey and Randy Barbato of the Fabulous Pop Tarts and World of Wonder, who are the producers of *RuPaul's Drag Race* (St. James 2018; Terrell 2018). The production company of *The American Music Show* was Funtone USA, which also produced music and films for many of the artists that appeared on the show. Funtone Records, which managed the music production portion of the company, was co-founded by Richards and Ted Rubenstein. Richards' home was known as the Funtone USA World Headquarters, and his living room was the main studio for the show.

One of Funtone USA's slogans was "if it ain't fun, don't do it," and the actors' enjoyment was central to the show (Charles 1995:57–58). Though many of the sketches were satirical takes on serious aspects of American politics and culture, such as

NAACP demonstrations against Ku Klux Klan rallies in nearby Forsyth County, the presentation was always campy and humorous (Ditzler 2017c).

The American Music Show exhibited the experiences of members of Atlanta's queer arts and music scene through interviews, recordings of live performances, and sketches and segments filmed on location, which depicted the late-twentieth century landscape of LGBTQ+ Atlanta. The cast also developed a roster of recurring characters, many of whom often appeared in drag, including the Singing Peek Sisters who created by Molli Worthington (Wanda Peek) (Ditzler 2017a). With a budget of \$5 per episode and using mostly home video equipment, *The American Music Show* broadcast queer culture into the homes of people across Atlanta, and eventually the country. *The American Music Show* ran on public access television through 2005.

THE ATLANTA BUSINESS & PROFESSIONAL GUILD DIRECTORY

In the late 1970s and early 1980s, the number of LGBTQ+ owned and LGBTQ+-friendly businesses increased in Atlanta alongside the LGBTQ+ population. The Atlanta Business & Professional Guild (ABPG) was formed in 1978 to aid in the

Newsletters

As there was a proliferation of LGBTQ+ organizations in Atlanta in the 1980s and 1990s, the number of LGBTQ+ newsletters grew as well. Similar to ALFA's *Atalanta*, LGBTQ+ groups used newsletters to keep their members and others in the community informed about news related to their organization. Most of these newsletters were published from the headquarters or offices of these organizations, or from the homes of members of the groups. Like most of the other LGBTQ+ print media in Atlanta, newsletters helped keep LGBTQ+ people in the city connected to their communities, though newsletters were often slightly more focused on certain interests or subgroups within Atlanta's larger LGBTQ+ communities.

communication of these businesses, so they could promote one another and avoid overlapping planned events and specials (see Theme: Atlanta's LGBTQ+ Community Organizations) (*The Atlanta Business & Professional Guild* 1987a). In 1982, the ABPG began publishing the *Atlanta Business & Professional Guild Directory*, an annual list of businesses that were members of the organization. This guide helped promote LGBTQ+-owned businesses, as well as those businesses that were welcoming to the LGBTQ+ community. It also helped LGBTQ+ people identify places to support financially that would in turn support them socially and politically (Parker 1987).

Unlike the guides found in the earlier newsletters and magazines published in the city, the ABPG's directory listed a wide range of businesses, from accountants to health professionals, to plumbers and contractors. Similar to other LGBTQ+ organizations in Atlanta at the time, the ABPG also published a newsletter, the *Atlanta Business & Professional Guild News*, which covered updates about LGBTQ+ businesses, as well as general LGBTQ+ news on a local and national level. It was later renamed *The Phoenix* and was published through at least the late 1980s (The Atlanta Business & Professional Guild 1985, 1987b).

ESTABLISHED LGBTQ+ MEDIA IN ATLANTA: MID-1980S AND 1990S

By the mid-1980s, Atlanta had several LGBTQ+ publications and a thriving weekly television program that provided coverage of the growing LGBTQ+ population in the city. Weekly magazines continued to expand on the topics they covered during this period, with *Cruise Weekly Arts & Entertainment Magazine* adding small sections on news, sports, and forms of entertainment beyond the bar scene, such as coverage of local

theaters (*Cruise Weekly* 1982b; *Cruise Weekly Arts and Entertainment Magazine* 1984). New weekly magazines proliferated in Atlanta during this period, most of which included more articles and fewer full-page spreads of photographs and advertisements.

PULSE, GUIDE, AND ETCETERA

One of the first weekly magazines to begin publishing during this period was *Pulse*, which printed its first issue in June 1984 (*Pulse* 1984). According to Gregg Daugherty, *Pulse* "had a great focus on editorial[s], information, education, [content] beyond just getting you to the bars" (Daugherty 2018:Location 0:50:31). *Pulse* was only published for a short period in the mid-1980s, but other weekly magazines founded during this period lasted into the 1990s and through the turn of the twenty-first century. *Etcetera* was first published in June 1985, and by the mid-1990s, it was the largest LGBTQ+ publication in the southeastern United States (Chenault and Braukman 2008:99; Georgia State University Library 2020b).

Less than a year later, in January 1986, *Guide Magazine* was founded in Atlanta (*Guide Magazine* 1986). It was published at least through 1995. Both *Etcetera* and *Guide Magazine* covered a variety of subjects related to LGBTQ+ experiences in Atlanta, including articles on LGBTQ+ history, local performers, sports reports, interviews, health advice, and opinion editorials regarding culture and politics. Many of the earlier staff of *Cruise*, *Gaybriel*, and the *Metropolitan Gazette* worked on these publications, combining their talents to provide more variety and cover more aspects of Atlanta's growing LGBTQ+ communities. These weekly magazines served a similar purpose as the earlier weeklies by helping to keep Atlanta's growing LGBTQ+ population connected. Beyond

basic direction to and updates regarding local events, the new range of topics in these weekly magazines also aided in informing Atlanta’s diverse LGBTQ+ communities about what other LGBTQ+ people and groups were doing in the city.

SOUTHEASTERN ARTS, MEDIA, AND EDUCATION (SAME) AND *SOUTHERN VOICE* NEWSPAPER

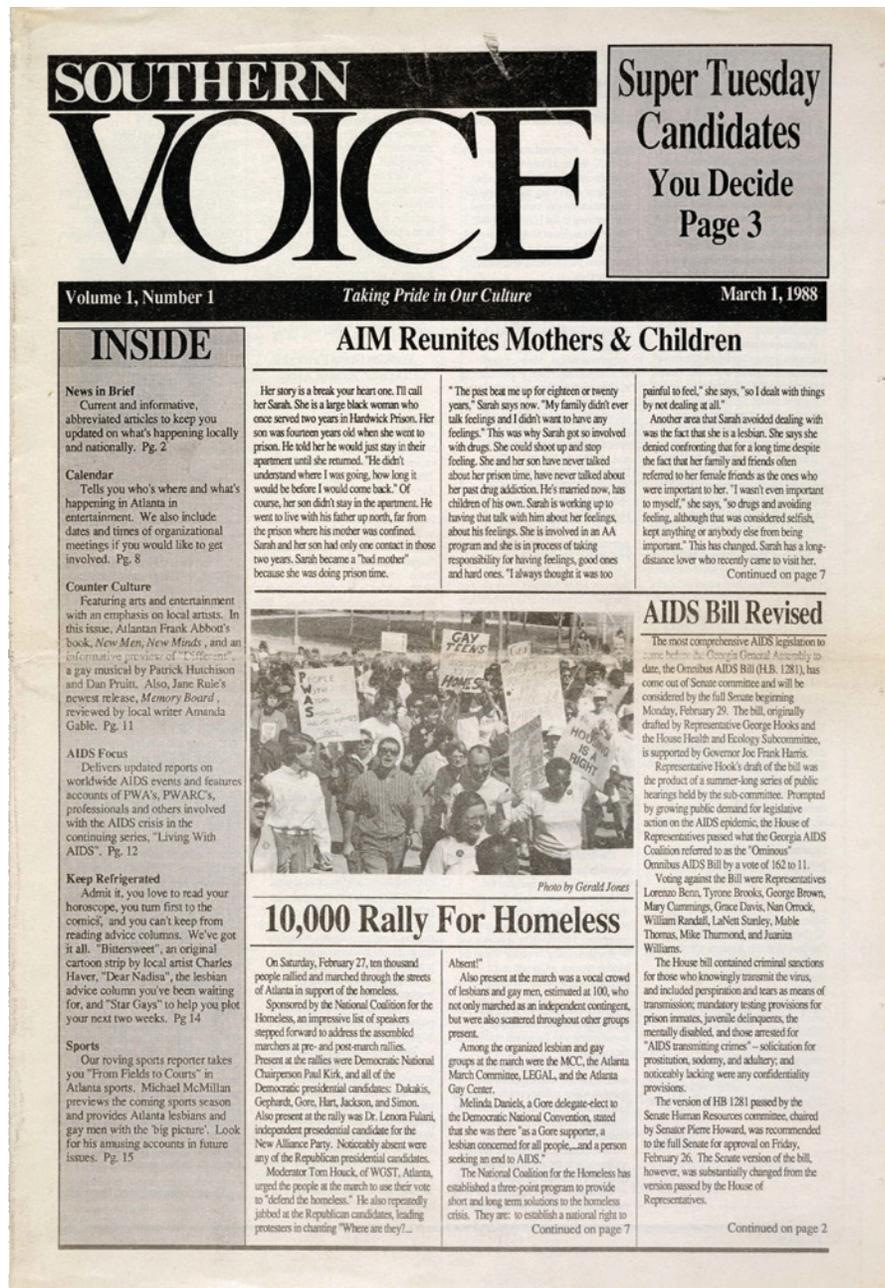
Southeastern Arts, Media, and Education (SAME), an LGBTQ+ arts education nonprofit, was founded in 1985 by several Atlanta-based LGBTQ+ artists, including Rebecca Ranson (Pici 2014:Location 01:08:10). As part of their mission to use art to create social change, SAME founded several publications and media projects. The offices for SAME were originally in the Little Five Points Community Center at 1083 Austin Avenue NE (Cash 2020; *Southern Voice* 1988). By 1993, they had moved to 75 Bennett Street NW. One of their earliest publications was *Amethyst: A Journal for Lesbians & Gay Men*, a semi-annual literary journal with written works by and representative of the experiences of LGBTQ+ people. It was first published as a regional journal in 1987, but began to include works by LGBTQ+ people from across the country by 1988 (Jackson 1988).

SAME also created films about LGBTQ+ issues, and in 1989, they co-sponsored the Lesbian and Gay Film Festival. During the 1980s and 1990s, the festival brought LGBTQ+ representation in film to Atlanta during a time when seeing LGBTQ+ experiences on screen was rare. Though it originally started as a weekend celebration of LGBTQ+ films, the festival was extended to a week-long festival in the early 1990s. Sponsorship changed for the festival through the 1990s, but it continued annually and became an independent non-profit organization known as Out on Film in

2008 (Farmer 2019; Out on Film 2020). Though the Lesbian and Gay Film Festival/Out on Film was not Atlanta’s first LGBTQ+ film festival, it is the city’s longest running film festival specializing in LGBTQ+ material. An earlier film festival, known as the Atlanta Gay Center Cinema, was held at Metropolitan Community Church at 800 North Avenue NE in 1979. The festival was organized by the Arts Advocates, an arts and culture event planning group that was sponsored by the Atlanta Gay Center (Atlanta Gay Center 1979).

SAME also sponsored the creation of the LGBTQ+ newspaper *Southern Voice*, which covered national and local news for Atlanta and the southeastern United States. *Southern Voice* was founded in 1988 by Christina (Chris) Cash and a team of volunteers. They published the paper bi-weekly from a small office space inside the SAME office building. By the mid-1990s, *Southern Voice* had a paid staff, printed 25,000 copies as a weekly paper, and published from its own building at 1189 Virginia Avenue NE (Cash 2020; *Southern Voice* 1994). According to Cash, the initial goals of the paper were to “focus on the news and not bar events; equally balance the coverage and images of men and women; limit advertising of a sexual nature, and have a cover that LGBTQ+ Atlantans would feel comfortable reading on MARTA” (Cash 2020).

Closer in appearance to contemporary major newspapers than its LGBTQ+ predecessors in Atlanta, *Southern Voice* covered important political, cultural, and health-related stories, with an emphasis on HIV/AIDS information. Weekly LGBTQ+ event information was still included, but it received less coverage and was typically shown on the paper’s weekly calendar (Bryant 1988). *Southern Voice* provided a regularly published LGBTQ+ newspaper for Atlanta after the closure of the *Metropolitan Gazette* and *CruiseNews*, and



(Opposite) Front Cover of *Southern Voice* Volume 1, Number 1 from March 1, 1988 (Source: *Southern Voice* Newspaper Collection, 1988-1995, Kennesaw State University, Department of Archives, Rare Books and Records Management, Digital Library of Georgia)

it continued to serve as one of LGBTQ+ Atlanta's primary news sources through the first decade of the 2000s. The paper was sold in 1997 to Windows Media, a national publisher of LGBTQ+ material. *Southern Voice* lost funding from Windows Media in 2009 and ceased publication in December of that year (Kennesaw State University Archives 2020). In March 2010, Cash and several former *Southern Voice* employees established *Georgia Voice*, an LGBTQ+ newspaper that covered similar

topics as *Southern Voice* (Cash 2010). *Georgia Voice* continues to publish bi-weekly in Atlanta as of 2023.

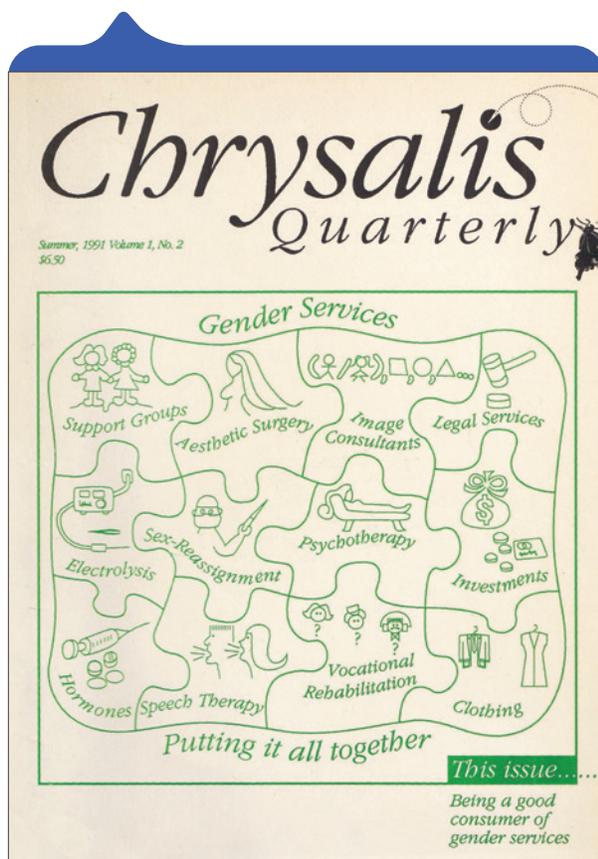
CHRYSALIS

In 1990, trans rights activist Dallas Denny established the Atlanta Education Gender Information Service (AEGIS), a non-profit organization that provided trans people and health professionals with information related to gender

dysphoria (see Theme: LGBTQ+ Healthcare and Advocacy). Though AEGIS quickly changed its name to the American Education Gender Information Service, the organization continued to operate from Denny's home in nearby Tucker, Georgia. Denny also began publishing *Chrysalis Quarterly*, a journal that addressed trans issues, in 1990.

The journal, which was renamed *Chrysalis: The Journal of Transgressive Gender Identities* in 1995, focused on one topic per issue. Some of the subjects addressed include general health, medical procedures, discrimination, gender and sexual identities, and relationships with family, friends, and employers (Denny 2014). In 1994, AEGIS began publishing a newsletter as well, which updated subscribers of *Chrysalis* and supporters of

Front Cover of *Chrysalis Quarterly*, Volume 1, Number 2 from Summer 1991 (Source: Dallas Denny, Joseph A. Labadie Collection, University of Michigan, Digital Transgender Archive)



the organization about their work (Denny 1991). AEGIS began to slow production of its physical operations in 1998, which included stopping the printing and distribution of *Chrysalis* (*From All Over: GenderNews* 1998). In 2000, AEGIS was reorganized as Gender Education & Advocacy, Inc., and Denny resumed publishing *Chrysalis* as an online journal (Denny 2014).

GROWING REPRESENTATION IN THE ATLANTA LGBTQ+ MEDIA LANDSCAPE, VENUS AND CLIKQUE MAGAZINE

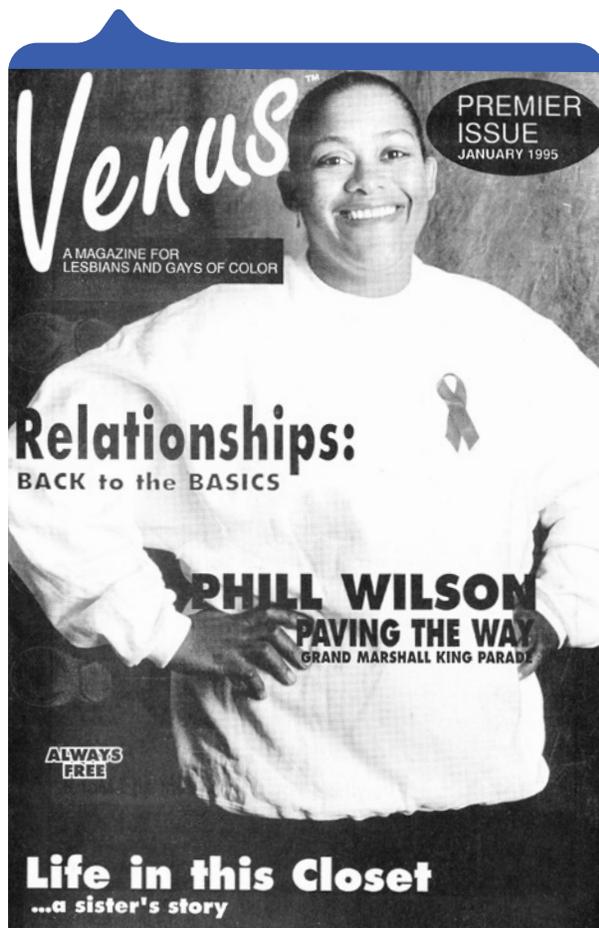
More African American LGBTQ+ Atlantans began to open up about their sexuality in the 1990s, which led to an increase in Black representation in the city's LGBTQ+ media. Prior to this time, coverage of Black LGBTQ+ people and spaces in Atlanta was mixed into the wider LGBTQ+ media, including the weekly magazines and the newspapers, such as *Guide* and *Southern Voice*. The earliest known, Black-published LGBTQ+ magazine in Atlanta was *Venus*, which started publication in January 1995. Named in honor of Venus Landin, a Black lesbian who was an activist for the LGBTQ+ communities of Atlanta, *Venus* covered issues and topics specific to Black LGBTQ+ Atlantans.

Content in *Venus* included articles regarding relationships, spirituality, health, education, entertainment, organizations, and businesses, as well as one or two feature articles that contained interviews, advice, and reports on recent events. Local and national news was reported in a section titled "the 411." The final pages of each issue of *Venus* contained a list of local and national LGBTQ+ organizations, which included several Atlanta-area Black LGBTQ+ spaces that were not typically listed in the mainstream LGBTQ+ publications in the city. *Venus* was published into the first decade of the

2000s. As Black LGBTQ+ social life became more visible in Atlanta during the last decade of the twentieth century, *Venus* helped Black LGBTQ+ Atlantans stay connected and informed.

While *Venus* focused mostly on providing Black LGBTQ+ Atlantans with information through articles, another Black LGBTQ+ publication began to provide content that mirrored Atlanta's earlier LGBTQ+ bar magazines, like *Etcetera*. First published by Dwight Powell in 1998, *Clikque Magazine* was an entertainment bar magazine that highlighted information and events important to

Front Cover of *Venus*, Volume 1, Number 1 from January 1995 (Source: *Venus: A Magazine for Lesbians and Gays of Color*, African American Lesbian and Gay Print Culture Collection, Archives Division, Auburn Avenue Research Library on African American Culture and History, Atlanta-Fulton Public Library System)



Black LGBTQ Atlantans (*Clikque Magazine* 1999a, 2000). The Atlanta office for the magazine was located at 931 Monroe Drive NE, Suite 102-279 in the Midtown Promenade shopping center (*Clikque Magazine* 1999b).

Clikque Magazine featured many full-page advertisements for bars, clubs, and local events, alongside articles on nightlife, ballroom events, local Black LGBTQ+ organizations, and HIV/AIDS. In July 1999, Dorian Kelley-Jahman, a Black trans woman, began writing a column, TransForum, for *Clikque Magazine*, where she discussed issues important to Black trans people. TransForum was one of the first trans-focused columns to appear in a major LGBTQ+ publication in Atlanta (Kelley-Jahman 1999). Though *Clikque Magazine* mostly covered people, places, and events in the Atlanta area, it also regularly featured Black LGBTQ+ life in cities in Texas, including Dallas and Houston. The directory in the rear of the magazine also included listings from multiple cities across the southeastern United States. *Clikque Magazine* continued publication into the first decade of the twenty-first century.

ATLANTA'S LGBTQ+ MEDIA IN THE NEW MILLENNIUM

David, one of the earliest LGBTQ+ magazines in the southeastern United States, ceased publication in the mid-1990s. The publisher of *David* at the time was Gil Quijas, who decided to resurrect the magazine as a weekly entertainment publication for Atlanta (Auer 2010; Kent 2012). Quija's new magazine, *David Atlanta*, was first published in October 1998 (Tyler 1998). Though the offices for *David Atlanta* were originally in Fort Lauderdale, where its predecessor had been published, by 1999, the magazine had moved to 1117 Peachtree Walk, Suite 123 in Atlanta (*David Atlanta* 1999).

As a weekly bar and entertainment magazine, most of *David Atlanta's* pages contained advertisements and photographs of people at recent Atlanta-area LGBTQ+ events. It also contained a weekly calendar of events and a directory for LGBTQ+ bars, clubs, restaurants, stores, and fitness centers. Between the entertainment information, there were typically small articles that covered topics such as fitness, music and film, local restaurants and bars, spirituality, and national LGBTQ+ news. Though the internet was quickly becoming the easiest way for LGBTQ+ people to communicate and meet in the late 1990s, *David Atlanta* continued to publish a classified section, as many other LGBTQ+ magazines had done in the preceding decades. *David Atlanta* became the primary LGBTQ+ entertainment magazine in Atlanta during the first decade of the twenty-first century, but, similar to *Southern Voice*, was forced to close in 2009 after losing funding from its parent company, Windows Media (Wheatley 2009). Also mirroring the path of *Southern Voice*, *David* was reestablished by former employees in early 2010 (Hancock 2010). The magazine continued to publish under the name *David* until 2017, when it was rebranded as *Peach* (Fleming 2017). In early 2023, the magazine announced that its name was reverting back to *David* (Hyldebrandt 2023).

OUTTV

While the *American Music Show* brought queer programming to Atlanta during the last two decades of the twentieth century, it was not until 1999 that the city received its first weekly, self-identified LGBTQ+ television show, *OutTV*. Mike Maloney created *OutTV* to display the variety of LGBTQ+ experiences in Georgia's major cities. One of the main goals of the show was to make non-LGBTQ+ Georgians more aware and tolerant of LGBTQ+ people (University of Georgia, University Libraries 2018).

OutTV's content mostly focused on events that occurred outside of the LGBTQ+ nightlife scene, including the Atlanta Gay Men's Chorus concerts, Black and White Men Together and Georgia Equality events, Atlanta Pride and the Hotlanta River Expo, the AIDS Walk and AID Atlanta events, author and artist interviews at Outwrite, and interviews with LGBTQ+ Georgians that made significant impacts on their communities (*Project Q* 2018). Maloney raised funds from family and friends to film *OutTV* and purchase airtime in Atlanta and Savannah. The show appeared weekly on AT&T Broadband cable channels in both cities between 1999 and 2001 (Georgia State University Library 2020c). *OutTV* provided LGBTQ+ Atlantans with a new media format in which they could interact with information that reflected their lives and covered stories that were important to them.

CONCLUSION

LGBTQ+-produced media has served as an informational lifeline for Atlanta's LGBTQ+ residents, helping to connect those living in the city to one another while also providing links to LGBTQ+ communities in other parts of the state, region, nation, and the world at large. The city's LGBTQ+ guides, magazines, newsletters, newspapers, radio, and television shows covered the full spectrum of print and broadcast media. These sources not only provided information, outlets for social or political interaction, and expressions of thoughts and ideas, they also allowed LGBTQ+ people in Atlanta to fully represent themselves and their communities in a positive light within the larger culture of straight, mainstream media that was historically dismissive of, or openly hostile to the city's LGBTQ+ population.

NRHP ELIGIBILITY STANDARDS

THEME: LGBTQ+ MEDIA IN ATLANTA

Associated Property Functions/Uses: The table below is intended to provide guidance on the types of properties that are expected to be associated with the theme LGBTQ+ Media in Atlanta. This list is not to be considered comprehensive, as it was developed in tandem with the research conducted for the development of the theme’s history. This list does not preclude other properties with differing functions and uses that could have associations with the theme, pending future research.

Property Description: Associated property types may include commercial buildings or residential buildings that have been converted into commercial use. These resources are likely not to have been originally built for the purposes of housing a LGBTQ+ associated media business or organization. This is because LGBTQ+ media enterprises, which emerged during the 1970s and 1980s, were independent, grassroots organizations and businesses that found available spaces in a variety of existing buildings.

Property Significance: Properties that have significance for their association with LGBTQ+ media should have direct associations with a media business or organization that catered to Atlanta’s LGBTQ+ community. Media organizations or businesses could include print, film, television, radio, or early digital media. Some buildings may be associated with a person considered an important leader in Atlanta’s LGBTQ+ media landscape. There may also be a node of media-related buildings that could be considered a district.

Geographic Locations: The city limits of Atlanta, particularly Midtown and other Intown neighborhoods such as the Atlanta University Center area, Candler Park, Lake Claire, and the Little Five Points commercial district.

Areas of Significance

- Art
- Commerce
- Communication
- Entertainment/Recreation
- Ethnic Heritage: Black
- Social History: LGBTQ History
- Social History: Women’s History

Property Function or Use	Common Subcategories
Building: Residential	Apartment Single-Family Residence
Building: Commercial	Retail
Building: Education	School
District	Commercial Residential

Criteria: NRHP Criteria A and B, Criteria Consideration G

For Criterion B, the significant individual must have lived or worked in the property during the period in which they achieved significance - i.e. the period during which the person performed their most productive work.

Properties associated with businesses, organizations, or individuals that date from the last 50 years must possess exceptional importance, following the requirements of Criteria Consideration G.

Period of Significance: 1973-2000

Period of Significance Justification: Although *The Great Speckled Bird* newspaper was the first media outlet to cover LGBTQ+ events in Atlanta, its original office and subsequent locations are no longer extant. The earliest known extant building associated with LGBTQ+ media is the first Atlanta Lesbian Feminist Alliance (ALFA) House at 1190 Mansfield Avenue NE in Candler Park, where the group began regularly publishing a monthly newsletter in 1973 (later named *Atalanta*). Further research may reveal earlier extant properties with documented associations with this theme. The period of significance ends in 2000, the end of the period of study for this context statement. In general, if the period of significance continues to the present, the end of the study period is the recommended end date.

Eligibility Standards

- Resources should be associated with a media organization/institution that played a significant role in chronicling, reporting, and communicating for, and about, Atlanta's LGBTQ+ community.

- Resources may be associated with the life of an individual or individuals who played a significant role in LGBTQ+ media in Atlanta.

Character Defining Features

- Documented association with the historic theme LGBTQ+ Media in Atlanta.
- The property associated with Atlanta LGBTQ+ media must have occupied the property during the period in which it achieved significance.
- Resources should retain most of the essential character defining features from the period the institution or individual occupied the property.

Integrity Considerations

- Overall integrity should be assessed within the time frame the resource gained significance.
- The most important aspects of integrity for this theme and area of significance should be Location, Design, Feeling, and Association.
- Integrity of Materials and Workmanship, while important, may not be crucial for meeting the Integrity threshold for this theme and area of significance. Many buildings in the Inventory have experienced alterations and may not retain all of their original materials.
- In most cases, integrity of setting should be considered in terms of an urban versus suburban setting and whether newer infill is or is not in keeping with the property's historic period of development.



CASE STUDY

RESOURCE: FUNTONE USA WORLD HEADQUARTERS, 1714 ADOLPHUS STREET NE

Note: This case study is a starting point for National Register eligibility analysis for this and related resources. Interiors of case study properties were not accessed during the creation of this context document, however, a thorough analysis of interior integrity would be required as part of any formal assessment of this property's eligibility for the National Register of Historic Places. Furthermore, these are not the official opinions of HPD and are provided here as starting points and models for additional analysis. Formal eligibility would need to be determined via in-depth analysis at the time of nomination.

The circa 1925 bungalow located at 1714 Adolphus Street NE was known as the Funtone USA World Headquarters, which brought the first weekly show with LGBTQ+ representation on Atlanta television in 1981 with *The American Music Show*. The show was a public access program broadcast in Atlanta and created by Dick Richards, James Bond, and Patsy Duncan. Richards' house on Adolphus Street in the Candler Park neighborhood became the Funtone USA World Headquarters with the living room serving as the main studio for the show. *The American Music Show* televised the experiences of members of Atlanta's queer arts and music scene through interviews, recordings of live performances, and sketches and segments filmed on location, which depicted the late-twentieth century landscape of LGBTQ+ Atlanta. The cast also developed a roster of reoccurring characters,

many of whom often appeared in drag, including the Singing Peek Sisters. With a budget of \$5 per episode and using mostly home video equipment, *The American Music Show* broadcast queer culture into the homes of people across Atlanta, and eventually the country. *The American Music Show* ran on public access television through 2005.

The property is currently listed in the NRHP as a contributing resource in the Candler Park Historic District, which was listed in 1983 and updated in 2005 in the areas of community planning and development and architecture.

This case study proposes the house merits individual consideration for the NRHP for significance at the local level under Criteria A in the areas of Communications and Social History: LGBTQ+ History as the location of a popular underground television show, *The American Music Show*. Because, at the time of this study, the resource's period of significance is less than 50 years of age, it must also meet Criteria Consideration G. The Funtone USA World Headquarters meets Criteria Consideration G because it functioned as the studio production facility of a popular underground LGBTQ+ program, *The American Music Show*, which broadcast queer culture into the homes of people across Atlanta, and eventually the country. There is no comparable resource like this that has been identified in the City of Atlanta.

National Register Criteria: Criterion A, Criteria Consideration G

Area(s) of Significance: Communications and Social History: LGBTQ+ History

Period of Significance: 1984-2000

Integrity: The Funtone USA World Headquarters is in its original location and retains integrity of location. The house maintains its integrity of setting, with historic, single-story homes in the immediate vicinity. The building has not been enlarged and maintains its historic rectangular footprint, massing, and one-story height. The house is a Bungalow, and retains its integral historic front porch, and historic fenestration and entry, appearing as it did during the period of significance. Therefore, the building has integrity of design. Integrity of materials is present due to the retention of the original wood clapboard siding, the brick and poured concrete front porch with wood columns on piers, and original one-over-one wood sash windows. Integrity of workmanship, expressed in the frame construction and arrangement of the building materials, is also intact. The house has integrity of association as it is recognizable from the period of significance and it maintains integrity of feeling as an early twentieth century residence that was later used as the studio for Funtone USA.

Character Defining Features

- Direct association with the theme LGBTQ+ Media in Atlanta as the house served as the Funtone USA World Headquarters and was a site of the production of the popular underground LGBTQ+ program, *The American Music Show*.
- Retains essential character defining features including: Bungalow house type, one -story height and the full-width, engaged front porch.

LGBTQ+ ARTS IN ATLANTA

In Atlanta, LGBTQ+ people and experiences have been represented in the arts since at least the turn of the twentieth century. Prior to the late 1960s, many LGBTQ+ artists had to conceal their sexuality and other parts of their identity. Though these people were unable to be open publicly, their queer identities were often reflected in the artwork they created. As Atlanta's LGBTQ+ community grew more visible in the mid-twentieth century, the number of known LGBTQ+ artists increased as well. LGBTQ+ art was created in a variety of ways, including live performances, paintings and drawings, audio recordings, written works, and even the design of towering buildings on the city's landscape.

Unlike most of the other themes in this context, the development of LGBTQ+ arts in Atlanta does not lend itself to being organized chronologically. Rather, this theme is divided into sections reflecting the different types of art created by LGBTQ+ people in Atlanta. The chapter also does not describe every LGBTQ+ artist who has lived or worked in the city. Instead, it utilizes the histories of a few individuals or groups to highlight the different forms of art practiced by LGBTQ+ Atlantans. It is intended to serve as a touchstone for future research into the artistic work and contributions of specific LGBTQ+ Atlantans.

EARLY LGBTQ+ PERFORMING ARTS IN ATLANTA

EARLY FEMALE IMPERSONATION IN ATLANTA

The earliest known evidence of LGBTQ+ representation through the arts in Atlanta is from

the performances of female impersonators. Though female impersonators during the nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries may or may not have identified as LGBTQ+, their artistry explored gender and the Western cultural understandings of the differences between women and men. The earliest documented performance by a female impersonator in Atlanta was in 1895 at the Cotton States and International Exposition in modern-day Piedmont Park. Two female impersonators, Dick Harlow and Mr. Stewart (possibly Edward Stewart) visited the city to perform at the fair. When a reporter for the *Looking Glass*, an Atlanta-based alternative magazine from the mid-1890s, asked Mr. Stewart about his makeup abilities, Stewart replied, "I regard my face just as a painter would a canvas and practice has taught me just how to get the best effects" (Funderburk 1993). Visiting female impersonators continued to perform in Atlanta, including Francis Renault, who appeared on stages in the city in 1913 and 1924 (Chenault and Braukman 2008).

ATLANTA'S EARLY DRAG SCENE

By the mid-twentieth century, Atlanta had its own female impersonators, who performed at supper clubs and dinner theaters. During this period, the performances often occurred alongside other forms of variety show entertainment, though there were a few spaces that solely advertised shows featuring female impersonators. In these venues, female impersonators performed for mostly heterosexual, gender-conforming crowds, though LGBTQ+ people made their own spaces in these places as well (see Theme: Atlanta's LGBTQ+ Social Spaces). Since the artform was being sold to heterosexual crowds, female impersonators had different parameters to work within than later drag artists, who mostly entertained the patrons of LGBTQ+ bars and clubs. To appeal

to heterosexual customers, efforts were made to underscore the assumed heterosexuality of the female impersonators (Fitzgerald and Marquez 2020:55–56). These efforts include the use of masculine-sounding stage names, the incorporation of gender satire and references to the off-stage male identities of the performers in promotional materials, and a focus on the performance as an artform, where a man was able to achieve a convincing feminine appearance and demeanor. Behind closed doors, in the homes of these LGBTQ+ Atlantan female impersonators, this veneer of heterosexuality and off-stage gender conformity in their drag performances faded. In private, the importance of the illusion was reduced to equal other elements of the performance, particularly gender and sexuality-based comedy (Chenault and Braukman 2008:48; Fitzgerald and Marquez 2020:55–56).

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, the on-stage separation of the professional and personal lives of female impersonators diminished as drag transitioned from Atlanta’s majority-heterosexual supper clubs to the city’s newly forming LGBTQ+ bars and clubs. According to *The Great Specked Bird*, by 1970, female impersonators in Atlanta were revealing part of themselves through their acts, rather than performing a sort of “art of deception” (Miller 1970). The content of the performances also changed, moving from vocal entertainment or “naughty [but] never vulgar” comedy routines to drag pageants, pantomime (or lip syncing) performances, and absurd and exaggerated humor that incorporated LGBTQ+ perspectives (Chenault and Braukman 2008:48, 72–73). This new style of public drag performance quickly became popular among Atlanta’s growing openly-LGBTQ+ population, and an LGBTQ+ customer base for these new entertainment spaces, known as show bars, grew. As the

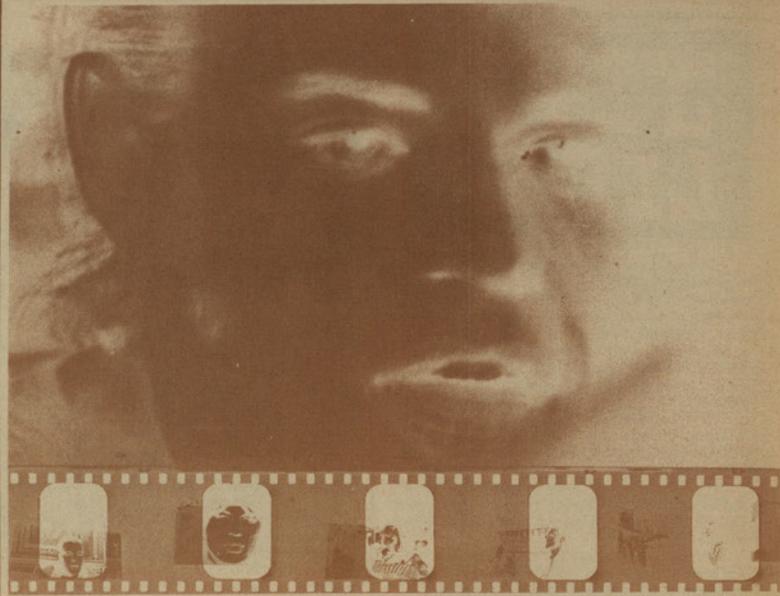
popularity of these spaces and the entertainers that performed in them continued to swell through the 1970s, many Atlanta-based female impersonators reached a level of local and, later, national celebrity in LGBTQ+ communities.

According to contemporary reports, Club Centaur at 1037 Peachtree Street NE brought these openly LGBTQ+ drag shows to Midtown’s countercultural audiences on Peachtree Street in 1970. This bar was preceded by the openly LGBTQ+ venues the Joy Lounge and Mrs. P’s, which were both on Ponce de Leon Avenue and provided spaces for drag performances in the late 1960s (see Theme: Atlanta’s LGBTQ+ Social Spaces) (Chenault 2008:144–145; Hess 1970; Roberts 1978). Female impersonation competitions were also established in Atlanta at this time, including the city’s first drag pageant, Miss Joy Lounge, which was established by Billy Jones, Frank Powell, and other female impersonators at the Joy Lounge (Roberts 1978:10). By 1971, show bars with casts of mostly female impersonators and a few male performers began opening, including the Sweet Gum Head at 2284 Cheshire Bridge Road NE and the Onyx at 341 West Peachtree Street NW (Onyx no longer extant). In the late 1970s and through the 1980s, Atlanta’s LGBTQ+ show bars hired additional staff to produce full plays and musicals, alongside cabarets and individual lip sync numbers that had been typical in the preceding decades. Notable directors at Atlanta’s LGBTQ+ show bars include Howard Brunner, who produced the plays *Fortune* and *Men’s Eyes* at the Sweet Gum Head and *Boy Meets Boy* at the Magic Garden (1888 Cheshire Bridge Road NE), and Roski Fernandez, who produced many plays and musical programs at the Locker Room Disco (2325 Cheshire Bridge Road NE) (Chenault 2012; *Cruise Weekly Calendar* 1977a; Roberts 1978).

Coverage of Club Centaur showing images of Diamond Lil performing with her band (Left) and Billy Jones alongside other female impersonators (Right) from the *Great Speckled Bird*, November 1, 1970 (Source: Atlanta Cooperative News Project, Georgia State University Library)



charlie cushing



carter tomassi

Performance, starring James Fox and Mick Jagger and playing now at the Broadview Plaza, is my favorite movie yet about the death culture and the counterculture. Maybe you don't see that polarity. If that's the case, you needn't read further. Blindness to this reality led the "liberal" movie reviewer for *Life* Magazine, Richard Schickel, to call *Performance* "a completely worthless film," "bathosmic," "disgusting." Schickel can somehow stomach President Nixon and his genocidal war in Vietnam which has been regularly reviewed in his magazine since 1962, but when a film and a culture comes along which examine the roots of this violence, and repeat it, he is "disgusted."

The plot, a particularly vicious and cold-blooded young gangster (James Fox) kills a fellow criminal and becomes the hunted. He holes up in ex-rock star Turner's (Jagger) house. The relationship between the two is the movie's core (at least for me). Fox is real—from his Glen Plaid suit and rep tie to his Bedford Highway style woman's apartment, he is the crystallization of the animal struggle (BM) culture. America has built in the last twenty-five years, it hardly matters that the setting is England, in fact it paints up the degree the American way of life has pervaded the world. When Fox has to get out, he plans to escape to America, where he is assured he'll do well.

Fox and his organization, which seems founded on successful American management principles, show you what man is in the old society. Jagger and friends are the force within—the new man. The old values unfold in Fox: aggressive, sadistic, alone, afraid, uncreative, death-dealing, money-motivated. . . . But Jagger, ahhh, he's beautiful!!! Creative, caring, loving, soft, generous, struggling, sexual. Jagger shows us in his lifestyle (ugh) what

In case you haven't picked up on the drag show at the Centaur Club (corner of Peachtree & 11th), then you don't know what you're missing. These days the crowds are younger, freakier, louder, hipper and a lot more fun to be with than what you might have imagined—Atlanta is coming out, to say the least! Chuck's Rathskeller has rock bands and dancing, but the Centaur's drag show is a whole other scene.



charlie cushing

charlie cushing



We'll leave it up to you: inside the gay bar, do the masks go on, or do they come off? Are the queens who are up on stage entertaining us actually practitioners in the art of deception, or, instead, of revelation? You may discover that YOU are in a kind of drag that you were not even aware of. In any case, for your delight and education, you will find on weekdays and weekends, Baby Jane, Dusty, Aretha, Fancy, Desiree, Lisa, Audrey and Elaine ("Billy's Beautiful Boys"), all of whom do a pantomime thing, and, oh yes, the Queen of All Glamour, who has just blown everybody's minds by her latest innovation: a rock & roll band and a live mike. No one who was there



we've heard and seen before from him. Like a drag queen he mocks our old idea of man to destroy it. Anyone who has ever listened closely to a song like "Back Street Girl" or watched little Mick strut outrageously around a stage, knows he is not the devil, not superego-tripping, ultra-masculine man, but that he plays with our stereotypes to rid us of them.

Jagger and the acid-freak-rock revolution he has helped to create, is a change in the idea and reality of what a man is, and thus it's political, moral, societal issue. The revolution is now, and it's not in the streets, it's in your head. The trip Fox takes in the movie, is a trip you and I are taking with trippoids like Jagger, Laband, Schickel doesn't share our trip. He freaked out, found his limit, and joined the hysterical throngs of threatened Middle America.

A possible flaw: the women in this movie seem to me to be man-toys, beautiful and sacrosanct, same as usual. The movie is about man feminized, softened, living. Women is a prop. It's a failing, the fault of an industry producing films for a sexist audience.

By the way *Performance* is beautifully and ingeniously photographed, witty, and bloody. The music, especially Jagger picking out random blues and folk songs, are the best dramatized version of a song I've ever seen! "Merry From January" is dynamite. Go see it.

—smokey kaufman



charlie cushing

Friday and Saturday nights for Diamond Lil's premier live performance will ever be the same. They call themselves Diamond Lil and the Converse All-Stars, and if the boys in the band look more than a little sheepish and freaked out by their new "vocalist" and their new setting, well that's just part of the show!

Also part of the show is a heavy adrenalin rush you will get from the boys in a very different



band, the uniformed pigs who traipse in and out, off and on, and who keep you aware that just a shot and a kiss away from the stage, the lights, the gowns, the music and the make-up, there is a new world busy being born and a pitiful, helpless old world busy dying. Folks are just beginning to dig that it's all the same struggle, whether you smash the state with a gun or with glitter—or both. So if you want to understand just how ugly Attorney General Mitchell really is, feast yourself on the beauty of Diamond Lil and the show business that she and the other queens are taking care of at the Centaur Club.

Let's give Amerika something to do when it goes down on its knees!

—miller



charlie cushing

Hi Ya Tootsies!

Billy Jones was an Atlanta entertainer and female impersonator who played a major role in the transition of the Atlanta drag scene from the mostly heterosexual or mixed supper clubs of the 1950s and 1960s to the openly LGBTQ+ bars and clubs in the 1970s. Though he was known for portraying several characters, Jones was most well-known for his performances as Phyllis Killer, a drag impersonation of Phyllis Diller, and Shirley Temple Jones, his take on Shirley Temple. In 1968, Jones hosted the first “Phyllis Killer’s Oscars” at Mrs. P’s where he distributed awards to members of Atlanta’s LGBTQ+ community and the establishments that welcomed them. The Phyllis Killer Oscar Awards continued annually through the mid-1980s. Most award categories focused on the LGBTQ+ entertainment and bar scene in Atlanta, but there were also awards that recognized social and political contributions to Atlanta’s LGBTQ+ communities. As Phyllis Killer, Jones also wrote the “Phyllis Killer’s Nite Notes” gossip column for two Atlanta-based LGBTQ+ newspapers, *The Barb* and the *Metropolitan Gazette*, where he gave updates about Atlanta’s events and clubs. Through the late twentieth century, Jones was regarded as the “Still Living Legend,” and was recognized as a pioneer in Atlanta’s LGBTQ+ communities (Roberts 1978).

LGBTQ+ THEATER AND PLAYWRIGHTS

WOMANSONG THEATER AND RED DYKE THEATER

One of the earliest known theater troupes to present LGBTQ+ perspectives on stage in Atlanta was WomanSong Theater, a feminist performance group that showcased the stories of women and children. A group of approximately six to eight women, including a few lesbian feminists, formed WomanSong Theater in early 1972, though the group also included one 11-year-old boy, as well as rotating guests that included a few gay men when they performed in LGBTQ+ spaces (*A Woman(Song) Lover* 1972; *Lucia* 1972). Through skits, songs, and dancing, the troupe aimed to make audiences more aware of the political issues being addressed through the gay and women’s liberation movements, including discussions around gender, abortion, sexuality, and imperialism (Bille 1972; Rita



Billy Jones as Phyllis Killer (center), club owner Frank Powell (bottom left), and three other female impersonators at the Joy Lounge in October 1968 (Source: Joy Lounge October 1968, OutHistory.org)

Flyer for Red Dyke Theater Performance at the Metropolitan Community Church, 1970s (Source: "Red Dyke Theater Presents The Davita Frosting Show the Greatest Drag Show on Earth to Benefit the ALFA Softball Team," Event Flyers, Red Dyke Theatre, Pici papers, Special Collections, Georgia State University)



Red Dyke Theater
presents
THE DAVITA FROSTING SHOW
drag
the greatest show on earth
to benefit the
ALFA
softball team

Dykanna Ross and the Superbs

The Femmetations

Coach Donna

Peach Midler and the Dykettes

Al Queen

The Android Sisters

Gladys Peach and the Clits

for information call 523-7786

tickets: \$2.00 patron: \$5.00

march 15 8.00 pm

metropolitan community church 807 north highland ave., n.e.

1972). Many of the group's earliest performances were held at the Twelfth Gate, a coffeehouse and major center of the Midtown counterculture, which was located at 36 10th Street NW (*Great Speckled Bird* 1972). Elaine Kolb, a founding member of the Atlanta Lesbian Feminist Alliance (ALFA), was one of the first members of WomanSong Theater (see Theme: Political Activism in Atlanta's LGBTQ+ Communities) (Fontana 1972). The troupe performed in Atlanta and across the Southeast through the mid-1970s (Seaberg 1974).

In late 1974, the lesbian members of WomanSong merged with members of the Buffalo, New York-based Stars and Dykes Forever Theater to establish

the Red Dyke Theater, a non-profit, lesbian-feminist theater troupe based in Atlanta (*Great Speckled Bird* 1975). The founding members of the Red Dyke Theater lived in a collective household on Page Avenue in Candler Park known as "Tacky Towers" (exact location and status unknown), and many of them were also members of ALFA. One of the major goals of the Red Dyke Theater was to reclaim the representation of women on stage through drag. Though they were fans of local female impersonators and regular patrons of Atlanta's show bars, the impetus for the creation of the Red Dyke Theater was a growing concern amongst its founding members regarding the way men

LGBTQ+- Friendly Cabarets

In 1977, Michael Chafin and Patrick Cuccaro established Showcase Cabaret in Ansley Mall (Thomas 1977). The previous year, Cuccaro and Chafin produced "The Boys in the Band," an LGBTQ+ play about a group of gay men socializing at a house party, at the Academy Theatre at 3213 Roswell Road NE (Chenault 2012). Though Showcase Cabaret was not explicitly LGBTQ+, it was a welcoming space and was popular among LGBTQ+ Atlantans. The cabaret produced locally-written shows, including the wildly popular *Della's Diner*, created by Tom Edwards and starring Megan McFarland and Libby Whittemore (*Atlanta Constitution* 1980; Eldredge 2019). Showcase Cabaret also hosted a benefit for the LGBTQ+ political action group the First Tuesday Association for Lesbian & Gay Rights in 1980 (See Theme: Political Activism in the Atlanta's LGBTQ+ Communities) (*Cruise Weekly* 1980g). Shortly before Showcase

Cabaret closed in late 1980, the LGBTQ+-friendly restaurant, Gene & Gabe's, opened a cabaret on the second floor of their building, which was referred to as "Upstairs" (*Atlanta Constitution* 1980; *Cruise Weekly* 1980f). Located at 1578 Piedmont Road NE, across the road from Ansley Mall, Gene & Gabe's Upstairs produced similar shows to Showcase Cabaret, including *Della's Diner* and its many sequels. Drag performer Laverne (Larry) Edwards also hosted a live comedy talk show known as "I Love Laverne" on Sundays at Gene & Gabe's Upstairs, which featured other Atlanta-area LGBTQ+ entertainers and personalities (YLIQA, 12/09/2020, "DIVA Tude!!!"). According to Whittemore, "the bread and butter for places like Showcase and Upstairs at Gene and Gabe's was the gay community" (Eldredge 2019). Gene & Gabe's Upstairs remained popular with LGBTQ+ Atlantans through the 1980s, until both the restaurant and cabaret closed in 1990 (Brown 2001; Northside Neighbor 2018).

portrayed women on stage (Pici 2014:00:33:19; Red Dyke Theatre 1977).

Self-described as lesbians impersonating female impersonators impersonating women, the Red Dyke Theater aimed to reassess some of the typical depictions of women at drag shows through their performances (Out Front Theatre Company 2020). As a non-profit, the Red Dyke Theater always performed at benefits for the community. Their shows were often purposefully provocative to instigate discussions about female impersonation and its representation of women (Pici 2014:Location 00:38:34). Using lip syncing numbers and comedy acts, they reclaimed words that were often used negatively toward women and presented representations of “sexy women” that were not influenced by typical

Rebecca Ranson (left) reviewing the script of “Warren” with actor Jon Goldman (center) and stage manager Rick Bowles (right) on July 21, 1986 (Source: *Atlanta Journal Constitution* Photographic Archives. Special Collections and Archives, Georgia State University Library)

Western beauty standards (Out Front Theatre Company 2020). Their first public performance was held in March 1975 at the Metropolitan Community Church at 800 Highland Avenue NE. They also performed in bars, such as the Tower Lounge at 735 Forrest Avenue NE (now Ralph McGill Boulevard) (Pici 2014:Location 00:36:18). Red Dyke Theater performed until 1978, when they collectively decided to disband to focus on maintaining steady jobs, which would not permit regular travel with the troupe (Pici 2014:Location 00:52:26; Red Dyke Theatre 1977).

7 STAGES THEATER

Since at least the 1970s, local theater groups have been sharing LGBTQ+ stories on stages in Atlanta. The content of these performances not only brought LGBTQ+ representation to Atlanta audiences but also addressed many of the issues facing LGBTQ+ people during the time. One of the earliest to showcase LGBTQ+ content was 7 Stages Theatre, which was formed in 1979 by Del Hamilton and Faye Allen.



Their first location was at 430 Moreland Avenue NE in the Little Five Points neighborhood of Atlanta, and in 1987, they moved to another building in the neighborhood at 1105 Euclid Avenue NE. By showing emerging works that had contemporary importance to both artists and audiences due to their social, political, and spiritual themes, 7 Stages “set themselves up to be an alternative to the Alliance Theater,” which presented more mainstream productions at that time (7 Stages Theatre 2005; Allen and Hamilton 2018:00:02:25; Georgia State University Library 2021).

In telling stories that were important to the varied communities of Atlanta, 7 Stages produced many plays that reflected the lives of LGBTQ+ people. One of the earliest productions in the United States to address the AIDS epidemic was Rebecca Ranson’s *Warren*, which was produced and first presented at 7 Stages in 1984. The play told the story of Ranson’s friend Warren who had died of AIDS-related complications earlier that year. It was noted for its personal approach to AIDS in relation to its impact on gay men, which contrasted with the mostly clinical approach found in other sources of information at the time (Gunn 2017:7; Sherbert 1984). Productions at 7 Stages such as *Warren* allowed audiences to learn more about the lived experiences of LGBTQ+ people. They also produced plays written by LGBTQ+ Atlantans, which placed queer perspectives in the spotlight. One such playwright was Jim Grimsley, who wrote “Math and Aftermath,” a play that tells the story of a gay porn film crew’s experience after the bombing of Bikini Atoll in 1953. The show opened at 7 Stages in 1988 and is an example of a production that introduced LGBTQ+ characters within a larger plot, without making contemporary issues facing LGBTQ+ people the focal point (7 Stages Theatre 1988). Productions featuring LGBTQ+ characters and storylines continue to be performed at 7 Stages today.

MUSIC AND VOICE

SOUTHEASTERN ARTS, MEDIA AND EDUCATION (SAME) PROJECT

In the 1980s and 1990s, LGBTQ+ Atlantans and their allies formed arts collectives and organizations that helped highlight LGBTQ+ stories to generate discussion and create social change. The Southeastern Arts, Media and Education (SAME) Project was founded by Rebecca Ranson in 1985 as a multidisciplinary non-profit arts organization (see Theme: LGBTQ+ Media in Atlanta). Their goal was to enact social change by presenting LGBTQ+ experiences through art. During the 12 years SAME operated, they sponsored the production of more than 70 plays that exhibited LGBTQ+ stories (Chenault and Braukman 2008:99; Emory University 2015). They also supported performance art in the form of spoken word, poetry readings, and smaller theater troupes that performed their own work.

ADODI MUSE: A GAY NEGRO ENSEMBLE

Another group that helped generate discussion regarding LGBTQ+ experiences through theatrical presentations was ADODI Muse: A Gay Negro Ensemble. Formed in Atlanta in the mid-1990s, ADODI Muse was a theatrical performance poetry collective of Black gay men. Though it originally began as a writer’s collective that would also perform the members’ work, the importance of the performances quickly took precedence. The number of members shrank as performing grew more important to the group, and by 1995, the remaining, performing members of ADODI Muse were Tony Daniels, Duncan Teague, and Malik M. L. Williams. They were each from different places and had slightly different perspectives but



(Left to Right) Duncan Teague, Tony Daniels, and Malik M.L. Williams of ADODI Muse, circa 1996 (Source: In The Life Atlanta (ITLA) Pride events, Atlanta, Georgia, VIS 423.007.006. Maria Helena Dolan photographs. Kenan Research Center at the Atlanta History Center)

were unified by their Black gay identities (Teague 2013:35–43).

ADODI Muse used the stage, as well as recordings, to tell the stories of Black gay men through singing, rapping, and the performance of their poetry and writings. Though a larger number of Black gay Atlantans were becoming open about their sexuality in the 1990s than in previous decades, the issue of silenced Black LGBTQ+ voices due to fear, discrimination, and loss because of HIV/AIDS was still present. ADODI Muse was revolutionary for performing provocative works inspired by the members' personal experiences as out, gay, Black men (National Black Justice Coalition 2017; *The Adodi Muse: A Gay Negro Ensemble* 2004). Their works addressed major issues facing Black gay men in the late-1990s, such as coming out as LGBTQ+ and confronting the possibility of being HIV+ (Teague 2013:41–43). Pieces created and performed by ADODI Muse include "'Burning for Your Touch': the Scripted Truth" and "Boo, This Aint The Flu" (Doyle 2019; Teague and Reese 2023). In the 1990s, ADODI Muse performed at Charis Book

and More at 421 Moreland Avenue NE, as well as at Second Sunday meetings (Bynes and Stephens 2015). Daniels died in an automobile accident in 1998, but the group took on a new member, Anthony Antoine, and continued performing into the twenty-first century (Doyle 2019).

THE ATLANTA GAY MEN'S CHORUS

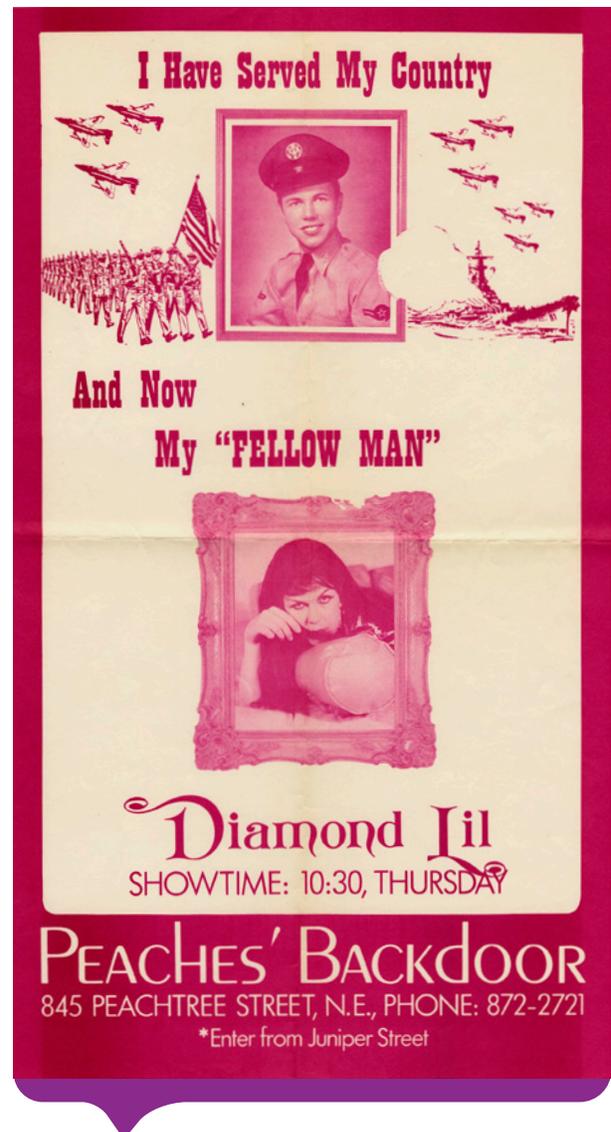
Inspired by the San Francisco Gay Men's Chorus that formed in 1977, Jeffery McIntyre founded the Atlanta Gay Men's Chorus in 1981. At the time of its founding, it was the fifth gay men's choir formed in the world and the first in the southeastern United States. Similar to other LGBTQ+ arts organizations that formed in Atlanta during the 1980s, the Atlanta Gay Men's Chorus' goal was to use their artistry to influence social change (The Mountain 2019; *Voices of Note* 2022). The first auditions for the group were held in August 1981 at the Metropolitan Community Church at 800 North Highland Avenue (*Cruise Weekly* 1981e). Forty-five members participated in the choir's 1982 Spring Concert at the Peachtree Playhouse at 1150 Peachtree Street NE (Heverly 1982a). The Atlanta Gay Men's Chorus performed at a variety of venues, ranging from the Cannon Chapel at Emory University to LGBTQ+ bars and the parking lots of largely-LGBTQ+ apartment complexes in the city (Cochran 1993; *Cruise Weekly* 1981f). They also travelled to other cities to perform, and in 1989, participated alongside 50 other LGBTQ+ choirs in the Third Festival of Gay and Lesbian Choruses in Seattle, Washington (*Southern Voice* 1989a). By 1993, the choir was rehearsing at Virginia-Highland Baptist Church at 743 Virginia Avenue NE (Cochran 1993). The Atlanta Gay Men's Chorus continues to perform in the city as of 2023, and is now part of the larger Atlanta-area LGBTQ+ choral organization *Voices of Note* (*Voices of Note* 2022).

LIVE ACTS AND BANDS

DIAMOND LIL

Musical performances were also a major form of LGBTQ+ creative expression in Atlanta in the second half of the twentieth century. Diamond Lil, a notable female impersonator known as “the queen of all glamour and grease,” began performing at drag shows in Atlanta in 1965 (*Cruise Weekly Calendar* 1976; Denton 2016). Unlike other female impersonators of the time, Diamond Lil sang and performed with a live band rather than lip syncing to recorded music. Though she originally used lip syncing in her performances, in the late 1960s Diamond Lil organized a band and began performing rock music live to give her acts an edge after being removed from show bar casts, reportedly due to jealousy from other female impersonators. Diamond Lil’s shows also included interactions with the audience between sets that included short stories and jokes (Doyle 2006). By 1970, she was well known for her live music performances, particularly at the short-lived and LGBTQ+-friendly Club Centaur at 1037 Peachtree Street NE, though she mostly performed at straight venues through the 1970s (Lil 1970).

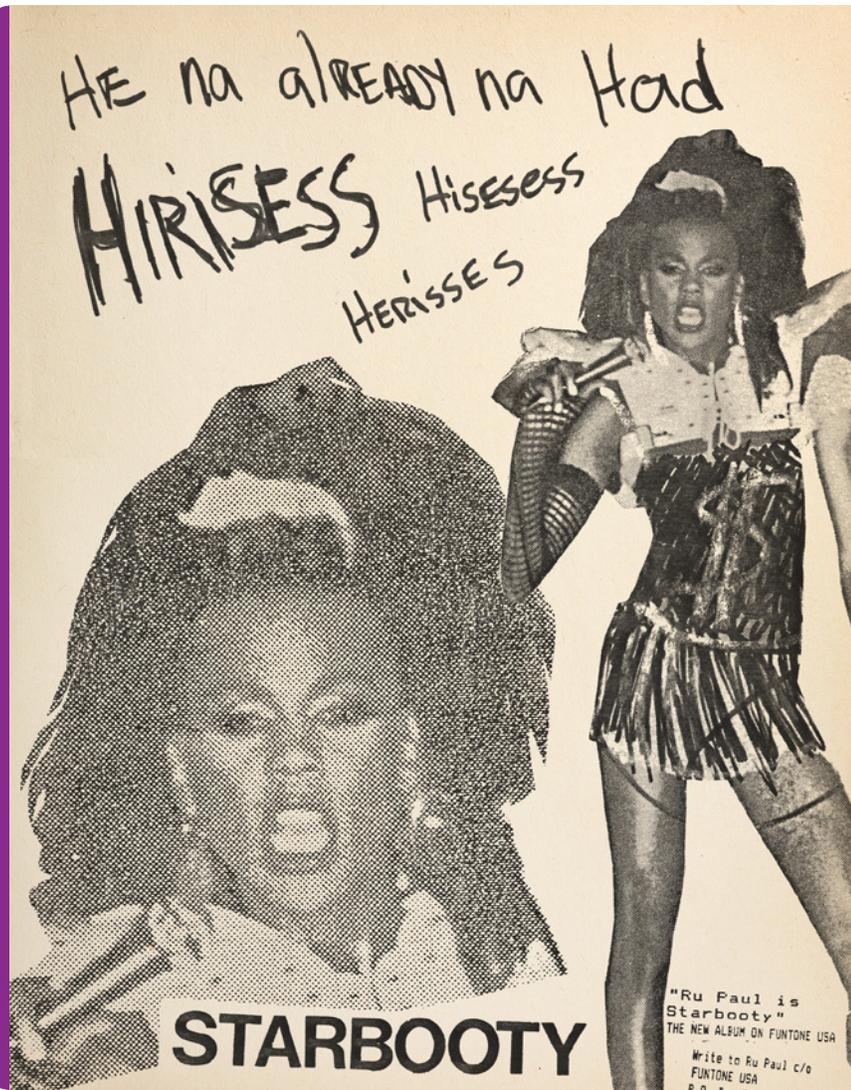
LGBTQ+ show bar owners and managers at that time were usually only interested in female impersonators that lip synced, and live acts were only occasionally invited to perform (Doyle 2006). Diamond Lil also formed her own record production company, Glamour & Grease Records, during the 1970s, and made albums of her music to sell during performances (Denton 2016; Discogs 2022). By the early 1980s, she was regularly invited to the stages of show bars and other LGBTQ+ bar venues in Atlanta. She also recorded and released her biggest hit, Silver Grill Blues, around this time, which she wrote about the Silver Grill at 900



Poster advertising Diamond Lil's performance at Peaches Backdoor, circa 1971 (Source: Diamond Lil (Phillip Forrester) - performance at Peaches' Backdoor, Peachtree Street, Atlanta, Georgia, VIS 419.070. Billy Jones visual arts materials. Kenan Research Center at the Atlanta History Center)

Monroe Drive NE (no longer extant), a diner that was popular among Atlanta’s LGBTQ+ population in the 1970s and 1980s (Doyle 2006). Diamond Lil’s music production was rare among the drag community in Atlanta. Her work influenced many LGBTQ+ artists, including other notable drag queens from the city such as Lily White and Lady Bunny (Harrison 2016).

Poster advertising
RuPaul's Album
"RuPaul is Starbooty,"
circa 1986 (Source:
Rosser Shymanski)



RuPaul is Red Hot!

RuPaul Charles was one of the entertainers that often joined the Now Explosion in their performances, as well as performing in his own bands and on his own on stage at the Nitery, Celebrity Club, and the 688. His first time in full “glamour” drag, meaning a dress, heels, and a wig, was for one of the New Explosion’s shows (Charles 1995:60–62). In 1982, RuPaul joined Robert Warren and Todd Butler to form Wee Wee Pole, his second act on Atlanta’s stages after his performances with RuPaul and the

U-Hauls. Like the Now Explosion, they had a new wave sound that was “catchy, danceable, [and] edgy” (Warren 2013). Wee Wee Pole performed through 1983 but disbanded at the end of that year. RuPaul went on to perform under his own name, and plastered posters across the city that contained slogans such as “RuPaul is Red Hot” and “RuPaul is Everything” (Charles 1995:62–64). Throughout the 1980s, RuPaul was a well-known performer in Atlanta, but in 1987, he permanently relocated to New York... “and her modeling career took off!” (Charles 1995:97)

THE NOW EXPLOSION

In the early 1980s, other LGBTQ+ musicians began to form bands in Atlanta, and like Diamond Lil, they often played to a mixture of LGBTQ+ and heterosexual, gender-conforming crowds. Throughout the decade, the bands developed a new style of musical performance that quickly came to rule Midtown. Described by “Lady Clare” Butler of the Now Explosion as “trashy party extravaganza,” the performances were as much about the energy of the show and creativity of the performers on stage as it was the quality of the sound (Butler 2022). Formed in 1980, the Now Explosion was one of the biggest queer bands of this era, and though not all of their members identified as LGBTQ+, the environment at their shows was always accepting of LGBTQ+ people. Anyone was welcome at their performances, which allowed for freedom of expression and a mixing of different types of people. They also frequently dressed in drag during their acts and were often featured on *The American Music Show (TAMS)*, the queer-friendly public access show that was established in the early 1980s (see Theme: LGBTQ+ Media in Atlanta) (Butler 2022).

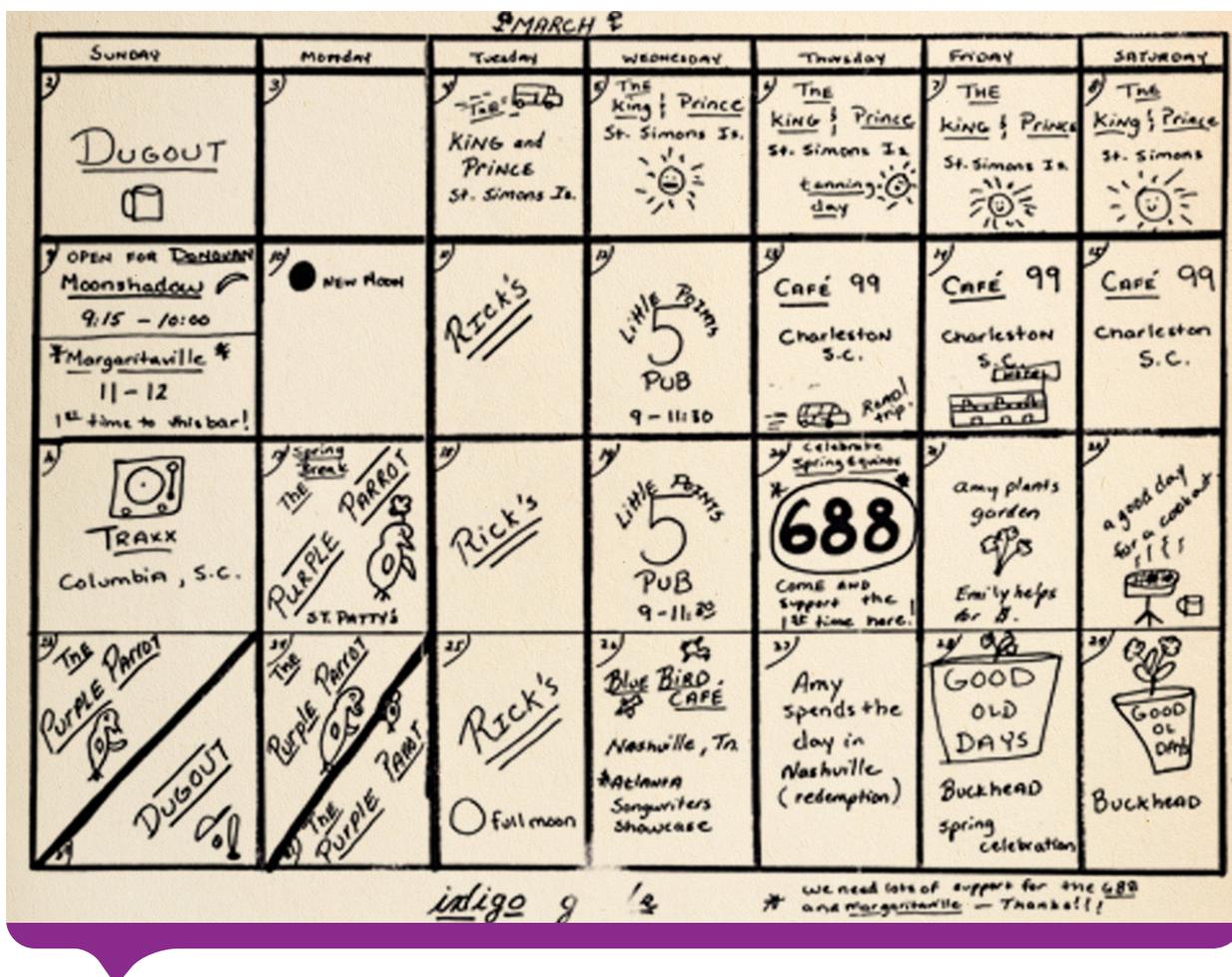
Two of the mostly straight, but very welcoming, venues they performed at were TV Dinner at 1028 Peachtree Street NE and the 688 at 688 Spring Street NW (TV Dinner is no longer extant). Shortly after the formation of the Now Explosion, Larry Tee (Lawrence Thom), one of the band’s members, began searching for a home club for the band. He hoped to find a club owner who had low expectations for crowd sizes and bar sales, so the Now Explosion could gain more control over their performance schedule, experiment with their sound and acts, and have the ability to provide a stage for other members of *TAMS* cast to perform live (Butler 2022). Tee found the Nitery Club at

600 Ponce de Leon Avenue NE, owned by Antonio DiMauro, and it quickly developed into the band’s regular performance space.

By 1983, the Nitery had closed, and the band had moved a few blocks west to the DiMauro’s Celebrity Club at 306 Ponce de Leon Avenue NE. Both venues gave the Now Explosion the exploratory space in which they had been searching. As their popularity increased, an LGBTQ+ punk and new wave scene developed along the Ponce de Leon corridor. Band members, solo artists, and fans, as well as many cast members of Atlanta’s queer-friendly alternative public access program *The American Music show*, gathered in venues, businesses, apartments, and rented houses along and in the neighborhoods abutting Ponce de Leon Avenue (See Theme: LGBTQ+ Media in Atlanta). There, they developed an alternative and LGBTQ+-friendly culture that supported LGBTQ+ people through advocacy work and the fostering of inclusive social spaces. The promotion of LGBTQ+ causes was typically done at performances, such as Now Explosion shows at the Celebrity Club (Historic Atlanta 2020). The punk/new wave scene lasted until the mid-to-late-1980s, when the city of Atlanta began to gentrify Midtown through renewal efforts and the demolition of older buildings (Butler 2022).

THE INDIGO GIRLS

The accepting environment of some of Atlanta’s LGBTQ+-friendly bars also provided a space for lesbian artists in the 1980s. The Indigo Girls, the folk-rock duo consisting of Amy Ray and Emily Saliers, formed in the mid-1980s while the two bandmates were attending Emory University. Originally from the nearby city of Decatur, Ray and Saliers met in elementary school and began playing and recording music together in the basement



Calendar showing the Indigo Girls' gigs and other events from March 1986 (Source: A Year A Month: A Monthly Blog from A and E, January 31, 2014, Tumblr)

of Ray's childhood home while they were in high school (Tongson 2020). Though they initially went to separate colleges, they both independently returned home to attend Emory University, where they reconnected and formed a band. Known as the B Band, they attempted performing at Atlanta-area coffeehouses but quickly found them too "traditional and straight" (Ray 2014; Tongson 2020).

In searching for new spaces, the duo found that Atlanta's alternative bars, pubs, and clubs were more accepting, including spaces previously frequented by the Now Explosion like the 688. While Ray and Saliers were not open about their

sexuality during this period, the spaces where they began performing were often also in LGBTQ+ enclaves of Atlanta, and the crowds were made of up activists and community organizers who exposed the Indigo Girls to fundraising and political organizing. Their home bar, or "main gig," was the Little Five Points Pub at 1174 Euclid Avenue NE, which was a cornerstone of the Little Five Points neighborhood (Ray 2014). This countercultural neighborhood bar was a space where everyone was welcome, and the Indigo Girls cite it and the surrounding community with shaping their activist-approach to music and performing (Ray 2014).

In 1988, the Indigo Girls were signed to Epic Records after a representative from the label heard them at the Little Five Points Pub. They released

their debut album in 1989, *Indigo Girls*, which won the 1990 Grammy Award for best contemporary folk album (Crenshaw 2018). The Indigo Girls came out as lesbians in 1994 and have since been active in LGBTQ+ activism. They have also performed several times as musical headliners for Atlanta Pride, with their first performance occurring in 2005 (Advocate 1994; Atlanta History Center 2019).

BALLROOM CULTURE

Another type of performing art associated with Atlanta's LGBTQ+ communities is found within the underground culture of ballroom. Ballroom culture, also known as house/ball culture, is a mostly Black and Latin subculture in the United States. Within ballroom culture, there are distinct social groups known as houses, which are alternative families that have a Western family structure and consist of members that are chosen socially rather than biologically (Bailey 2013:5). Social status within the ballroom community is closely associated with the success of performances at competitive events known as balls. People typically compete in balls as part of a house, though people not associated with a house, who are known as "free agents" or "007s," can also participate (Bailey 2013:5). The social ranking system includes the titles star, statement, legend, and icon, and each of these are conferred upon people based on the length of time they have participated in ball events and the number of awards they have won (Bailey 2013:136).

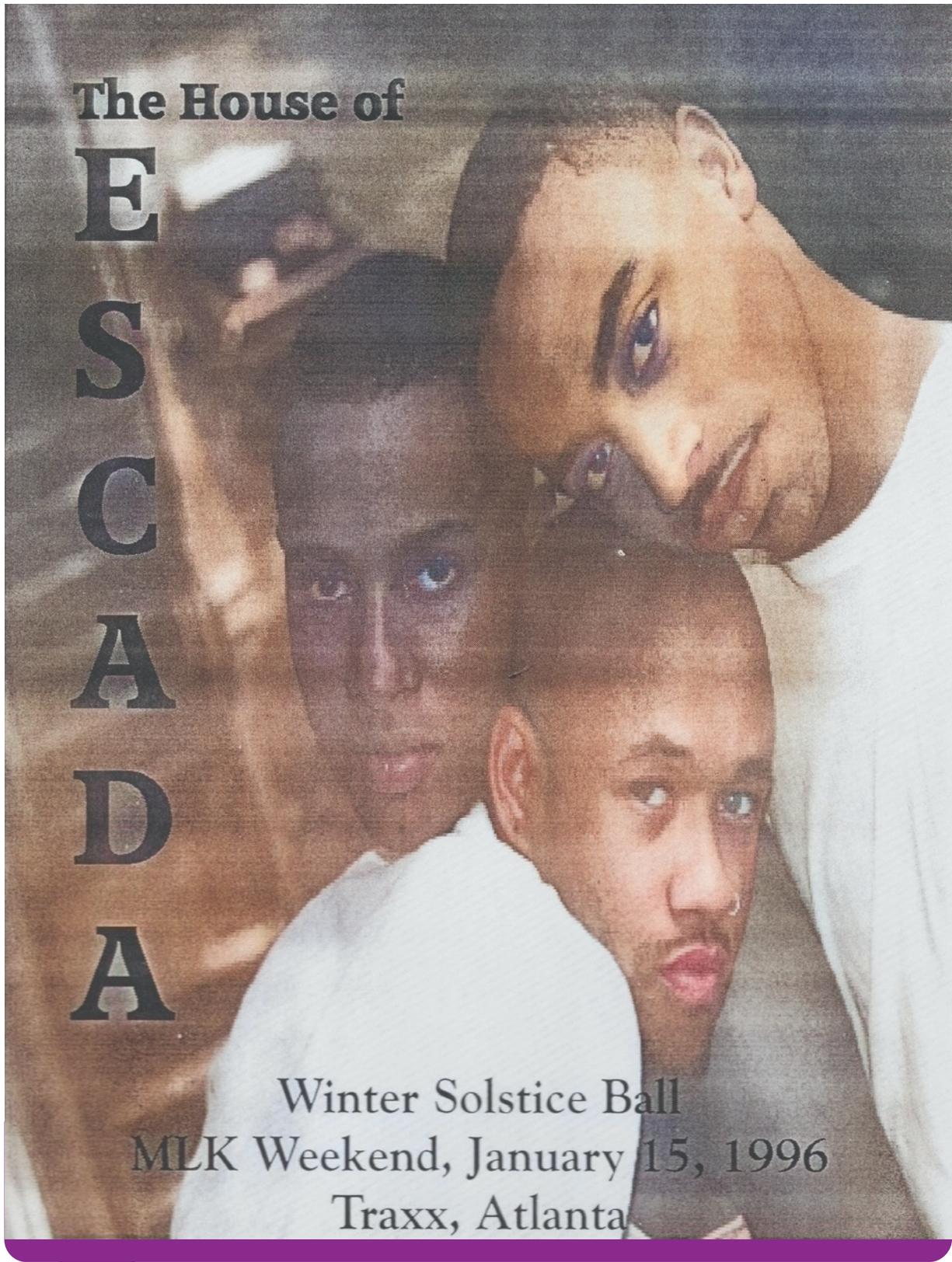
Performances at balls are organized into many different categories that focus on a range of performative talents, including voguing (a form of dance), theatrical performances, the presentation of physical attributes or high fashion outfits, and the ability to convey specific gender and sexual identities (Bailey 2013:5; Tucker

2021:3). Participants "walk" categories at balls, and their performances are judged by a panel of ballroom veterans, who assign scores to each participant (Tucker 2021:3). By repeatedly winning in a category at multiple balls, members of the ballroom community earn recognition for themselves and their houses (Bailey 2013:136).

Ballroom culture originally developed in New York City between the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century (NYC LGBT Historic Sites Project 2018:34). The modern version of ballroom, similar to the culture and events described above, was founded in the late 1960s in the Harlem neighborhood of New York by Crystal and Lottie LaBeija. Though ballroom has continued to change, like all cultures, the balls during this period were also competitive events (Tucker 2021:48). During the late twentieth century, ballroom began to spread to other cities in the United States, mostly in the northeast (Bailey 2013:5).

ORIGINS AND GROWTH OF ATLANTA'S BALLROOM COMMUNITY

Atlanta's ballroom community was established in 1992 on the campus of Morehouse University by three Morehouse freshmen: Antonio Johnson, Damien Jones, and Anthony Moultry. After watching the seminal yet controversial film *Paris Is Burning* in Jones' dorm at Room 205, Charles D. Hubert Residence Hall on the campus of Morehouse University, Jones suggested to the group they form their own house (Moultry 2022: 00:02:40). They agreed and formed Atlanta's first ballroom house, which they originally named Miami de Trois as a nod to their hometowns (Johnson and Jones were from Detroit, Michigan and Moultry was from the Miami, Florida area) (Moultry 2022: 00:04:15).



Poster advertising the 1996 House of Escada Ball held over Martin Luther King Day Weekend in Atlanta (Source: Anthony Moultry)

Unlike most ballroom houses at that time and before, Miami de Trois was not made up of people searching for chosen families after being abandoned by or leaving their biological families but was instead a group of college students that were all relatively similar ages. As Johnson, Jones, and Moultry began recruiting other people to join their house between 1992 and 1993, they decided to change the name of the house to the House of Evangelista, basing the name off Linda Evangelista, who was Jones' favorite supermodel (Moultry 2022: 00:04:50). In the summer of 1993, they moved to Plaza Station Apartments at 3399 Buford Highway NE (no longer extant), and the House of Evangelista began meeting there. For nearly three years, the House of Evangelista existed mostly as a social group, who would hang out at the apartment and then go out to the bars and clubs together (Moultry 2022: 00:06:31).

During the summer of 1995, the House of Evangelista traveled to New York to attend the Eric Bazaar Ball, one of the most significant balls at the time (Moultry 2022: 00:09:00). Visiting the center of ballroom culture inspired them to host their own ball, as well as to change their house name to a luxury brand like other ballroom houses, which often have names inspired by haute couture designers. They selected the name House of Escada because it was shorter and would allow them to keep their logo, which had two overlapping Es (Moultry 2022: 00:11:15). The House of Escada hosted their first ball, and Atlanta's first ball, at Traxx at 306 Luckie Street NW (no longer extant) over Martin Luther King Day weekend in 1996 (#2 00:03:20; 00:04:45).

Interior of Traxx at 306 Luckie Street NW, Decorated for the House of Escada's First Ball, the 1996 Winter Solstice Ball (Source: Anthony Moultry)



Through extensive promotion and the help of fellow Morehouse student Tony Milan, who had connections with ballroom communities in the northeast, the House of Escada was able to bring in legendary ballroom figures from New York and other cities to Atlanta for the ball (Moultry 2022: #2 00:01:20; 00:04:00). The ball was well attended, which helped the House of Escada gain recognition and put Atlanta on the ballroom map (Moultry 2022: #2 00:03:20; 00:04:20). Following the House of Escada's first ball, other houses formed in Atlanta, including the House of Missoni, the House of Supreme, and the House of International, and these houses began hosting their own balls in the city (Moultry 2022: #2 00:04:40; 00:04:50). Balls continued to be held in Atlanta through the 1990s and are currently hosted in the city multiple times a year (Southeast Ballroom Scene Facebook Group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/270865830207164/>).

LGBTQ+ VISUAL ARTS IN ATLANTA

MARY HUTCHINSON

LGBTQ+ visual artists have lived and worked in Atlanta since at least the early twentieth century, though some did not live openly as LGBTQ+. Before the late twentieth century, many of their depictions of queer experiences were not openly expressed as LGBTQ+. One of the earliest documented LGBTQ+ visual artists in Atlanta is Mary E. Hutchinson. Though she never openly identified as an LGBTQ+ person, it is known from letters that she maintained intimate relationships with women, and at the time of her death, she had a partner named Dorothy King (Turner 2012:375–378, 2018). Born in 1906, Hutchinson was raised in Atlanta and studied under Atlantan artist Marion Otis. Hutchinson exhibited her artwork for the first time in 1925 alongside

her teacher in the windows of the Henry Grady Hotel at 216 Peachtree Street NW (no longer extant) (Turner 2012:411). In 1926, she moved to New York to study at the National Academy of Design. After graduation, she held membership with several galleries in New York. Hutchinson also worked for the Civil Works Administration and the New York Federal Art Project during the period, the latter of which she was headquartered out of the Harlem Community Arts Center. She also joined two women's arts groups, the National Association of Women Artists and the New York Society of Women Artists and exhibited her work at the Barbizon Hotel for Women, a women-only hotel (Turner 2012:377–384).

Hutchinson's works depicted people from her social circles, many of whom were women, and she also created paintings and drawings that featured women she maintained relationships with as the subjects (Turner 2012:379–380, 384, 401, 2018). In 1932, the High Museum at 1262 Peachtree Street NE (no longer extant) in Atlanta invited Hutchinson to exhibit her art in a solo show. Two years later, the High purchased two of her works, including one of her most notable, *Two of Them* (Turner 2012:380–381). In 1945, she returned to Atlanta after her father's death, and lived with her mother, Minnie Belle Hutchinson, and her partner, Dorothy King, in an apartment at 120 Lafayette Drive NE in Ansley Park. In Atlanta, she taught at the Atlanta Art Institute and several private schools, and she also continued exhibiting her art, including at the Castle Gallery at 87 15th Street NE and within the Black arts community in Atlanta at the West Hunter Street Library at 1116 Hunter Street SW (now MLK, Jr. Drive). After her mother's death, Hutchinson and King moved into another apartment in the same building, with the address of 124 Lafayette Drive NE (*The Atlanta Constitution* 1945, 1970; Turner 2012:401). Between her 1932 show at the High

and her later exhibitions from the 1940s to 1960s, Hutchinson's drawings and paintings are some of the earliest known artistic displays of queer perspectives and relationships in Atlanta.

FREDDY STYLES

In the late twentieth century, LGBTQ+ visual artists who were open about their identities began creating and showing their work in Atlanta. Born in 1944 in Madison, Georgia, Freddie Styles is a Black gay abstract visual artist who currently lives and works in Atlanta (AVISCA Fine Art 2020). Growing up in the Pittsburgh neighborhood of Atlanta, he never tried to hide his sexuality or difference from others, and mostly found quiet acceptance from his community. During high school, Styles came out to his family and formed friendships with other Black gay men in the city, including a social group called the Jolly Twelve (Styles 2005:00:32:29; 01:10:29). Around that same time, Styles began painting, and he sold his first work to Clayton Maxey, the owner of the neighborhood store at 336 Fletcher Street SW where Styles worked. Maxey encouraged Styles to attend Morris Brown College to study art, and after he was accepted into the program, Maxey provided Styles with the funding for his education (Styles 2005:00:49:11; 00:54:14).

Though his work is now highly abstract and mostly focused on nature, Styles' earlier pieces were more objective and did portray his LGBTQ+ experiences. Styles has painted drag queens, including his piece *There's One in Every Crowd*, which was created before 1980 and depicted a group of Black women standing at a bus stop alongside a taller person in drag. The only known depiction of the Marquette Lounge at 809 Hunter Street NW (now MLK, Jr. Drive; building no longer extant), likely one of the oldest Black gay clubs

in Atlanta, was created by Styles in his work *The Red Door*. In the painting, the door to the club is slightly ajar, revealing a sparkling, silver interior. According to Styles, the silver color within the club represents the feeling experienced by young gay men who were eager to become old enough to access a place where they could openly be themselves (Styles 2005:01:03:25; Swann Auction Galleries 2020). Through Styles' early works, imagery showing some of the mid-to-late twentieth century experiences of Black LGBTQ+ life in Atlanta that were not often captured on camera have been preserved. Styles continues to create pieces and has worked as an artist-in-residence at Clark Atlanta University, Clayton State University, and Spelman College (AVISCA Fine Art 2020).

Galleries displaying visual art pieces by LGBTQ+ artists have existed in Atlanta since the early 1980s. The first known LGBTQ+ art gallery opened on the second floor of the Atlanta Gay Center in 1981. By the mid-1980s, LGBTQ+ artists were featured in the Bar on Peachtree at 1018 Peachtree Street NE (no longer extant). Though it was a neighborhood bar, the owners also used it as a gallery space to highlight local artists, many of whom were LGBTQ+ since it was one of the major Midtown gay bars at the time.

GRANT HENRY

In the 1990s, Grant Henry, also known by his pen name and alter ego Sister Louisa, began creating visual art pieces that explore spirituality and Christian imagery, with a particular focus on salvation. Using previously created art pieces,

typically in the form of paintings, Henry paints words, phrases, and arrows over the images to make the viewer think more critically about the religious subject being depicted (Koser 2018). During the mid-1980s, while he was married with children and deacon of the First Presbyterian Church in Marietta, Henry realized that he was not living authentically as himself, and he asked his wife for a divorce. He then began attending Columbia Theological Seminary in Decatur, Georgia, and completed his courses, but was not ordained because he refused to recite the phrase “only through Jesus Christ is salvation possible” (*The Georgia Voice* 2013). Believing salvation could be found in many places, Henry refused to say it and was told “they’re only words” (*The Georgia Voice* 2013).

In the mid-1990s, Henry operated an antique shop known as Resurrection Antiques and Otherworldly Possessions in the Church of the Living Room at 465 Flat Shoals Avenue SE in East Atlanta Village. In the store’s inventory, Henry had several antique religious paintings and paint-by-number pages depicting Jesus Christ. The response of “they’re only words” from the seminary leaders influenced Henry to begin writing on the religious imagery, refocusing the meaning of the pieces, and creating space for discussion about religion and salvation. He first displayed his artwork at an art show in the Telephone Factory Lofts at 828 Ralph McGill Boulevard NE, where he was living at the time. During this period, Henry also began to accept his LGBTQ+ identity. Since the turn of the twenty-first century, Henry has opened an LGBTQ+-friendly space known as Sister Louisa’s Church of the Living Room and Ping-Pong Emporium, which is filled with his artwork (McCann 2022). Many of Henry’s pieces reflect an LGBTQ+ perspective of Christian imagery, broadening the definition of

religious experiences and incorporating subjects such as drag into the antique Christian artwork.

LGBTQ+ ARCHITECTS AND ATLANTA’S BUILT ENVIRONMENT, HENRY JOVA

Though there are likely several architects who designed notable buildings in Atlanta in the twentieth century who were known among their peers to be LGBTQ+, details and physical evidence of their private lives are difficult to uncover. Similar to people in other upper-class professions, few LGBTQ+ architects were able to publicly express their sexuality or gender non-conformity during the twentieth century due to the attitudes toward LGBTQ+ people at the time and the need to protect their career.

One architect who lived openly as a gay man and designed several of Atlanta’s most recognizable mid-to-late twentieth century buildings was Henri Jova. During the last four decades of the twentieth century Jova shared a home at 861 Mentelle Drive NE with his partner David Rinehart. Known as “the honorary mayor of Midtown,” Jova was instrumental in the redevelopment of the neighborhood that has since become known as the Midtown Historic District. Jova graduated from Cornell University in 1949 and then studied in Rome, Italy, for two more years before returning to the United States and working at the architectural firm Harrison & Abramovitz in New York City. In 1954, he relocated to Atlanta to work as the chief of design at Abreu & Robeson Architects (Saporta 2014). According to Jova, he purchased the house at 861 Mentelle Drive NE around 1960 because it was a cheap property (Hairston 2008).

Through the 1960s, property values in Midtown, then known as Uptown, were impacted by a

combination of white flight, an increase in rental properties and apartment buildings, and a growing counter-cultural community. Buildings in the neighborhood were also being lost to demolition and fire. Jova, witnessing these changes, gathered the first meeting of what would become the Midtown Neighborhood Association in 1969, and in the fall of that year, the newly formed organization elected him chairman. Alongside him on the association were several other architects, including his business partners and neighbors Stanley Daniels and John Busby (Johnson 2021). Through the 1970s and 1980s, the Midtown Neighborhood Association advocated for the rehabilitation of houses within the neighborhood and encouraged the creation of zoning laws that preserved the historic character of the NRHP-listed Midtown Historic District (Midtown Neighborhood Association 2016). Jova is credited with pioneering the efforts that helped preserve the Midtown neighborhood as the city landscape quickly changed over the following decades (Shaw 2014).

Outside of the residential neighborhood in Midtown, Jova, along with his architectural firm, Jova/Daniels/Busby, oversaw the design work for many late-twentieth century buildings and spaces throughout the city. One of the most notable is Colony Square, the first mixed-use development in the southeastern United States, which is located on the east side of Peachtree Street between 14th and 15th Streets. Known as a “micropolis,” the live-work-play concept of Colony Square was developed in 1967. Colony Square was also the first architectural design work completed by Jova/Daniels/Busby (Colony Square 2020; Craig 2020a). Other places in Atlanta designed by Jova include the Trust Company of Georgia Northeast Freeway Branch at 2160 Monroe Drive NE, the Atlanta Newspapers Building at 72 Marietta Street NW, the North Avenue MARTA Station at 713 West

Peachtree Street NE, the Carter Presidential Center at 453 Freedom Parkway NE, and the Carnegie Education Pavilion in Hardy Ivy Park at 300 West Peachtree Street NW, as well as several private residences in the city (Atlanta Preservation Center 2018; Saporta 2014)

LGBTQ+ AUTHORS AND POETS

DONALD WINDHAM

Donald Windham was an openly gay author who was active in New York City’s artistic social circle in the mid-twentieth century, where he was friends with many well-known gay novelists and playwrights, including Tennessee Williams

Donald Windham (left) and his partner, Sandy Campbell (right), 1955 (Source: Library of Congress)



and Truman Capote. Many of Windham's works incorporated homoerotic themes, including his novels *The Dog Star* and *Two People* (Grimes 2010).

Though much of his career took place in the northeastern United States, Windham was born in Atlanta, Georgia in 1920 and lived in the city until he was nineteen years old. One of his earliest works, *The Kelly Boys*, centers around Windham's desire for three brothers who frequent prominent Atlanta landmarks, including the Peachtree Street shopping district at 10th Street and the bathhouse in Piedmont Park. In the early 1960s, Windham published a series of autobiographical short stories in *The New Yorker*, recalling memories of his early life in Atlanta. The collection, published as the memoir *Emblems of Conduct* in 1963, describes Windham's life in the city as his family faced poverty, sold their Victorian home on Peachtree Street, and relocated to the then-newly developed Techwood Homes project in west Atlanta (Windham 1996).

FRANK ABBOTT

Openly LGBTQ+ writers were active in Atlanta during the mid-to-late twentieth century. One of the earliest known Atlantan gay authors and poets is Frank Abbott, who is also a psychotherapist (Abbott 2011:00:09:32; 00:20:00). Abbott received a bachelor's degree in sociology from Mercer University, where he also developed an interest in the women's and Black liberation movements. After he moved to Atlanta in the mid-to-late 1970s, Abbott quickly began participating in early organized LGBTQ+ gatherings, such as the third Southeastern Lesbian and Gay Conference in 1978 and was drawn toward the lesbian and women's groups, which he found more organized and less bar-oriented (see Theme: Political

Activism in Atlanta's LGBTQ+ Communities) (Abbott 2011:00:39:15).

As Abbott made connections with Atlanta's lesbian community, he began reading feminist literature to better understand gender and sexuality. In his reading, he found authors, such as Adrienne Rich and Audre Lorde, who helped him to see feminism as a liberating tool for both women and men. This perspective not only influenced how he interacted with LGBTQ+ people and organizations in Atlanta, such as his role in forming Atlanta's group of Radical Faeries, but also led him to write pro-feminist works for men (see Theme: LGBTQ+ Atlantans and Religion/Spirituality) (Akili 2011; FEKT 2021). During the late-twentieth century, Abbott edited three anthologies covering the topics of men, gender, and sexuality: *New Men, New Minds: Breaking Male Tradition* (1987), *Men and Intimacy: Personal Accounts of the Dilemmas of Modern Male Sexuality* (1990), and *Boyhood: Growing Up Male* (1993). He also published a book of poetry in the late 1990s, *Mortal Love: Selected Poems, 1971-1998* (Georgia State University Library 2020b). Since the turn of the twenty-first century, Abbott has continued to publish more works and created the Atlanta Queer Literary Festival, which began as an annual event in 2007 but now sponsors literary events in the Atlanta-area year-round (Atlanta Queer Literary Festival 2008).

R. LEIGH "TRÉ" JOHNSON

In the 1980s and 1990s, many LGBTQ+ artists expressed their experiences with HIV/AIDS through their work. In Atlanta, the Black gay author, poet, playwright, and performer R. Leigh (Tré) Johnson lived unapologetically as a feminine, HIV+ Black gay man. He used many of his writings and performances to describe his

personal experiences living with HIV/AIDS (Aaron 2022). During the early 1990s, Johnson formed a Black LGBTQ+ performance group known as the Sissy Shockers, and, according to Terence Jackson, a fellow member of the troupe, many of their performances were based on Johnson's discovery that he was HIV+ and the complicated emotion surrounding his recognition that he had contracted the virus from someone he loved. Johnson wrote a short autobiography in the mid-1990s entitled "23rd Psalm," where he described growing up as a Black gay boy, how he traumatically learned about AIDS through his family, the process of finding out that his lover was dying and that he had also been exposed to HIV, and what his life had been like since learning his HIV status.

Though the topics Johnson touched on in his art were often emotionally heavy, he often took a positive approach in his presentation. He concluded "23rd Psalm" with a paragraph focused on his accomplishments in life and his hope for the future (Aaron 2022). One of his most notable poems, "Labor Day In The Clubs In Atlanta," was similarly optimistic and encouraging. The poem explored the Labor Day events held by Black LGBTQ+ Atlantans in the 1980s and 1990s, describing the events that created the foundation for Black Gay Pride. He also discusses HIV and its impact on Atlanta's Black gay communities at the end of the poem though, and the final stanza reads, "KEEP FIGHTING CHILDREN!

HOLD ON! THE STORM IS ABOUT TO END! AND A BRAND NEW PARTY IS ABOUT TO BEGIN!!!" (Aaron 2022). Johnson died from AIDS-related complications in the spring of 1996, but he left a lasting impact on Atlanta, particularly through his influence on members of the LGBTQ+ arts community (Aaron 2022).

CONCLUSION

Many different forms of art have given LGBTQ+ Atlantans a platform to express their sexual and gender nonconformity. Though early LGBTQ+ artists in the city, such as traveling female impersonators and native authors and painters, were typically forced to hide their LGBTQ+ identities, their works serve as some of the earliest evidence of LGBTQ+ experiences in Atlanta. In the late 1960s and 1970s, LGBTQ+ art developed alongside the burgeoning gay liberation movement and provided an outlet to express and navigate publicly open queer identities for the first time. Art also allowed LGBTQ+ people living in Atlanta in the 1980s and 1990s to interpret and share their experiences during the HIV/AIDS epidemic, as well as establish new cultural communities that centered around new forms of artistic expression. Since the turn of the twenty-first century, the number of openly LGBTQ+ artists in the city has continued to grow, and their works have helped increase the visibility of LGBTQ+ perspectives across Atlanta.

NRHP ELIGIBILITY STANDARDS

THEME: LGBTQ+ ARTS IN ATLANTA

Associated Property Functions/Uses: The table below is intended to provide guidance on the types of properties that are expected to be associated with the theme LGBTQ+ Arts in Atlanta. This list is not to be considered comprehensive, as it was developed in tandem with the research conducted for the development of the theme’s history. This list does not preclude other properties with differing functions and uses that could have associations with the theme, pending future research.

Property Description: Associated property types may include commercial buildings or residential buildings that have been converted into commercial use. These resources may not have been originally built for the purposes of housing a LGBTQ+ associated arts endeavor. They may include community arts organizations, bookstores, arts centers, theaters, performing arts

centers, galleries, lounges, show bars, cabarets, and architecture studios. It should be noted that bookstores, theaters, lounges, show bars, and cabarets may also have significant associations with the Social Spaces theme.

Property Significance: Those properties identified as significant under the LGBTQ+ Arts in Atlanta theme should have a documented association with a person, business, or organization that made important contributions to the history of performing arts, visual arts, and/or literature associated with LGBTQ+ representation, expression, and/or reflection of identity in Atlanta. Some buildings may be associated with a person considered an important leader in the Atlanta LGBTQ+ arts culture. In order to demonstrate eligibility this would need to be a property that best represents that person’s productive artistic life. If a building is no longer extant consideration of eligibility for the individual’s residence as NRHP-eligible can be made. Additionally, consideration should be given to adjacent properties and their use and histories as there may be a node of arts-related resources that could be considered a district.

Property Function or Use	Common Subcategories
Building: Commercial	Bar Retail Theater/Auditorium
Building: Education	College/University Buildings/Dormitories
District	Commercial Landscape
Sites/Landscapes	Park Plaza
Objects	Fountain Monument Sculpture Statuary

Geographic Locations: The city limits of Atlanta, particularly Candler Park, Ponce de Leon Avenue corridor, Midtown, Cheshire Bridge Road, and Southwest Atlanta.

Areas of Significance

- Architecture
- Art
- Education
- Entertainment/Recreation
- Ethnic Heritage: Black
- Landscape Architecture
- Literature
- Performing Arts
- Social History: LGBTQ History

Levels of Significance: Most properties demonstrating a direct association with the theme would likely be eligible at the local (city) level of significance unless a property has association with significant events or individual(s) that made a noted impact to LGBTQ+ social history that resonated at the state, or even national levels.

Criteria: NRHP Criteria A, B, and C, Criteria Consideration G

For Criterion B, the significant individual must have lived or worked in the property during the period in which they achieved significance - i.e., the period in which they created their productive body of work. Properties associated with institutions or individuals for which significance date to within the last 50 years must possess exceptional importance, following the requirements of Criteria Consideration G.

Period of Significance: 1895-2000

Period of Significance Justification: The period of significance is recommended as beginning in 1895 when the first known female impersonation performance took place at the Cotton States and International Exposition in Piedmont Park. Although the building or structure where the performance took place is likely no longer standing, research indicates that other such performances took place in Atlanta during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Further research may reveal additional extant places with documented associations with the LGBTQ+ Arts in Atlanta theme. The period of significance ends in 2000, the end of the period of study for this context statement. In general, if the period of significance continues to the present, the end of the study period is the recommended end date.

Eligibility Standards

- Resources must have a documented association with a business, organization, or institution that made important contributions to LGBTQ+ arts, including performing arts, visual arts, and literature.
- Resources may also be associated with the life of an important individual or individuals who played a significant role in LGBTQ+ Arts in Atlanta.

Character Defining Features

- Documented association with the theme LGBTQ+ Arts in Atlanta.
- A significant space associated with LGBTQ+ Arts in Atlanta may be located in a building designed for another use.
- The business, organization, or institution associated with LGBTQ+ Arts in Atlanta must have occupied the property during the period in which it achieved significance.

- Resources associated with the LGBTQ+ Arts in Atlanta theme and nominated under Criterion C for design must meet one of the following three requirements for eligibility: embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction; represent the work of a master architect, artist, or designer; or have high artistic value.

Integrity Considerations

- Overall integrity should be assessed within the time frame the resource gained significance.
- The most important aspects of integrity for this theme and area of significance should be Location, Feeling, Association, and Design. A significant resource that has an association with the LGBTQ+ Arts theme should be in its original location. It should retain recognizable features from its period of significance that contribute to its integrity of design, feeling, and association. Property specific research should aim to identify important exterior and interior features that had direct association with the area(s) of significance.
- Integrity of Materials and Workmanship, while important, may not be crucial for meeting the integrity threshold for this theme and area of significance under Criteria A and B. Many buildings in the Inventory have experienced alterations and may not retain all of their original materials.
- The resource should retain most of the essential character defining features from the period the organization/business or individual occupied the property.
- Those resources nominated under Criterion C for design or high artistic value should retain integrity of Materials and Workmanship.
- In most cases, integrity of setting should be considered in terms of urban versus suburban setting and assess whether newer infill is, or is not, in keeping with the property's historic period of development.



CASE STUDY

RESOURCE: ILLUSIONS, 1021 PEACHTREE STREET NE

Note: This case study is a starting point for National Register eligibility analysis for this and related resources. Interiors of case study properties were not accessed during the creation of this context document, however, a thorough analysis of interior integrity would be required as part of any formal assessment of this property's eligibility for the National Register of Historic Places. Furthermore, these are not the official opinions of HPD and are provided here as starting points and models for additional analysis. Formal eligibility would need to be determined via in-depth analysis at the time of nomination.

Illusions is located in an multiple retail, commercial strip that was built in 1921 and is situated on the east side of Peachtree Street, between 10th and 11th streets, in Midtown. This commercial block, part of the area historically referred to as “The Strip,” is one of the few remaining LGBTQ+ drag show spaces that originated during the 1970s and 1980s. The building, which is built of concrete block with a painted brick veneer and non-historic

storefront glass windows, also housed Club Centaur, another notable LGBTQ+ bar. After the Sweet Gum Head, one of the city’s oldest show bars, closed in 1981, Ray Ferris and Ted Binley, the owners of Crazy Ray’s LGBTQ+ neighborhood bar in Ansley Mall, opened Illusions in 1982. Several of the Sweet Gum head’s staff came to Illusions, including director and choreographer Marc Jones, DJ Alan Orton (who also had a locally famous drag persona named Lavita Allen), and female impersonators Charlie Brown, Bertha Butt, Satyn DeVille, and Lily White. Illusions held its grand opening on March 18th, 1982, with the cadre of drag artists performing to “one of this city’s largest opening night crowds in history” (*Cruise Weekly* 1982a, 1982b).

For a period in the early 1980s, both RuPaul and Lady Bunny lived in an apartment building on the northwestern corner of the intersection of 10th and Juniper Streets, on the same block as Illusions. According to Larry Tee, a DJ and former member of the Now Explosion, RuPaul and Lady Bunny regularly visited Illusions during this period, and watched performances by some of the biggest names in drag in Atlanta. Though the New York drag scene also had an impact on both of artistic

forms in the mid-to-late 1980s, Tee argues, “[Illusions] probably has a huge influence, a larger-than-life influence on contemporary drag because ... Bunny and Ru ... did their studying there. That was their college of drag” (Tee 2021).

The property is significant at the local level under Criterion A in the areas of Social History: LGBTQ+ History and Performing Arts because Illusions was arguably the most influential performing arts space for drag in Atlanta during the 1980s and inspiring the careers that brought drag into mainstream popular culture at the national level in the 1990s with Ru Paul. At the time of this study, the resource’s period of significance is less than 50 years of age. Therefore, it must also meet the requirements of Criteria Consideration G as a property that has achieved significance within the past 50 years. Illusions appears to meet Criteria Consideration G as a property of exceptional importance as an especially significant piece of Atlanta’s LGBTQ+ history. The venue was one of the most important show bars in the city during the 1980s and has had an influential role in the development of drag performance art and nationally renown performers during the late twentieth century.

National Register Criteria: Criterion A, Criteria Consideration G

Area(s) of Significance: Performing Arts, Social History: LGBTQ+ History

Period of Significance: 1982-1986

Integrity: Illusions remains on the site where it was original constructed and retains integrity of location. Although non-historic infill is located in the immediate area surrounding the building, the infill is in keeping with the commercial urban character of the Midtown area, therefore, the

building maintains its integrity of setting. The building has not been enlarged and maintains its historic height, flat roof with parapet, and rectangular footprint. The façade no longer has the lighted marquee that was captured in a historic photo from *Cruise* magazine. However, it appears to retain the original, four bay wide, storefront openings, although the sashes likely have been replaced over time. Therefore, the building has diminished integrity of design. Although the building façade has received some changes in materials it has integrity of materials, due to the retention of its brick veneer exterior, and its integrity of workmanship, which is expressed in its functional, reinforced concrete block construction, remains evident. Because the building footprint, massing, and fenestration remain relatively unchanged, it is recognizable from its late twentieth century period of significance as a drag show space, and thus maintains integrity of association and feeling. Further research may reveal historic photos of the interior space when Illusions was in operation, and any further character defining features should be identified and evaluated for integrity.

Character Defining Features

- Direct association with the theme LGBTQ+ arts in Atlanta as it served as a prominent and influential show bar for drag.
- Retains essential character defining features including: single-story, multiple retail commercial building; flat roof with parapet; four- bay, storefront façade and entry; brick veneer exterior; concrete block construction.
- Illusions meets Criterion Consideration G as it is one of the most important show bars in the city and was influential in the development of drag performance art.

LGBTQ+ NEIGHBORHOODS AND ENCLAVES IN ATLANTA

Note: This section will make note of many LGBTQ+ spaces within the communities discussed. These will only be addressed briefly, but parenthetical references are included to indicate where in this document the reader may find additional information about that LGBTQ+ space. Addresses of resources are provided when available and called out at the resource's first mention.

Though LGBTQ+ spaces were found throughout the entire city during the twentieth century, several areas of Atlanta developed concentrations of LGBTQ+ people and places. The majority of these areas were also occupied by heterosexual, gender-conforming people, but the general culture of these enclaves was often openly accepting of LGBTQ+ people. Only a few of these areas encompassed large portions or the entirety of a neighborhood, while most were smaller enclaves within larger neighborhoods. Starting in the early 1970s, the areas immediately surrounding Piedmont Park became the center of LGBTQ+ life in Atlanta. This included sections of the Midtown, Ansley Park, Piedmont Heights, Morningside, and Virginia-Highland neighborhoods (see Atlanta map in Introduction). Like other contemporary gayborhoods in the United States, the LGBTQ+ population of this area was largely white and male throughout the second half of the twentieth century. Though women and Black Atlantans who were LGBTQ+ did live and socialize in this area, these groups also formed their own enclaves. This chapter will outline the basic history of the LGBTQ+ neighborhoods and enclaves in Atlanta, and it

will highlight a few extant examples of LGBTQ+ spaces in these areas. The chapter is organized loosely by chronology and then by enclave size and geography, following the trajectory of the visible growth of the city's LGBTQ+ communities.

DOWNTOWN

Atlanta's earliest known LGBTQ+ enclave was in downtown, centered in the Fairlie-Popular Historic District between Five Points and the Greyhound Bus Station at 81 Cain Street NW (now Andrew Young International Boulevard; no longer extant). Gay men began gathering in this area as early as the 1940s to socialize at hotel bars, meet at Rich's Department Store, and cruise in the bathrooms of the bus station and library. Between the 1940s and 1950s, LGBTQ+ people were also attending the country's first gay-affirming religious worship services in this area, as well as watching and performing in female impersonation shows at downtown supper clubs (see Theme: LGBTQ+ Atlantans and Religion/Spirituality).

The demographics of downtown shifted in the late 1950s and early 1960s as middle and upper-class white Atlantans began to leave the city for nearby suburb communities. The higher end entertainment venues and bars that served LGBTQ+ people also relocated to other areas of the city during this period. As a result, the downtown area developed a reputation for LGBTQ+ working-class dive bars, sexual spaces, and adult businesses between the late 1950s and early 1980s. Though one show bar, the Onyx, operated in downtown during this period, it was the only show bar in this section of the city and had a reputation for "an atmosphere absent of pretentiousness and 'chic glitter'" (*Cruise Weekly* 1978).

By the mid-1970s, many of the LGBTQ+ spaces in downtown were popular among Black Atlantans,



View of the theater district section of downtown Atlanta, the area of the earliest known concentration of LGBTQ+ spaces in Atlanta (Source: Lane Brothers Commercial Photographers. Photographic Collection, Special Collections and Archives, Georgia State University Library)

including the previously established working-class bars the Cameo Lounge and the Blue Room. New social spaces began to open in this area in the early-to-mid-1980s, and these places were immediately popular with Black LGBTQ+ people as well. The majority of the bars and clubs were located along or just off Luckie Street between Fairlie and Simpson streets, including the Festival Lounge, the Pear Garden, and Traxx. Unlike the LGBTQ+ spaces that

operated in downtown in the 1960s and 1970s, most of these bars and clubs had reputations for being safer, more polished spaces with elegant interiors. Between the early 1980s and the turn of the twenty-first century, downtown served as Atlanta's largest Black LGBTQ+ enclave.

Downtown was mostly a social LGBTQ+ enclave, and no strictly residential properties have been identified in this area. Though LGBTQ+ people are not known to have occupied houses or apartment buildings in downtown, hotels and the Luckie Street YMCA did provide accommodations for LGBTQ+ people in the twentieth century.

Businesses such as bars, clubs, bookstores, and theaters were the most common types of LGBTQ+ spaces in downtown between 1940 and 2000. Other types of LGBTQ+ -associated resources include the Anita Bryant Protest Route between Central City Park (now known as Woodruff Park) and the Georgia World Congress Center along Marietta Street, the AIDS Legal Project office at 151 Spring Street NW, and the offices of the Lesbian/Gay Rights Chapter of the ACLU at 223 Mitchell Street SW (see Theme: Political Activism in Atlanta's LGBTQ+ Communities and Theme: LGBTQ+ Healthcare and Advocacy). Many of the

Piedmont Park as the Center of LGBTQ+ Atlanta

Though the presence of openly LGBTQ+ people first increased in Midtown alongside other parts of the counterculture in the late 1960s, Piedmont Park has served as an LGBTQ+ gathering place since at least the 1950s. During that period, gay men cruised the park's dark, forested areas and lesbians played softball on the fields in the Active Oval, though both groups were not publicly open about their sexuality at the time. LGBTQ+ people also socialized at the Piedmont Tavern across from the park. As the visibility of LGBTQ+ people increased in the area in the 1960s, Piedmont Park, alongside Midtown, developed into the center of LGBTQ+ life in the city, evidenced by its role in the earliest Gay Liberation marches.

(Below) Piedmont Park's Ballfields in 1953 (Source: Lane Brothers Commercial Photographers. Photographic Collection, Special Collections and Archives, Georgia State University Library)



buildings that housed the LGBTQ+ spaces and venues in this area are no longer extant. Resources that remain standing include the Winecoff Hotel at 176 Peachtree Street NW and all three locations of the Pear/Pearl Garden at 111 Luckie Street NW, 15 Simpson Street NW, and 91 Broad Street SW.

MIDTOWN

Midtown has been recognized as one of Atlanta's largest gayborhoods since the 1970s, and its development as an LGBTQ+ neighborhood began in the mid-to-late 1960s (Cash 1973). In the 1950s and 1960s, middle and upper-class white Atlantans moved from the city's intown neighborhoods to newly developing suburbs on Atlanta's north side. In Midtown, the older homes were converted into multi-family rooming houses and many of the commercial spaces were abandoned as shoppers began visiting newer stores and malls closer to their homes in the suburbs (Dandes 1982; Midtown Neighborhood Association 2016). A combination of cheap rent, available commercial spaces to establish businesses and community organizations, and the large public gathering space at nearby Piedmont Park brought members of the counterculture movement, known as hippies or the flower children, to Midtown in the mid-to-late 1960s. The cultural center of this community was in an area called the Strip, which extended along Peachtree Street from approximately 8th Street to 14th Street (Dandes 1982; Strip Project 2016).

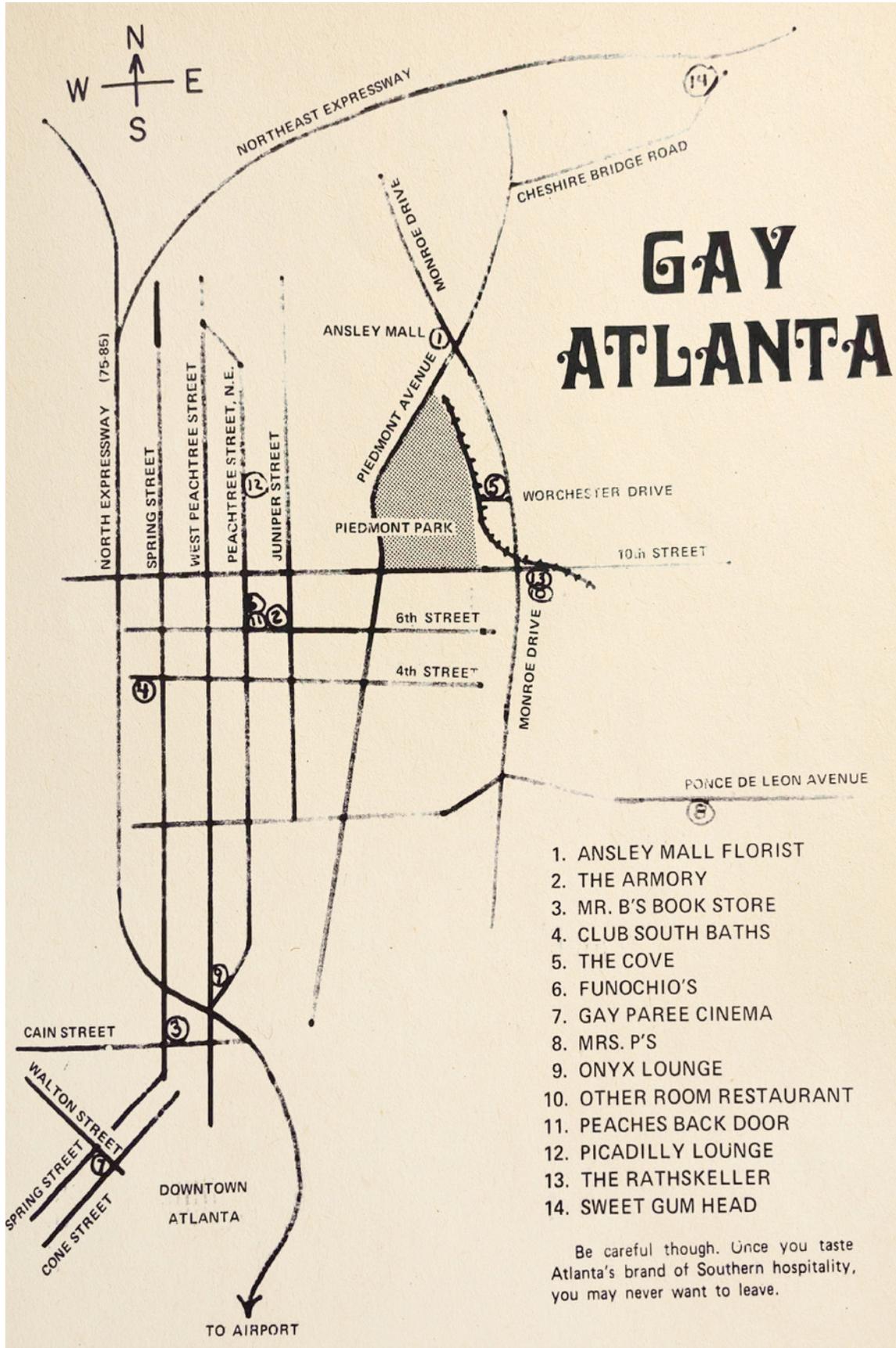
Though the occupants of Midtown during this period were all united in their difference from the mainstream culture, there were many smaller communities within the larger countercultural population of the neighborhood. LGBTQ+ people moved into Midtown as part of this development, living in the residential neighborhood (today known as the NRHP-listed Midtown Historic District) and establishing their own spaces at bars, clubs, and restaurants such as Club Centaur at 1037 Peachtree Street NE, Chuck's Rathskeller at 931 Monroe Drive NE, and the Prince George Inn at 114 6th Street NE. One of the earliest and most well-known countercultural spaces on the Strip was the Catacombs, a basement-level coffeehouse and club in a house on the southwest corner of the intersection of Peachtree and 14th Streets. The Catacombs was established in 1967 by a gay man, David Braden, who was known as Mother David and was a major figure on the Strip (Fike 2014; Herbert 1967; Strip Project 2014).

In the early 1970s, the elements of the counterculture that were perceived as "seedy," including hard drugs, biker gangs, and sexually-

oriented businesses became more common in Midtown (Albright 2016). These changes, alongside alterations to the physical landscape through fires and attempts at redevelopment in the area, caused many members of the countercultural movement to either leave Midtown for other neighborhoods in Atlanta or relocate

“ SO I JUMPED IN AND SHE [MISS COCKS] DROVE ME DOWN TO THE 14TH STREET AREA WHERE ALL THE BEATNIK COFFEE HOUSES AND DRAG BARS WERE. WE WENT INTO A RESTAURANT CALLED MAMA MIA'S, SHE BOUGHT ME LASAGNE AND INTRODUCED HERSELF AS MISS COCKS, OR MICKEY TO HER FOLKS. ... THERE WAS A WHOLE GAY SUBCULTURE IN ATLANTA, AND I DIVED RIGHT INTO IT.”

– **Jayne County** discussing her early LGBTQ+ experiences in Atlanta in the mid-to-late 1960s (County 1995:21)



GAY ATLANTA

1. ANSLEY MALL FLORIST
2. THE ARMORY
3. MR. B'S BOOK STORE
4. CLUB SOUTH BATHS
5. THE COVE
6. FUNOCHIO'S
7. GAY PAREE CINEMA
8. MRS. P'S
9. ONYX LOUNGE
10. OTHER ROOM RESTAURANT
11. PEACHES BACK DOOR
12. PICADILLY LOUNGE
13. THE RATHSKELLER
14. SWEET GUM HEAD

Be careful though. Once you taste Atlanta's brand of Southern hospitality, you may never want to leave.

(Opposite) A map of “Gay Atlanta” from the December 1971 edition of *David* reveals that many LGBTQ+ spaces in the city were adjacent to Piedmont Park, and a cluster of spaces was forming in Midtown (Source: *David*, Volume 2, Number 2, December 1971. Lesbian, Gay, Bi-Sexual, and Transgender Serial Collection. Kenan Research Center at the Atlanta History Center)

to other cities altogether (Dandes 1982; Wheatley 2016). As other segments of the counterculture abandoned Midtown, LGBTQ+ people continued living in apartments and old houses in the neighborhood. Overtly sexual venues and areas of prostitution in Midtown created more space for LGBTQ+ people who were relegated to look for friends or sexual partners in bars, bathhouses, adult theaters, pornography bookstores, and outside, on the streets or in Piedmont Park (Brown 1976). According to a 1973 report in the *Atlanta Constitution*, there was “a whole colony of homosexuals” in Midtown, which had “increased enormously over the last two years on the street and [in] Piedmont Park” (Cash 1973). There was a rise in the number of LGBTQ+ bars in Midtown in the first half of the 1970s as well, with places opening there such as the Armory at 836 Juniper Street NE, Peaches Back Door and Backstreet at 845 Peachtree Street NE, the Gallus at 49 6th Street NE, Score One at 1184 West Peachtree Street NW, and the Club Three at 1139 West Peachtree Street NW. Atlanta’s first Gay Liberation March was also held in Midtown during this period, marching from 7th Street to Piedmont Park along Peachtree Street on June 27th, 1971.

The growth of LGBTQ+ spaces in Midtown continued through the 1970s, and by the end of the decade, the neighborhood was acknowledged

as one of Atlanta’s “three principal gay residential areas,” alongside Virginia-Highland and the Cheshire Bridge Corridor (*Cruise* 1979). The neglected old houses in the residential portion of Midtown were renovated and restored in the late 1970s, and though the Midtown Neighborhood Association (MNA) was largely responsible for these alterations, LGBTQ+ people living in the neighborhood were also a significant part of this effort (Midtown Neighborhood Association 2016; Pendered 2003; Wilkins 2022). Henri Jova, a gay architect who helped establish the MNA in the late 1960s, was a leader in this preservation effort (see Theme:LGBTQ+ Arts in Atlanta). New LGBTQ+

“ IF YOU LIVED IN MIDTOWN, WHICH I DID, THEN YOU LIVED IN THE VILLAGE. AND YOU LIVED IN AN ENVIRONMENT THAT WAS PREDOMINANTLY CONTROLLED [BY] AND TOTALLY CREATED [FOR] ... THE NEEDS AND WANTS OF THE GAY COMMUNITY. ”

– **Gregg Daugherty** on LGBTQ+ life in Midtown during the late 1970s and early 1980s (Daugherty 2018:00:04:14)

organizations established themselves in Midtown in the late 1970s as well, including the offices of the LGBTQ+ publication *The Barb* at 40 Peachtree Place NW, the first LGBTQ+ resource center in Atlanta at 20 4th Street NW, and the first location of the official Atlanta Gay Center at 972 Peachtree Street NE (see Theme: Atlanta’s LGBTQ+ Community Organizations and Theme: LGBTQ+ Media in Atlanta).

The late 1970s and early 1980s were the height of LGBTQ+ Midtown. This period fell between the redevelopment era of the early-to-mid-1970s that included the construction of Colony Square (1197 Peachtree Street NE), and then the revival of redevelopment in the mid-1980s, which led to the clearing of several blocks in the neighborhood. Between these two periods of redevelopment, new construction slowed in Midtown and a revitalization effort that was supported by

Midtown residents thrived. This effort focused on restoring historic buildings and integrating them into neighborhood planning (McElroy 1978; Rogers 1976).

As the population of openly LGBTQ+ Atlantans continued to increase in Midtown, gay people began to open businesses in the neighborhood to serve their growing community. Many of these were situated along Peachtree Street between 5th and 14th Streets, a portion of which included the previous location of the Strip of the late 1960s. Fittingly, the area became known as the Gay Strip among the LGBTQ+ community of Midtown, and it included businesses such as the Midtown Pub and Bar on Peachtree at 1018 Peachtree Street NE, Bulldog & Company at 893 Peachtree Street NE, Illusions at 1021 Peachtree Street NE, Midtown Gym at 1107 Peachtree Street NE, Plum Butch and Plum Nelly at 1029 and 1027 Peachtree Street NE, and T's & Things at 896 Peachtree Street NE (*Cruise Weekly* 1982). As more LGBTQ+ owned businesses began to open in Midtown, the Atlanta Business and Professional Guild was formed by gay business owners as an organization that could connect and advocate on behalf of these places (Atlanta Business & Professional Guild 1986). LGBTQ+ Atlantans also developed new cultural traditions in Midtown during this period, including the Armory's Easter Drag Races, which were held in the parking lot between the Armory and Backstreet on the Juniper Street side of the block at 6th Street.

“ IT LOOKS LIKE A WAR HAS BEEN THROUGH HERE, I HAVE NEVER SEEN IT LIKE THIS BEFORE. ”

– RuPaul Charles' reaction to seeing the block of Peachtree Street between 10th and 11th streets in 1989, which had previously been the location of Weekends (1022 Peachtree Street NE). Developers cleared many of the buildings on this block in the late 1980s, and it remained undeveloped into the late 1990s. It was the original location of Music Midtown in the mid-to-late 1990s and is currently the home of the Federal Reserve (Sullivan 1989:02:05)

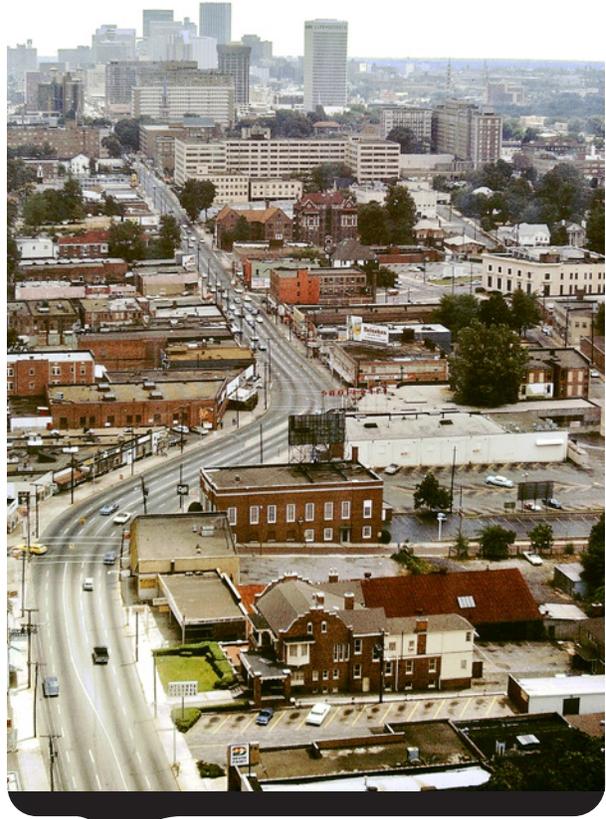
Between the mid-1980s and the turn of the twenty-first century, many of the older buildings left standing in Midtown, excluding those in the MNA-protected residential area, were demolished and new high-rise office buildings and condos were erected in their places (Midtown Atlanta 2022). Though a considerable number of LGBTQ+ businesses remained in the area, several significant LGBTQ+ spaces were lost to redevelopment during this period, including the former locations of the Bar on Peachtree, the Gallus, Foster's Lounge at 980 Peachtree Street NE, and the original location of

the Metro at 48 6th Street NE. Along the Gay Strip, many LGBTQ+ businesses were “replaced with parking lots, straight clubs, bank buildings, and unused fields intended for never-built shopping centers” (Moore 1992). The demographics of the neighborhood began shifting to include more heterosexual, gender-conforming people and places during this period as well, but Midtown remained a “predominantly gay area” through the 1990s and was still considered “the center of gay life in Atlanta” in 2000 (Croft 2000; Moore 1992). In 1996, Outwrite, an LGBTQ+ bookstore, relocated to the intersection of 10th Street and Piedmont Avenue, a few doors down from Blake's, an LGBTQ+ neighborhood bar at 227 10th Street NE. Between the late 1990s and the first years of the

(Opposite) The Strip on Peachtree Street in Midtown, looking southwest from the intersection of Peachtree and 11th streets, circa 1972. (Source: Photograph taken by Dr. William A. Wood, Jr., Courtesy of Andrew Wood)



Club Centaur on the Strip, occupied the building at the southeast corner of the intersection of Peachtree and 11th streets (Source: *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* Photographic Archives. Special Collections and Archives, Georgia State University Library)



An aerial photograph of Midtown in 1972, looking south on Peachtree Street from Colony Square at 14th Street (Source: Photograph taken by Dr. William A. Wood, Jr., Courtesy of Andrew Wood)



new millennium, this intersection developed into the heart of LGBTQ+ social life in Midtown, and it continues to serve as an important LGBTQ+ space in the city as of 2022 (Croft 2001; *The Georgia Voice* 2022a).

Many of the LGBTQ+ commercial spaces in Midtown are no longer extant. Construction that occurred during the periods discussed above and since the beginning of the twenty-first century have radically altered the neighborhood's landscape. Notable non-residential buildings that remain standing include the spaces occupied by Bulldogs, Outwrite, Club Baths/Flex at 76 4th Street NW, Midtowne Medicine Center at 699 Piedmont Avenue NE, Saint Mark United Methodist Church at 781 Peachtree Street NE, and the commercial row on the east side of Peachtree Street between 10th and 11th streets that includes the previous locations of Club Centaur, Illusions, Plum Butch, and Plum Nelly. Though a few apartment complexes that were not within

Gay House Parties in the 1960s

In the mid-1960s, when there were only a few public LGBTQ+ social spaces in Atlanta, Richard Kavanaugh hosted LGBTQ+ parties at his home in Morningside. Kavanaugh and his friends frequented Piedmont Park and the LGBTQ+ bars in the city, such as Mrs. P's, during this period as well. Using his knowledge of the LGBTQ+ landscape and his connections within the LGBTQ+ community, Kavanaugh helped establish the Atlanta-based gay magazine *Cruise* in 1976.

**Exterior of 761 Morningside Drive NE, 2022
(Source: New South Associates)**



the NRHP Midtown Historic District have been demolished, likely including the once all-LGBTQ+ apartment complex at 11th Street and Piedmont Avenue (exact location and status unknown), many of the residential properties in Midtown from the period of significance are extant (*Cruise Weekly* 1981a). This includes single and multi-family houses and apartment complexes within the Midtown Historic District. The route of the first Gay Pride March along Peachtree Street from the area of 7th Street to Piedmont Park continues to be utilized as a section of Atlanta’s LGBTQ+ Pride Parades as of 2022.

ANSLEY MALL AND VICINITY: ANSLEY PARK, PIEDMONT HEIGHTS, AND MORNINGSIDE

As Piedmont Park became the center of LGBTQ+ social life in the late 1960s and early 1970s, gay people began creating spaces for themselves

within the neighborhoods that bordered the north side of the park. This included areas of Ansley Park, Piedmont Heights, and Morningside, though the LGBTQ+ spaces were mostly concentrated on the edges of these neighborhoods. Ansley Mall, a mid-century outdoor shopping mall located west of the intersection of Piedmont Avenue and Monroe Drive, served as the heart of this growing LGBTQ+ enclave, and many of the earliest LGBTQ+ spaces in the neighborhood were established there. The mall also played an earlier role in helping to create LGBTQ+ spaces in Atlanta. When Ansley Mall opened in 1966, it pulled business away from the nearby Peachtree Street commercial corridor. As the businesses on Peachtree Street closed or relocated, open commercial spaces with cheap rent were available for members of the counterculture to utilize (Jones 2020). This led to the creation of the Strip, which fostered

Northeast Oblique of Ansley Mall, 1966 (Source: *The Atlanta Constitution*, March 31, 1966, Newspapers.com)



the creation of the Midtown LGBTQ+ community that then began to socialize on the north side of Piedmont Park (Cash 1973).

The earliest known public LGBTQ+ space in the Ansley Mall LGBTQ+ enclave was the Cove at 586 Worchester Drive NE, a cruise bar that opened in 1969. Located in an old warehouse immediately east of Piedmont Park, the Cove was adjacent to the gay cruising trails, known as the “tree trails,” that weaved through the northern, wooded portion of the park (Cruise 1976; Faludi 1984; *International Guild Guide* 1969; Smith 1974). The mall itself was already popular with LGBTQ+ people during this period as well, though it was not until the early 1970s that LGBTQ+-specific spaces opened there. In August 1969, police raided the Ansley Mall Mini-Cinema during a showing of Andy Warhol’s *Lonesome Cowboys* and photographed all the patrons to compare the images against photographs of “known homosexuals” in Atlanta (Hurst 1969). This event is remembered as a major turning point in Atlanta’s LGBTQ+ history, having spurred the creation of the Georgia Gay Liberation Front in the early 1970s (Waters 2019) (See Theme: LGBTQ+ Policing and Harassment and Theme: LGBTQ+ Political Activism in Atlanta’s LGBTQ+ Communities).

Between the 1970s and early 1980s, Ansley Mall transformed into the anchor of a thriving LGBTQ+ enclave that stretched into the surrounding neighborhoods. Stores, restaurants, and bars opened in the mall and surrounding area, creating social spaces for LGBTQ+ people. El Matador, a small neighborhood bar, opened in a space at the back of the mall in 1971. The bar was popular with older gay men, and in the late 1970s, it was renamed the New Order (Jackson 1971; Voss 1982a). Ansley Mall Florist, which was operating by 1971 as well, advertised in the LGBTQ+ publication

David, suggesting it was also popular with LGBTQ+ people in the early 1970s (David 1971). The LGBTQ+ presence in Ansley Mall expanded in the mid-1970s when the Ides of March, a retail collective, opened in a large commercial space on the front side of the mall. The mini-mall had several gay-owned stores, including Regalos, a home goods and gift store (Killer 1977). Though the Ides of March closed in the early 1980s, Ansley Mall remained a popular LGBTQ+ social space through the end of the twentieth century. In the 1980s and 1990s, the LGBTQ+ presence in the Ansley Mall enclave grew to include businesses in Ansley Square, a strip mall built south of the mall in the early 1970s (*Atlanta Constitution* 1971a). LGBTQ+ spaces in Ansley Square included Crazy Ray’s and Burkhart’s, two bars that occupied opposite ends of the building at 1492 Piedmont Avenue NE, and Brushstrokes, a giftshop at 1510 Piedmont Avenue NE (David Atlanta 1998; Voss 1982b).

As the social scene developed in the Ansley Mall enclave in the 1970s, LGBTQ+ people began moving to apartment complexes in the area. The two most well-known LGBTQ+ apartment complexes in this area were Ansley Forest at 1616 Piedmont Avenue NE and Monroe Manor at 1445 Monroe Drive NE. Ansley Forest was established in 1961 (Barker 1961). According to members of the YLIGA Facebook group, the apartment was popular with LGBTQ+ people by the late 1970s (YLIGA, 09/01/2020, “Ansley Forest, Morningside Chase, Ansley North & South...”). In 1981, the parking lots of both apartments were listed as stops on the Atlanta Gay Men’s Chorus’ Christmas caroling tour, along with other major LGBTQ+ spaces near Midtown, suggesting that the complexes had a significant number of LGBTQ+ residents by that time (Cruise Weekly 1981b). Monroe Manor was built between 1972 and 1973, and advertisements from the late 1970s highlighted the complex as an



Morningside Chase has long been known as a “gay complex.”

The sign for Morningside Chase at the entrance to the apartment complex as seen in *Southern Voice*, September 16, 1993 (Source: *Southern Voice* Newspaper Collection, 1988-1995, Kennesaw State University, Department of Archives, Rare Books and Records Management, Digital Library of Georgia)

adult-only apartment community near Midtown and Ansley Mall (Carlyle Heights Condo Association 2022). The apartment complex was renamed Morningside Chase in 1983, and in 1993, an article in *Southern Voice* referred to it as “one of Atlanta’s most gay/lesbian friendly apartment complexes” (*Atlanta Constitution* 1983; *Southern Voice* 916). Both spaces remained popular residential options among LGBTQ+ Atlantans through the turn of the twenty-first century.

Though the Cove was demolished in the late 1990s and Ansley Mall has been renovated at least twice since the early 1980s, the Ansley Mall enclave retains many of buildings occupied by

LGBTQ+ spaces (Grooms n.d.; *CruiseNews* 1983; Seay 2020). There have only been a few additions built onto Ansley Mall, including the grocery section on its northwest elevation, but many of the commercial spaces have been significantly altered on the interior. Other properties that are extant include Ansley Forest, Ansley Square, Ansley North and Ansley South (separate apartment complexes that are both now housing cooperatives), Monroe Manor/Morningside Chase (now a condo property known as Carlyle Heights), The Boy Next Door at 1447 Piedmont Avenue NE, and Gene & Gabe’s Upstairs (now Smith’s Olde Bar) at 1578 Piedmont Avenue NE. As of 2023, the area around Ansley Mall remains one of the largest LGBTQ+ neighborhoods in Atlanta, and the mall itself continues to be popular among LGBTQ+ Atlantans. Ansley Square is also presently home to a cluster of LGBTQ+ businesses (*The Georgia Voice* 2022b).

country used to recognize and memorialize people impacted by or lost to the AIDS epidemic (*Etcetera* 1993; John Howell Park Project 2001; Morse 1988).

CHESHIRE BRIDGE ROAD CORRIDOR

Through the mid-to-late twentieth century, the full length of Cheshire Bridge Road was one of Atlanta's largest LGBTQ+ social enclaves. Originally a mostly residential area in the early-to-mid twentieth century, the nature of the road shifted in the mid-to-late-1960s as large warehouses, liquor stores, and nightclubs began to open along the corridor (*Atlanta Constitution* 1966; Gaines 1964; Parrish 1967). The latter two types of spaces were supported in-part by visitors from alcohol-free

Cheshire Bridge Road in 1984, Looking West from Intersection with Wellbourne Drive (Source: *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* Photographic Archive. Special Collections and Archives, Georgia State University Library)

counties northeast of Atlanta, who utilized I-85 to travel to Fulton County where alcohol sales were legal (Henry 2019). In the early 1970s, LGBTQ+ spaces joined the heterosexual bars and clubs on Cheshire Bridge Road, and by the end of the decade, there were at least six LGBTQ+-friendly businesses on the two mile stretch of Cheshire Bridge Road between I-85 and Piedmont Avenue. Several commercial spaces in the area were occupied by multiple LGBTQ+ bars between the mid-1970s and the turn of the twentieth century, with at least three spaces (1888, 2329, and 2345 Cheshire Bridge Road NE) housing three different LGBTQ+ businesses over time.

Some of the city's most well-known LGBTQ+ show bars, discos, and neighborhood bars from the twentieth century were located along the Cheshire Bridge Road corridor or in the immediate area of the road. The earliest known LGBTQ+ space on the road was the Poster Hut, which was established in



1967 but developed an association with LGBTQ+ consumers in the early 1970s (*The Georgia Voice* 2011). Frank Powell, “the patriarch of Atlanta’s homosexual bar business,” opened the first two LGBTQ+ bars on Cheshire Bridge Road: the Sweet Gum Head, a show bar, in 1971 at 2284 Cheshire Bridge Road NE, and Ms. Garbos, an LGBTQ+ women’s bar, in 1973 at 2200 Cheshire Bridge Road NE (Sverdlik 1988). Other significant bar and club spaces in the area include the Magic Garden/Numbers/the Saint at 1888 Cheshire Bridge Road NE, the Sports Page at 2069 Cheshire Bridge Road NE, the Locker Room Bathhouse and Disco at 2329 Cheshire Bridge Road NE, and the Otherside Lounge at 1924 Piedmont Avenue NE (see Theme: Atlanta’s LGBTQ+ Social Spaces). The concentration

(Below) Advertisement for Yorke Downs, 1985 (Source: *Cruise Weekly Arts and Entertainment Magazine*, Volume 10, Number 15, HoustonLGBTHistory.org)

LGBTQ+ Apartment Complexes in South Buckhead

One of the smaller, more concentrated LGBTQ+ enclaves in Atlanta during the twentieth century was

Brookwood, a residential neighborhood in south Buckhead. Along 26th Street, behind the midrise tower that housed the LGBTQ+ restaurant and disco Shelly’s Place at 1720 Peachtree Road NE, there were at least two apartment complexes that were popular with LGBTQ+ people between the 1970s and 1990s. Brookwood Park, an early 1960s midrise apartment building, and Yorke Downs, a two-story apartment complex, were both popular among LGBTQ+ men during this period (YLIGA, 04/25/2021, “Found this in the back of a drawer”).

Though Yorke Downs was demolished in the early twenty-first century, Brookwood Park is extant and operates as a condominium building as of 2023.

(Below) Brookwood Park, 2022 (Source: New South Associates)



of LGBTQ+ social spaces led Atlanta-based LGBTQ+ publications to establish offices in the area, including Cavco, Inc., the publishers of *Cruise* and *Cruise Weekly*, and the offices for *Guide* magazine (see Theme: LGBTQ+ Media in Atlanta).

The LGBTQ+ residential population of the area increased alongside the creation of more social spaces on Cheshire Bridge Road. By the late 1970s, apartment complexes located on Woodland Avenue, east of Cheshire Bridge Road, and Buford Highway, immediately north of I-85, were popular among LGBTQ+ people, particularly gay men and drag performers (YLIGA, 09/01/2020, “Ansley Forest, Morningside Chase, Ansley North & South...”). Apartments in these areas included the Four Seasons at 1170 Woodland Avenue NE and Tempo Parkway at 2572 Lenox Road NE (*Atlanta Constitution* 1971b, 1980). The largest concentration of residential buildings rented by LGBTQ+ people was in the Woodland Avenue area, extending into the Woodland Hills section of the North Druid Hills neighborhood east of Cheshire Bridge Road. Several apartment complexes along Lenox Road and Buford Highway that were farther away from the LGBTQ+ enclave centered around the Cheshire Bridge Road corridor appear to have been associated with the community in that area, and they also had large concentrations of LGBTQ+ residents as well (YLIGA, 09/01/2020, “Ansley Forest, Morningside Chase, Ansley North & South...”). These apartments include Lenox Forest at 3200 Lenox Road NE, Wishing Well at 3151 Buford Highway NE, and Sutton Place at 3540 Buford Highway NE (*Atlanta Constitution* 1970, 1982, 1989).

Efforts by area residents, developers, and city officials to transform Cheshire Bridge Road from a strip of adult businesses into a residential neighborhood of multi-family properties have

led to the demolition of several commercial buildings along the corridor since the late 1990s (Duncan 2017; Hairston 2004; Hennie 2014, 2016; Saunders 1999). Though the landscape along the road has changed, many of the twentieth century LGBTQ+ spaces in the area are extant as of 2023. Remaining social spaces include the Magic Garden/Numbers/the Saint; the Sports Page/the Heretic; the Poster Hut at 2175 Cheshire Bridge Road NE; Ms. Garbo’s; the Sweet Gum Head; and the Cheshire Square shopping center, which housed Arney’s/the Rose/Buddies at 2345 Cheshire Bridge Road NE and the Locker Room Bathhouse and Disco/Lavita’s/Lipstix. As of 2023, many of the apartment complexes along Woodland Avenue are also extant, and the Tempo Parkway apartments on Buford Highway remain standing, though they have been renovated and are now known as Lenox Place. Though this enclave is not as large and active as it was in the twentieth century, the Cheshire Bridge Road corridor continues to serve as an important LGBTQ+ neighborhood in the early twenty-first century, with LGBTQ+ businesses such as the Heretic and Tripp’s Bar (1931 Piedmont Circle NE), both established in the 1990s, still operating in the area.

LITTLE FIVE POINTS AND CANDLER PARK

Little Five Points was a major center of LGBTQ+ life in Atlanta during the twentieth century, particularly for LGBTQ+ women. The area developed into a counterculture enclave in the early 1970s, a change that was partially fueled by members of the counterculture relocating to the surrounding neighborhoods from the Strip in Midtown (Hopkins 1970). Earlier residents abandoned the area in the 1950s and 1960s for the city’s suburbs as cars became more affordable, Black Atlantans began to move into

the surrounding neighborhoods, and the Georgia Department of Transportation revealed plans to build the Stone Mountain Tollway through the east side of the city. The empty storefronts and old residences with cheap rental prices that were left behind attracted young people who hoped to revitalize the area into an engaged and inclusive community (WABE 2019). Like the earlier Strip community, a wide variety of people moved into the area who were united by their shared difference from the city's mainstream culture, and among these groups were many activism-oriented LGBTQ+ people (Dolan 2020).

The majority of the LGBTQ+ people that relocated to Little Five Points and Candler Park in the early 1970s were lesbians. There, they created a feminist-lesbian community within the larger neighborhood, which was built on countercultural and feminist ideals, such as communal living, egalitarianism, cooperative or collective organizational structures, and community and political activism. The women established communal residences in rental properties in Candler Park, where they pulled together resources to purchase necessary goods (Chesnut et al. 2009; Dolan 2020). Many of



(Left) Façade of Charis Books and More, circa 1976 (Source: atlpp0448, page 112, Planning Atlanta Planning Publications Collection, Georgia State University Library)

(Below) Façade of 432 Moreland Avenue NE in 1983. The building was previously occupied by the Sojourner Truth Press between 1971 and 1972. The first location of Seven Stages theater is visible at left (highlighted in yellow) (Source: Atlanta Journal-Constitution Photographic Archives. Special Collections and Archives, Georgia State University Library)



the houses had names, including Marmalade Manor, Ruby Fruit Jungle, Tacky Tower, and the Edge of Night (Gelfand 2020). The latter (1190 Mansfield Avenue NE) was the first headquarters for the central organization in the Little Five Points LGBTQ+ community, the Atlanta Lesbian Feminist Alliance (ALFA). The group occupied this residence between 1972 and 1973. ALFA relocated to another house in Candler Park at 1326 McLendon Avenue NE in 1973. The organization operated in this location until 1986, when it relocated out of the neighborhood (Fulton, Jr. 2021). Reflecting the area's connection with Atlanta's lesbian communities, the city's first Dyke March was held between Candler Park and Little Five Points in 1983 (Bagby 2014; Dolan 2020).

LGBTQ+ women were among some of the earliest investors, entrepreneurs, and employees/volunteers to support and establish businesses and organizations in Little Five Points during the first half of the 1970s. The Sojourner Truth Press, a women's press that was largely operated by lesbians living in communal households in Candler Park, relocated from the Strip to 432 Moreland Avenue NE in Little Five Points in 1971. It operated there through 1972 and was overseen by Jane Lifflander, one of the founding members of ALFA (Fontana 2012:00:54:34; Powell-Ingabire 2021). The press printed a variety of countercultural works, from *The Great Speckled Bird* to LGBTQ+ materials, including a monthly newspaper created by the Furies, a Washington D.C.-based lesbian feminist collective; LGBTQ+ editions of the Methodist Student Movement's magazine, *motive*; and *Sleeping Beauty: A Lesbian Fairytale*, a book written by Vicki Gabriner, who was also a founding member of ALFA (Powell-Ingabire 2021). Other, longer lasting ventures in Little Five Points that were supported by LGBTQ+

women include the progressive radio station WRFG 89.3 FM, which was partially funded by a local lesbian and featured LGBTQ+ content and hosts, and Charis Books and More, a feminist bookstore that stocked books with antiracist, antisexist, spiritual, and LGBTQ+ content (Bryant 2009; Gerrard 2022; Joye 1993).

Though many of the LGBTQ+ organizations and businesses that operated in Little Five Points between the 1970s and the turn of the twenty-first century are no longer present in the neighborhood, the area remains the countercultural center of Atlanta (Little Five Points Atlanta 2022). Charis Books and More relocated to Decatur in 2019, and the Little Five Points Pub, where the Indigo Girls often performed in the mid-1980s, closed in the late twentieth century. WRFG relocated from their initial location at 1091 Euclid Avenue NE to 1083 Austin Avenue NE in the early 1980s, where they remain a part of the Little Five Points community as of 2023. Much of the area has been preserved through efforts by residents of Little Five Points and the surrounding neighborhoods. Their work to protect the area included participation in the successful protests against the development of the Stone Mountain Tollway and other road alterations in the neighborhood, as well as preventing large chain stores from moving into Little Five Points by petitioning to have the neighborhood zoned as the city's first Neighborhood Commercial District (Kueppers 2019; WABE 2019). All the LGBTQ+ resources identified in the Little Five Points and Candler Park area through this study are extant as of 2023. The exact locations of many of the communal women's residences in Candler Park are currently unknown and merit further study, but both of the ALFA houses in the neighborhood are extant.

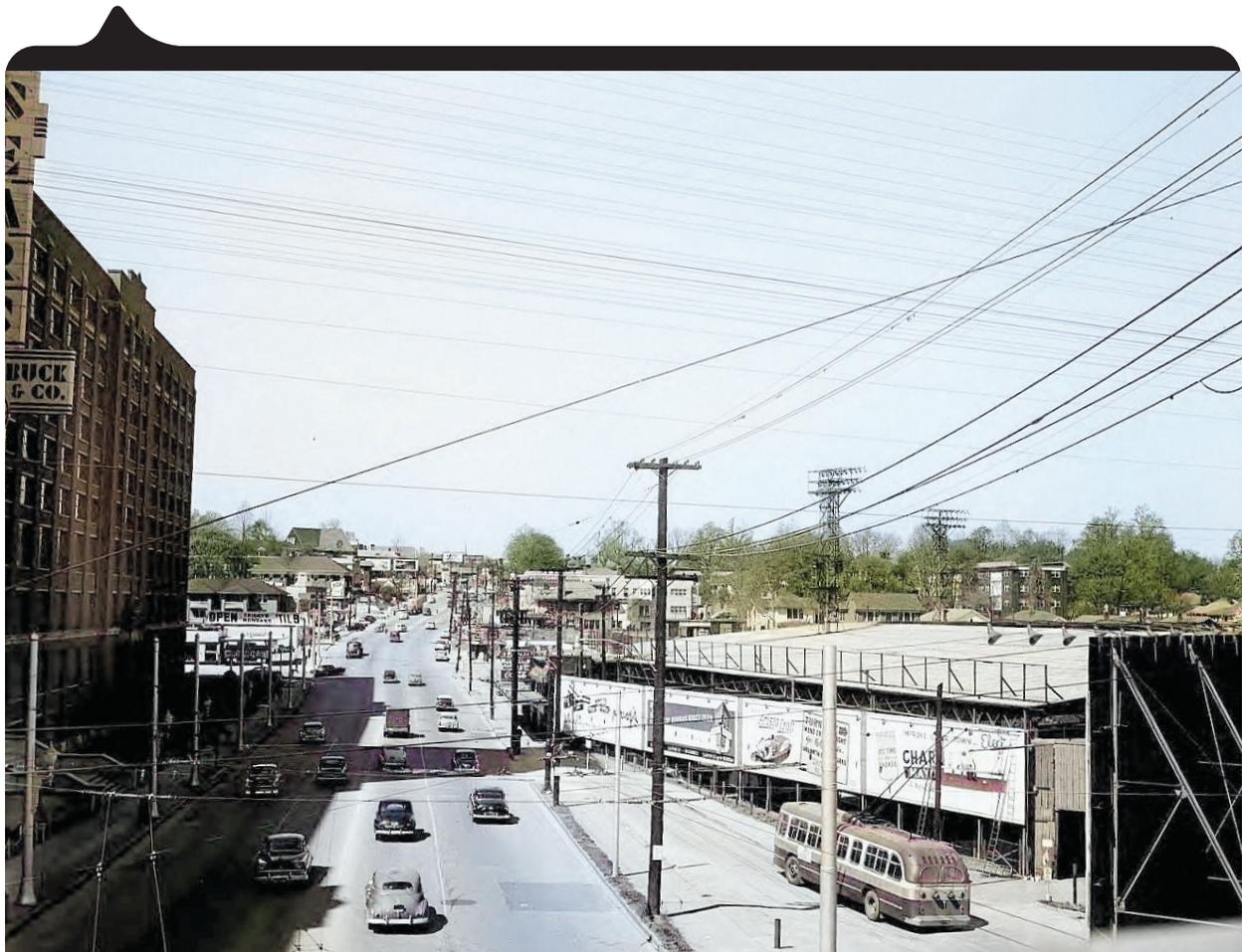
PONCE DE LEON AVENUE CORRIDOR

The Ponce de Leon Avenue corridor, which forms the southern boundary of Midtown and the Virginia-Highland neighborhood, was a twentieth century enclave that mostly consisted of commercial spaces occupied by bars, organizations, and health centers. Ponce de Leon Avenue began developing as an LGBTQ+ enclave in the mid-1950s, when lounges that catered to LGBTQ+ people opened alongside the upscale commercial

View west on Ponce de Leon Avenue from the north elevation of the Sears, Roebuck & Co. Building, 1953. The two-story building occupied by the Joy Lounge in the late 1960s is visible above the "open" sign at left (Source: Tracy O'Neal Photographic Collection. Special Collections and Archives, Georgia State University Library)

and dining businesses along the corridor. A concentration of social spaces opened in the area surrounding the Sears, Roebuck and Co. Building during this time, including the Glen Iris Supper Club at 614 Glen Iris Drive NE and Mrs. P's at 551 Ponce de Leon Avenue NE, the latter of which was the earliest known space opened to specifically serve a community of LGBTQ+ people in Atlanta.

As with other intown commercial districts, businesses on Ponce de Leon Avenue were negatively impacted as middle and upper-class white Atlantans relocated to and began shopping in the suburbs surrounding the city in the 1960s. Though this period is often described as an era of decline for Ponce, the changing character of the road allowed for LGBTQ+ spaces to thrive (City





of Atlanta, Department of City Planning 2020:40; Speno 2016:15). The city's earliest known lesbian dive bar, Dupree's Lounge, opened at 715 Ponce de Leon Avenue NE in 1965, which marked a shift from the earlier, more refined LGBTQ+ lounges in the area. In the late 1960s, the transition of female impersonation performances from mixed heterosexual/homosexual supper clubs to LGBTQ+ spaces occurred at two LGBTQ+ bars on Ponce de Leon Avenue, the Joy Lounge at 563 Ponce de Leon Avenue NE and Mrs. P's (see Theme: Atlanta's LGBTQ+ Social Spaces) (Chenault et al. 2010).

Though drag performances and lesbian spaces both shifted to other neighborhoods during the early 1970s, Mrs. P's remained one of Atlanta's most popular LGBTQ+ social spaces through the end of the decade. In the first half of the 1970s,

Billy Jones and his Darling Daughters at the Joy Lounge in the late 1960s (Source: Joy Lounge (group photo), Ponce de Leon Avenue, Atlanta, Georgia, VIS 419.138. Billy Jones visual arts materials. Kenan Research Center at the Atlanta History Center)

it was renovated to create the city's first LGBTQ+ leather bar. Mrs. P's closed in 1983, but the building continued to operate as an LGBTQ+ bar through the early 1990s.

During the early 1980s, Ponce de Leon developed into the center of Atlanta's queer music and arts scene, and the two major venues utilized by performers during this period were the Niterly at 600 Ponce de Leon Avenue NE and the Celebrity Club at 306 Ponce de Leon Avenue NE (see Theme: LGBTQ+ Arts in Atlanta). Though these spaces were not strictly LGBTQ+, they were welcoming to gay people, and many of the performers, artists, and

Old Fourth Ward

Atlanta's Old Fourth Ward extends along the south side of Ponce, making it the official Atlanta neighborhood for many spaces identified in this corridor. Though there are not as many LGBTQ+ spaces within the other areas of the Old Fourth Ward, it was home to a few important lesbian and Black LGBTQ+ spaces. The Tower Lounge, one of the longest running LGBTQ+ women's bars in Atlanta, was established on Forrest Avenue in 1952, a short distance from the LGBTQ+ bars that opened in the area surrounding the Sears, Roebuck and Co. Building on Ponce de Leon Avenue. For a short period in the 1960s, a home in the Old Fourth Ward was a hangout for one of Atlanta's earliest known Black LGBTQ+ social clubs, the Jolly Twelve. Another Black LGBTQ+ social organization, Second Sunday, was also founded in the neighborhood in the early 1990s.

**The space previously occupied by the Tower Lounge at 735 Ralph McGill Boulevard NE, 2022
(Source: New South Associates)**



other participants in the social scene identified as LGBTQ+. In the mid-1980s, the new wave culture shifted to venues in other areas of the city. LGBTQ+ social spaces continued to operate along the corridor between the mid-1980s and the turn of the twenty-first century, including the Phoenix at

567 Ponce de Leon Avenue NE, the Onyx II at 600 Ponce de Leon Avenue, and the Eagle at 306 Ponce de Leon Avenue NE.

In the 1980s and 1990s, the Ponce de Leon corridor also served as an LGBTQ+ organizational

and health center district. The second location of the Atlanta Gay Center opened at 931 Ponce de Leon Avenue NE in 1980, which provided many services to the city's LGBTQ+ population including a gay help phone line, venereal disease clinics, meeting spaces for other LGBTQ+ organizations, a coffeehouse that hosted live performances, and a space for the city's first literature-focused LGBTQ+ bookstore, Christopher's Kind. By the mid-1980s, the Atlanta Gay Center relocated to Midtown from Ponce de Leon Avenue, but resource centers that provided services for LGBTQ+ people continued opening in the area through the end of the twentieth century. The Atlanta chapter of the National Association of People With AIDS moved its office to 131 Ponce de Leon Avenue NE (no longer extant) in 1988. There, the organization provided social spaces, legal and insurance information programming, an employment help line, and other forms of information services to people living with HIV (*Southern Voice* 1988). In 1992, the Grady Infectious Disease Program relocated their clinic to the former Presbyterian Church headquarters at 341 Ponce de Leon Avenue NE. As one of the largest HIV/AIDS treatment facilities in the United States, the clinic served thousands of Atlantans living with AIDS during the last decade of the twentieth century (see Theme: LGBTQ+ Healthcare and Advocacy).

Redevelopment near the Sears, Roebuck and Co. Building during the late twentieth and early twenty-first century has led to the demolition of several of the earliest LGBTQ+ spaces along the Ponce de Leon corridor. Though a few of the spaces in that area have been lost, many of the LGBTQ+ spaces identified along this corridor are extant as of 2023, including the second location of the Atlanta Gay Center, the Briarcliff Hotel at 1050 Ponce de Leon Avenue NE, and Mrs. P's. The Grady Infectious Disease Program continues to operate at

its Ponce de Leon Avenue location as well (Grady Memorial Hospital 2022). In 2021, the City of Atlanta designated the building at 306 Ponce de Leon Avenue NE a local landmark, which protects it from alterations or demolition. The building was the first space in the Deep South to receive a landmark designation recognizing its LGBTQ+ history (Raymond 2020).

ATLANTA UNIVERSITY CENTER AND VICINITY

Atlanta University Center and the neighborhoods that surround it, including West End and Vine City, developed into an LGBTQ+ enclave as early as the 1960s. Young Black LGBTQ+ people, particularly Black gay men attending Morehouse College, created social groups on the campuses of Atlanta's Historically Black Colleges and Universities, which also extended to off campus residences in the area (Washington 2022). Between the 1960s and 1980s, a mostly hidden enclave of Black LGBTQ+ life thrived in the area, occupying dorm rooms, private homes, and one of the city's most well-known Black gay clubs, the Marquette Lounge at 809 Hunter Street NW (now MLK, Jr. Drive). Though the Marquette Lounge originally opened as a Black working-class bar, by the 1960s, it transitioned to an LGBTQ+ space. Through the late twentieth century, it was regarded as an LGBTQ+ institution in Atlanta (see Theme: Atlanta's LGBTQ+ Social Spaces and Theme: Atlanta's LGBTQ+ Community Organizations).

Few Black Atlantans openly identified as LGBTQ+ prior to the late 1980s, and the visibility of Black gay life in the city was minimal before this time. Private social clubs that met in this area, such as the Atlanta Committee, created space for Black LGBTQ+ Atlantans during this period. Between the 1960s and 1970s, middle-class Black gay



Hammonds House Museum, 2022 (Source: New South Associates)

men who were not publicly open regarding their sexuality formed the Atlanta Committee (Royles 2021). Members of the social club regularly hosted gatherings in their homes, including Dr. Otis Thrash Hammonds, who moved into his West End home at 503 Peoples Street SW, now known as the Hammonds House Museum, in 1979 (Lee 2014; Washington 2022). The Hammonds House Museum is the only residence previously utilized as a meeting place for the Atlanta Committee that was identified during this study.

In the 1990s, students at Morehouse College established the earliest known openly LGBTQ+ organizations in Atlanta University Center neighborhood. Morehouse students Antonio Johnson, Damien Jones, and Anthony Moultry formed Atlanta's first ballroom house, Miami de Trois, in the Charles D. Hubert Residence Hall on

campus in 1992. The group changed their name to the House of Escada in 1995, and through the decade, the house recruited new members from the student population of Morehouse College. Tony Milan, who also attended Morehouse, helped the House of Escada promote and host Atlanta's first ball in 1996, the Winter Solstice Ball (see Theme: LGBTQ+ Arts in Atlanta). By 1996, the Morehouse Alliance, a LGBTQ+ support group for students, was also active on campus.

Though Black LGBTQ+ Atlantans established new enclaves throughout other parts of the city in the 1990s and first decades of the twenty-first century, Atlanta University Center and the surrounding neighborhoods remained an active area of LGBTQ+ life in Atlanta during this period. Redevelopment along Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive, formerly Hunter Street, has resulted in the loss of many of the historic commercial buildings on the north side of the road, including the original location of

the Marquette Lounge. The club relocated to 868 Joseph E. Boone Boulevard NW in the twenty-first century and continues to operate at that location as of 2022. Many twentieth century residential buildings are extant in this area, including several of the historic dorms on the college campuses. As of 2022, the Atlanta University Center institutions continue to serve as welcoming spaces for young Black LGBTQ+ people.

EAST ATLANTA VILLAGE

East Atlanta Village began to develop as an LGBTQ+ enclave in the late 1990s, as redevelopment was pushing LGBTQ+ people out of other intown neighborhoods. Though it was, and continues to be, one of the city's smaller LGBTQ+ enclaves, East Atlanta Village served as an important queer artistic and social space at the end of the twentieth century. Grant Henry established his antique store, Resurrection Antiques and Otherworldly Possessions in the Church of the Living Room, at 465 Flat Shoals Avenue SE in the mid-1990s, where he developed his well-known artistic style that incorporates an LGBTQ+-perspective while reframing previously created religious artwork (Grant Henry, personal communication with Charlie Paine, 02/17/2023). Another LGBTQ+-owned business in East Atlanta Village in the late 1990s was the furniture store Traders at 485 Flat Shoals Avenue SE, which operated into the twenty-first century (*The Georgia Voice* Editors 2012). The only remaining LGBTQ+ space from this period in East Atlanta Village is Mary's, an LGBTQ+ bar that was established in November 1998 and advertised as "what East Atlanta Village always wanted – a mixed gay bar" (*Creative Loafing* 2018; *Etcetera* 1999). By 1999, the bar occupied 1287 Glenwood Avenue SE, where it continues to operate as of 2023 (David 2023; *Etcetera* 1999).

CONCLUSION

Over the course of the twentieth century, Atlanta's LGBTQ+ residents have gradually created their own distinct neighborhoods and enclaves in the city. The white gay community first coalesced in Midtown during the late 1960s and early 1970s at a time when the area was in decline due to the suburban flight of white, middle-class families. In the following decades, they established Midtown and other neighborhoods of Ansley Park, Morningside, Piedmont Heights, and Virginia-Highland surrounding Piedmont Park as a major center of LGBTQ+ life in the city. Lesbian and Black LGBTQ+ residents formed smaller communities in neighborhoods located in east and southwest Atlanta, such as Candler Park, Little Five Points, the vicinity of the Atlanta University Center, and West End. In addition, some major city streets, including Cheshire Bridge Road, Ponce de Leon Avenue, and segments along Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive, emerged as vibrant LGBTQ+-oriented corridors lined with apartments, clubs, restaurants, and various retail businesses. Initially, these areas collectively allowed LGBTQ+ people to let their guards down and foster authentic, creative, and supportive communities within Atlanta; however, they later emerged as influential power bases that shaped the creative, economic, and political character of the city in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries.

NRHP ELIGIBILITY STANDARDS

LGBTQ+ NEIGHBORHOODS AND ENCLAVES IN ATLANTA

Associated Property Functions/Uses: The table below is intended to provide guidance on the types of properties that are expected to be associated with the theme Atlanta’s LGBTQ+ Neighborhoods and Enclaves. This list is not to be considered comprehensive, as it was developed in tandem with the research conducted for the development of the theme’s history. This list does not preclude other properties with differing functions and uses that could have associations with the theme, pending future research.

Property Description: Associated property types under the theme Atlanta’s LGBTQ+ Neighborhoods and Enclaves are groupings, complexes, or districts containing a variety of building types, including single-family residences, apartment buildings, apartment complexes, parks, and other properties found in communities. Many of these areas are already identified as NRHP or local historic districts, but their association with the city’s LGBTQ+ history has not been yet recognized.

Property Significance: Those properties identified as significant under the theme Atlanta’s LGBTQ+ Neighborhoods and Enclaves would have direct association with an evident pattern of LGBTQ+ community development, whether through residential clusters or groupings, the establishment and patronage of LGBTQ+ businesses, churches, and social spaces, or the influence of college and university LGBTQ+ student organizations in a given area.

Geographic Locations: The city limits of Atlanta, particularly Downtown, Midtown, the Atlanta University Center, and other Intown Neighborhoods, such as Ansley Park, Candler Park, Poncey-Highland, Virginia-Highland, and the Little Five Points business district.

Areas of Significance:

- Community Planning and Development
- Ethnic Heritage: Black
- Social History: LGBTQ+ History
- Social History: Women’s History

Criteria: NRHP Criteria A, B, and C, Criteria Consideration G

To demonstrate significance under Criterion B, the significant individual must have lived or worked in the district during the period in which they

Property Function or Use	Common Subcategories
District	Commercial Landscape Residential
Sites/Landscapes	Park Plaza
Objects	Fountain Monument Sculpture Statuary

achieved significance - i.e., the period in which they created their productive body of work. This may be more applicable to a smaller area with association with this theme, where an individual had a direct impact on the shaping of the community.

Properties associated with institutions or individuals for which significance dates to within the last 50 years must possess exceptional importance, following the requirements of Criterion Consideration G. Under this context, a significant LGBTQ+ district may have exceptional significance for association with the birth of the LGBTQ+ civil rights movement; LGBTQ+ entertainment/recreation; the formation of a visible LGBTQ+ community; and the HIV/AIDS epidemic, among others. Because of the nature of the recent history of the LGBTQ+ communities in Atlanta, the period of significance for a district under this theme is likely to need to meet Criteria Consideration G.

Period of Significance: 1946-2000

Period of Significance Justification: Defining the period of significance will be dependent on the community, neighborhood, or enclave in question. The potential date range a district could have significance under this context is presumed to be 1946, when LGBTQ+ people were attending the country's first gay-affirming religious worship services in Downtown, which demonstrates the presence of an LGBTQ+ community in that area. The potential end of a district's period of significance would be 2000, the end of the study period for this context.

Each geographic area should be the focus of research, and potentially oral history interviews, to gain an understanding of the growth of the LGBTQ+ community within that area. Factors to look for in defining a district's period of

significance typically would include analysis of the important dates of development and/or use within the LGBTQ+ history of the resource. Geographic clusters of LGBTQ+ resources within a given area should be defined and the appropriate date range of the earliest to latest LGBTQ+-associated significant events or persons can then be applied to establish the period of significance for that district.

Eligibility Standards:

- Districts must have a documented association with LGBTQ+ community development, occupation, and use.
- The resource should have a definable concentration of LGBTQ+-associated resources.
- These areas may or may not be visibly distinguishable as an LGBTQ+ space.
- Districts may also be associated with the life of an important individual or individuals who played a significant role in the development of LGBTQ+ communities and enclaves in the city.

Character Defining Features

- A grouping, complex, enclave, or district is significant under this theme will demonstrate occupation, use, and/or development by the LGBTQ+ community for a period of time in the past.
- A grouping, complex, enclave, or district that is significant under this theme likely was not purposefully built by the LGBTQ+ community. However, the ongoing preservation and use of historic buildings by the LGBTQ+ community may be an associative feature.

Integrity Considerations

- Overall integrity should be assessed on a collective level, and within the time frame the district gained significance.
- The district should retain most of the essential character defining features from the period of significance.
- The most important aspects of integrity for this theme and area of significance should be Location, Feeling, Association, and Design. Research and the development of the

Inventory for this study reveals that many properties associated with LGBTQ+ history in Atlanta have been altered. Therefore, for assessing the integrity of a collection of LGBTQ+ resources, overall integrity should be weighed with less emphasis on integrity of materials and workmanship.

- In most cases, integrity of setting should be considered in terms of urban versus suburban setting and assess whether newer infill is or is not in keeping with the property's historic period of development.



CASE STUDY

RESOURCE: MIDTOWN HISTORIC DISTRICT

Note: This case study is a starting point for National Register eligibility analysis for this and related resources. Interiors of case study properties were not accessed during the creation of this context document, however, a thorough analysis of interior integrity would be required as part of any formal assessment of this property's eligibility for the National Register of Historic Places. Furthermore, these are not the official opinions of HPD and are provided here as starting points and models for additional analysis. Formal eligibility would need to be determined via in-depth analysis at the time of nomination.

The Midtown Historic District was listed in the NRHP at the local level in 1999 under Criteria A and C in the areas of architecture

and community planning and development. Its period of significance is 1885-1949. The district is characterized by early twentieth century houses from over a dozen subdivisions that were laid out between 1885 and 1930. The district, located between Piedmont Park to the north and the Old Fourth Ward neighborhood to the south, is bounded by 10th Street, Ponce de Leon Avenue, Piedmont Avenue, and Lakeview Avenue/Monroe Circle.

This case study proposes that the Midtown Historic District is also eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A at the local level in the area of Social History: LGBTQ+ History. The LGBTQ+ community began living in and setting up businesses in Midtown during the counterculture movement of the 1960s and 1970s. The growth of LGBTQ+ spaces in Midtown continued through the 1970s, and by the end of the decade, the neighborhood was acknowledged as one of Atlanta's "three principal

gay residential areas,” alongside Virginia-Highland and the Cheshire Bridge Road corridor. Many of the then-neglected older houses in the residential portion of Midtown were renovated and restored in the late 1970s. LGBTQ+ people living in the neighborhood and serving in leadership positions within the Midtown Neighborhood Association (MNA) were influential in this work. Henri Jova, a gay architect who helped establish the MNA in the late 1960s, was a leader in this preservation effort (see Theme: LGBTQ+ Arts in Atlanta). New LGBTQ+ businesses and community organizations were established in Midtown during the late 1970s and early 1980s as well, including: the home of Bill Smith, co-founder of the Georgia Gay Liberation Front and publisher of *The Barb*, at 374 5th Street NE; the offices of R & R Publishing, which produced *Cruise* and *Cruise Weekly* magazines, at 729 Piedmont Avenue NE; the home of architect Henri Jova at 421 7th Street NE; Outwrite Bookstore and Coffehouse at 991 Piedmont Avenue NE; Blake’s on the Park at 227 10th Street NE; Midtown Medical Center at 669 Piedmont Avenue NE; The Celebrity Club/Renegades Saloon and Cafe/The Eagle at 306 Ponce de Leon Avenue NE; The Nitery at 600 Ponce de Leon Avenue NE; and Ray Kluka Memorial Park at the 800 block of Monroe Drive NE.

Because the district’s suggested amended period of significance falls largely outside the 50-year threshold, it must also meet Criteria Consideration G. The Midtown Historic District has been significantly shaped by the LGBTQ+ community through LGBTQ+ people acquiring property and living in the district, establishing businesses and organizations in the district and participating in the ongoing planning and development of the community through preservation efforts and local politics.

National Register Criteria: Criteria A and C, Criteria Consideration G

Area(s) of Significance: Architecture; Community Planning and Development; and Social History: LGBTQ+ History

Period of Significance: 1970-2000

Integrity: The Midtown Historic District retains integrity of location. Although non-historic infill is located adjacent to the district, as a whole, the setting remains similar to what it was during the period of significance, thus it maintains its integrity of setting. The district is remarkably well preserved and as a collective, continues to embody integrity of design, materials, workmanship, association, and feeling as a residential neighborhood that was built during the early twentieth century.

Character Defining Features

- Direct association with the theme Atlanta’s LGBTQ+ Neighborhoods and Enclave with being one of the most prominent LGBTQ+ neighborhoods in the city.
- Essential character defining features include: early twentieth-century single family residences, duplexes, low-rise or garden style apartment buildings, and single-retail commercial buildings that were associated or rehabilitated by LGBTQ+ community members.
- Some early twentieth-century buildings have alterations and additions dating to the 1970s through the 1990s reflecting the rehabilitation efforts of the LGBTQ+ community.
- Further research and oral history interviews may reveal other traits brought to the district through LGBTQ+ individuals and groups.

RESOURCE INVENTORY

The following inventory is a preliminary list of 120 locations associated with Atlanta’s LGBTQ+ history that was derived through research and oral history interviews. The various locations are confined within the city limits of Atlanta. Online map research was used to determine the potential for the property to be extant or not and is noted in the list. The majority, if not all, of the places in the inventory were not purpose built, but rather, already existing buildings. Significant dates related to the LGBTQ+ association uncovered during research are noted in the list. These dates mark the establishment of organizations or businesses or, noted events that occurred at the location. It should be noted that because a property is included in this list does not mean that it is historically significance or eligible for listing in the NRHP.

DOCUMENTING LGBTQ+ LOCATIONS: STRATEGIES

The inventory is to be viewed as a starting point for research and further NRHP evaluative work in documenting the important LGBTQ+ places in Atlanta. Learning about these locations did not always result in an exact address. It is important to remember when identifying potential LGBTQ+ places, that documenting the history of a given place can be a challenge because of the historic disenfranchisement, harassment, and discrimination of LGBTQ+ people. Many locations may have been transitory because of safety issues, and addresses weren’t always freely given out in historic records. This is where tenacious researching can be an asset, using a variety of sources, including oral history interviews, city directories, local magazines/newsletters, advertisements, and historic photos.

INVENTORY TABLE

Name	Address/ Location/ Other Names	Extant	Significant Dates/ Decade	Description
14th Street Playhouse	1280 Peachtree Street NE	Extant	1994	The Greater Atlanta Business Coalition held its first meeting at the 14th Street Playhouse in November of 1994. Pat Murphy served as the first chairperson of the new organization, which was credited as being the first LGBTQ+ Chamber of Commerce in the United States. GABAC later changed its name to the Atlanta Gay & Lesbian Chamber of Commerce in 2003 when it joined the National Gay & Lesbian Chamber of Commerce (NGLCC) as a local affiliate
1895 Cotton States and International Exposition	Piedmont Park	No Longer Extant	1895	Two female impersonators, Dick Harlow and Mr. Stewart, performed at the Cotton States and International Exposition in Piedmont Park in 1895. Though they were not openly LGBTQ+, their performances are the earliest known gender nonconforming artistic expression in Atlanta. Though the park lands the exposition was held on are still open, all the buildings from the fair have been demolished. Some of the landforms created for the exposition are extant, as well as the stone steps and ornamentation on the north side of the Active Oval.

Name	Address/ Location/ Other Names	Extant	Significant Dates/ Decade	Description
688 Club	688 Spring Street NE	Extant	1980s	Alternative music venue. Though it was mainly a straight new wave and punk venue, acts from Atlanta's LGBTQ+ music and art scene performed at the club - including The Now Explosion, RuPaul, and Lady Bunny. This was the place where Lady Bunny first performed in drag, as Bunny Hickory Dickory Dock. In 1989, Weekends relocated to this space from their original location at 1022 Peachtree Street.
7 Stages Theater #1	430 Moreland Avenue	Extant	1979 - 1987	The first location of 7 Stages Theater, which was one of the first theaters in Atlanta to showcase LGBTQ+ stories. They opened at this location in 1979 and relocated to 1105 Euclid Avenue in 1987.
7 Stages Theater #2	1105 Euclid Avenue	Extant	1987 - Present	The second, and current, location of 7 Stages Theater. The theater relocated to this space in 1987. 7 Stages was one of the earliest theater groups to showcase LGBTQ+ stories.
Academy Theatre	3212 Roswell Road	No Longer Extant	1976	The Academy Theatre was an early supporter of LGBTQ+ representation on stage in Atlanta. In 1976, Michael Chafin and Patrick Cuccaro, the future owners of Showcase Cabaret at Ansley Mall, produced "The Boys in the Band" at the Academy Theatre. This production was one of the earliest known, openly-LGBTQ+ plays presented by a major theater in Atlanta.
ACLU, Lesbian/Gay Rights Chapter Offices	223 Mitchell Street SW, Suite 200	Extant	late 1980s - early 1990s	This is one location of the offices of the Lesbian/Gay Rights Chapter of the Georgia ACLU. The organization relocated often.
ACT UP Circle K Protest	2118 DeFours Ferry Road	Extant	August 27, 1988	One of two planned protests by ACT UP Atlanta against metro Circle K affiliates following the parent company's decision to deny medical claims on employee insurance for those with HIV/AIDS. A second protest took place at the Circle K near Northlake Mall (outside the city limits) on September 3, 1988.
ACT UP Governor's Mansion Protest	391 West Paces Ferry Road	Extant	September 29, 1988	ACT UP Die In protest at the Governor's Mansion on September 29, 1988 to protest the Gov. Joe Frank Harris' refusal to fund AZT treatments for uninsured AIDS patients.
ACT UP Protest at the Center for Disease Control and Prevention	1600 Clifton Road	No Longer Extant	1990	In January 1990, 400 ACT UP protesters stormed the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention campus, located just outside the city, to protest the public health agency's limited official definition of AIDS and statistical collection methods for HIV infections. During the two-hour occupation and standoff with police, the protesters hung banners that read CDC Kills, outlines of bodies on sidewalks to memorialize those who died from inaccurate HIV diagnosis, threw ping-pong balls, meant to represent immune system T-cells, down building hallways. ACT UP returned in December and took over the office of the Deputy Director of AIDS for the CDC at Executive Park demanding that women infected with HIV/AIDS be recognized and adequately treated. At the same time, another 600 activists from other various ACT UP chapters occupied the agency's main campus facility. Though the exact buildings these events occurred in have not been identified on the map, many of the CDC's buildings were demolished and replaced in the early 2000s.

Name	Address/ Location/ Other Names	Extant	Significant Dates/ Decade	Description
Adodi Muse offices	348 Berean Avenue SE	Extant	circa 1990s	Offices for the Black gay performance art group, ADODI Muse. Address taken from the 1996 Atlanta African American Gay & Lesbian Community Directory.
After Dark	1067 Peachtree Street	No Longer Extant	1974 - 1980	Adult gay bookstore owned by Ron Beasley. The store had several cruising areas, including a gaming area with pinball machines and a large theatre for adult films. The book selection included mostly pornography. After Dark was targeted during the anti-obscenity campaign in Atlanta during the late 1970s. In 1980, the bookstore was burned in three separate acts of arson. After the second burning in August, the store was forced to close. It was destroyed in the third fire in December of that year.
Agnes Scott College	141 East College Avenue	Extant	1990s	During the 1990s, ZAMI, an Atlanta-based Black lesbian organization, met on the campus of Agnes Scott College. The exact building/buildings used by ZAMI is/are currently unknown.
AID Atlanta Offices #1	1801 Piedmont Avenue	Extant	1980s	This location was provided as the original office of AID Atlanta. Prior to this building, they occupied a shared space within the Atlanta Gay Center on Peachtree.
AID Atlanta Offices #2	881 Cypress Street	Extant	circa 1985	This was the second location of AID Atlanta. The offices also house smaller AIDS-related agencies, including SISTERLOVE.
AID Atlanta Offices #3	1132 West Peachtree Street, Suite 112; The Chanticleer office	No Longer Extant	1988	Between 1973 and approximately 1975, Jack Gilley published The Chanticleer from the office space in suite 112. Over a decade later, a classified ad in the December 8, 1988 issue of the Southern Voice noted AID Atlanta maintained its office in Suite 112 in this building by this time.
AIDS Legal Project	151 Spring Street NW	Extant	mid-to-late 1990s	Provided free legal service to low-income people living with HIV/AIDS. Operated out of the offices of Atlanta Legal Aid, which were in this building.
AIDS Research Consortium of Atlanta	965 Virginia Avenue NE, Suite B.	Extant	1989	Founded by Dr. Melanie Thompson in her house at this location, the AARC was a non-profit organization that sponsored clinical trials of promising treatments of HIV - the first such research agency in Atlanta. The AARC closed in 2020.
ALFA House # 1 (Atlanta Lesbian Feminist Alliance)	1190 Mansfield Avenue NE, "Edge of Night"	Extant	1972 - 1973	The Atlanta Lesbian Feminist Alliance was founded in 1972 following a split with the Georgia Gay Liberation Front (GGLF). Meetings were originally held at the GGLF headquarters on Pine Street until the fall of 1972 when the group moved into the first ALFA House, dubbed the Edge of Night, which was located in the Candler Park neighborhood. Also referred to as "Upstairs and Downstairs." There were also several other houses in the neighborhoods surrounding L5P where ALFA members lived communally.
ALFA House #2	1326 McLendon Avenue NE	Extant	1973 - 1986	ALFA moved into the second ALFA House, a rented duplex, in the fall of 1973. This location was operated by an all-volunteer staff and would serve as the group's longest lasting headquarters during the 1970s and 1980s. The building housed meeting/educational space, a library, and office that was used for publication of the ALFA newsletter (later named Atalanta).

Name	Address/ Location/ Other Names	Extant	Significant Dates/ Decade	Description
ALFA House #3	64 Clay Street NE	Extant	1986 - 1994	With the second headquarters building on McLendon Avenue falling into disrepair, the group purchased the third and final ALFA House in the Kirkwood neighborhood in March 1986. High financial costs required for renovation and maintenance of the building, coupled with declining membership, hampered operations during the late 1980s and early 1990s and forced ALFA to eventually disband in 1994.
All Gay Apartment Complex	Address Unknown, Near Intersection of 11th Street and Piedmont Avenue	Unknown	1981	In February 1981, Cruise Weekly published an article advertising a pair of apartment complexes near the intersection of 11th Street and Piedmont Avenue that was marketing themselves as all-gay. According to the article, "one [apartment building] is already all gay and the other is headed in that direction." Several apartment buildings were located in this area at the time, though many have been demolished. The building was described as "yellow" in the article, suggesting it was not sided with brick, as many of the extant buildings are.
All Saints Episcopal Church	634 West Peachtree Street	Extant	June 28, 1987	On Sunday, June 28, 1987, the day after the 1987 Atlanta Pride Parade, a memorial service was held at All Saints Episcopal Church for those who had died from AIDS complications.
American Legion Building	1071 Piedmont Avenue	Extant	mid-1990s	One of Atlanta's earliest known gay-affirming Black churches, Redefined Faith Unity Fellowship Church, used this building for meetings in the mid-1990s.
American Legion Building	1349 Simpson Road NW	No Longer Extant	early 1970s	According to Henri McTerry, the American Legion on Simpson Road was a popular hangout for gay people, particularly late at night. He stated, "the later it got, the gayer it got."
Ansley Forest Apartments	1616 Piedmont Avenue; 1659 Monroe Drive NE	Extant	1970s - Present	Located across Monroe Drive from the Ansley Mall shopping center, this apartment complex is known as one of the most popular apartment complexes for members of Atlanta's LGBTQ community, in both the past and the present.
Ansley Mall Florist	1544 Piedmont Avenue	Extant	1971	Though the exact retail space Ansley Mall Florist occupied is currently unknown, it was one of the earliest businesses to advertise in LGBTQ+ publications in the southeast. In 1971, an advertisement appeared in David for Ansley Mall Florist, which included an image of a nude man holding a bouquet of flowers below his waist. The image and the advertisement's inclusion in the southeast's first LGBTQ+ magazine suggest this business was welcoming to LGBTQ+ people.

Name	Address/ Location/ Other Names	Extant	Significant Dates/ Decade	Description
Ansley Mall Mini-Cinema	1544 Piedmont Road NE (The Cook's Warehouse currently occupies the former theater space, though the entrance to the theater faced Monroe Drive on the northeast side of the mall)	Extant	August 5, 1969	Site of the 'Lonesome Cowboys' Raid that ignited the LGBTQ+ community and led to the formation of the Georgia Gay Liberation Front.
Ansley North	1705 Monroe Drive NE	Extant	1980s - 1990s	Ansley North was one of the major LGBTQ+ apartment complexes in Atlanta during the late twentieth century. Though it is extant, the units have been converted to condos and the complex now operates as a housing cooperative.
Ansley South	1365 Monroe Drive NE	Extant	1980s - 1990s	Ansley South was one of the major LGBTQ+ apartment complexes in Atlanta during the late twentieth century. Though it is extant, the units have been converted to condos and the complex now operates as a housing cooperative.
Answer, The	1055 Peachtree Street; Animals	No Longer Extant	1970s - 1980s	The Answer was a show bar opened in 1980 by Jim Nally after his other show bar, the Onyx, closed. Prior to opening as the Answer, the space was operated as a disco known as Animals. According to Gregg Daugherty, it was laid out similar to an old theater, with a large stage and a central aisle. Tables were spread out across the floor for seating to watch the show. It operated during the early 1980s.
Armory, The	834/838 Juniper Street	No Longer Extant	1971 - 2004	The Armory was a popular LGBTQ+ bar. It was established in 1971 by the owner of the Prince George Inn, Bill Copeland, as an overflow area for the gay men who gathered at the Prince George's bar at happy hour. Though it was initially a more formal bar when liquor laws had dress codes for bars, the attire changed to be typically more casual in the early 1970s when the laws were loosened. By the early 1980s, a dance floor was added and several community events were established at the bar, including the Easter Drag Races that continue today. In the late 1970s, the Armorettes, a charity drag troupe, formed at the Armory after patrons and staff would gather and cheer on the Atlanta Falcons during games at the bar. The Armorettes also participated in local sport leagues and held benefits to raise money for HIV research and people living with AIDS. They continue to perform monthly and raise money for HIV research.

Name	Address/ Location/ Other Names	Extant	Significant Dates/ Decade	Description
Arney's	2345 Cheshire Bridge Road; the Rose Room; Buddies	Extant	1980s - 1990s	Arney's opened in 1981 as a women's LGBTQ+ bar that was friendly to both women and men. It was a popular neighborhood bar and hosted game nights and showings of popular TV shows. Between 1984 and 1985, Deana Collins reopened this space as The Rose, an LGBTQ+ lounge that was popular with both women and men. According to past patrons of the bar, a painting of Collins hung above the bar. Collins was one of the most active supporters for the growing number of people with AIDS in Atlanta, and this venue participated in the 1985 AID Atlanta fundraiser 54 Hours of Care. In 1988, the LGBTQ+ neighborhood bar Buddies opened in this space. It operated into the 21st century.
Atlanta Carnegie Library	126 Carnegie Way	No Longer Extant	1953	Location of the 1953 arrests of 20 men on sodomy charges after the police used two-way mirrors in the restrooms of the library to catch people cruising. The Atlanta Constitution covered the arrests, which they called "The Atlanta Public Library perversion case." In their reporting, the paper published the addresses, names, and places of employment of those charged. Nineteen of the men lost their jobs, and they all plead guilty to the charges, which resulted in a fine of up to \$200, a sentence of 2 to 3 years in prison, and all of the men being banned from the Atlanta Public Library. All sentences were suspended or probated, but the men still faced issues within their families and churches.
Atlanta Feminist Women's Health Center- Original Location	580 14th Street NW	Extant	1976 to mid-1990s	Original location of the health clinic prior to the move to the current Cliff Valley Way location.
Atlanta Friends Meeting House	1384 Fairview Road, Quaker House	Extant	mid-to-late 1980s	In addition to its principal use as a church building, the Friends Meeting house functioned as a meeting space for a number of LGBTQ+ organizations during the mid-to-late 1980s, hosting Bet Haverim, the African American Lesbian/Gay Alliance (AALGA), and others. The Friends Meeting House moved to its current location at 704 W. Howard Avenue in Decatur in 1991.
Atlanta Friends Meeting House	701 West Howard Avenue	Extant	1990s	The second location of the Atlanta Friends Meeting House, which is actually outside of the City of Atlanta and is in the neighboring city of Decatur. In the 1990s, both ZAMI, an Atlanta-based Black lesbian organization, and Gay Spirit Visions, a gay spiritual organization, used the building as a meeting space.
Atlanta Gay and Lesbian Visitor's Center	1374 West Peachtree Street NW; Center Stage Theater	Extant	1990s	A visitor's center that focused on LGBTQ+ experiences and welcomed LGBTQ+ people during the 1996 Olympic Games. Housed at Center Stage, it was the first LGBTQ+ visitor's center created by a host city for the Olympics. In the early 1990s, In the Life Atlanta held workshops and panel discussions at Center Stage over Black Pride Weekend.

Name	Address/ Location/ Other Names	Extant	Significant Dates/ Decade	Description
Atlanta Gay Center #1	972 Peachtree Street NE.	No Longer Extant	1977; 1979 - 1980	This Peachtree Street office building was used by multiple LGBTQ+ organizations during the late 1970s. The Atlanta Gay Center operated at this location from September 1979 to May 1980. This was the first location of the reorganized Atlanta Gay Center. An earlier version of the Atlanta Gay Center, which mostly focused on providing a help line, was located on 4th Street. This temporary location was used until the organization was able to raise enough money to buy the converted house at 931 Ponce de Leon Avenue.
Atlanta Gay Center #2	931 Ponce de Leon Avenue NE	Extant	1980s	The second location of the second iteration of the Atlanta Gay Center. The organization relocated here in May 1980 and remained here through 1982. In this location, the AGC created a library, coffeehouse (The Gathering Place), bookstore, and an art gallery. They also provided services including a help line, community events and forums, and VD testing. Two of the city's first Black LGBTQ+ organizations, the Gay Atlanta Minority Association and Black and White Men Together, met at this location of the AGC. This site also housed the original Christopher's Kind Book Store on the second level before it relocated in 1982.
Atlanta Gay Center #3	848 Peachtree St NE, AID Atlanta	No Longer Extant	1980s	Located on the third floor of the 848 Peachtree St NE building during the early 1980s according to a 10 November 1983 Intown Extra article in the AJC. This location was still open in 1984.
Atlanta Gay Center #4	63, 67-71, 12th Street NE	No Longer Extant	1980s - 1990s	The Atlanta Gay Center operated at this location from 1989 to 1996. In this location, the center hosted workshops on HIV/AIDS, self-defense, anonymous HIV/STD testing, coming out, and young adult support groups for gay men and lesbians.
Atlanta Gay Center #5	159 Ralph McGill Boulevard NE; United Methodist Center	Extant	2000s	The Atlanta Gay Center was briefly housed in the office tower of the United Methodist Center around the year 2000. The center closed in 2007.
Atlanta Gay Center (First Iteration)	20 4th Street	No Longer Extant	1976	The location of the original iteration of the Atlanta Gay Center. Located on the second floor, this was Atlanta's first LGBTQ+-specific community center. It is not directly related to the second, and more notable Atlanta Gay Center organization, though there was an overlap in the people who helped organize the two groups, including Gil Robison.
Atlanta Greyhound Bus Terminal	81 Cain Street	No Longer Extant	1940s - 1960s	The Greyhound Bus Terminal was a meeting space for gay men during the mid-20th century. The second-floor restrooms, known as tea rooms to gay men, were used to cruise for sexual partners.
Atlanta Lambda Community Center	828 West Peachtree Street; Atlanta Gay Center	No Longer Extant	1980s - 1990s	This building was home to several LGBTQ+ organizations beginning in the early 1980s. The Atlanta Lambda Center was not officially opened here until 1994, and it housed meeting space for ACT UP/Atlanta and approximately 90 other LGBTQ+ organizations throughout the decade.

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Atlanta Lesbian Cancer Initiative	1530 DeKalb Avenue NE. Georgia Equality, Phillip Rush Center	Extant	2008 - Present	The Phillip Rush Center was established in 2008 and was home to several LGBTQ+ organizations, including Georgia Equality and the Atlanta Lesbian Cancer Initiative. ALCI was established in 1996 but may not have originally operated out of this location. The Rush Center closed in 2020 and Georgia Equality took over the lease for the space.
Atlanta Municipal Auditorium	30 Courtland Street SE; Dahlberg Hall	Extant	1941	The Atlanta Police Department arrested a man in the restroom of the Atlanta Municipal Auditorium for sodomy, and he was later convicted. In the 1940s and 1950s, the bathrooms (known as tea rooms) of downtown businesses and public buildings were used for cruising.
Atlanta Newspapers Building	72 Marietta Street NW; 2 City Plaza	Extant	1971	The Atlanta Newspapers Building was designed by Atlanta architect Henri Jova, a gay man who led the preservation movement in the residential portion of Midtown and designed several notable buildings in the city.
Atlanta Overlook Apartments, Apt. K-11	180 Jackson Street NE	No Longer Extant	1980s	In 1983, Phillip Boone and David Hampton began throwing parties at their apartment for Black gay men. By 1985, these parties grew to a point that a larger space was needed, and they began hosting parties at larger venues around Atlanta and became known as the Ritz Boys because they all worked at the Ritz Carlton Hotel. By the late 1980s, Hampton was the manager of the Warehouse on Luckie Street. They began throwing parties there that became known as Traxx Parties, and eventually a Traxx location opened there as well.
Backstreet	845 Peachtree Street, Peaches Back Door, Funochio's, Encore, Rhinoceros Room, Mendel's Den, Joe's Disco, Together	No Longer Extant	1975 - 2004	One of the most famous discos/dance clubs in Atlanta. Originally opened as Peaches Back Door in 1971 at the rear of a rock club, Funochios. The location reopened as Back Street (originally spelled as two separate words) in 1975 but was purchased and renamed Encore in December 1976. By January 1978, it was renamed Backstreet again (advertisements and listings began to interchange the spelling, but eventually went with Backstreet - one word). By the late 1980s, it was operating as a 24-hour dance club. In 1990, Charlie Brown established the famous Charlie Brown's Cabaret on the third floor of the club, which ran until the bar was forced to close in the 21st century. Backstreet's owners, the Vara family, decided to close the club on New Year's Eve (12/31/03) after the city of Atlanta prohibited 24-hour clubs.
Baltimore Block	Baltimore Place NW	Extant	1930s	According to Wesley Chenault, Baltimore Block was a popular residential space for creatives and artists in the early twentieth century. His research identified possible LGBTQ+ people who lived here during that period as well.
Bar on Peachtree, The	1018 Peachtree Street	No Longer Extant	mid-1980s	LGBTQ+ cocktail bar and restaurant on the "gay strip" in Midtown during the 1980s. Local art was also displayed and sold here. According to Cathy Woolard, the bar was also central in LGBTQ+ community organizing in the 1980s.

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Bayou Landing	2110 Peachtree Road NW. Later known as Mother's and Academy.	Extant	1970s	LGBTQ+ bar and disco. As the Bayou Landing in the early 1970s, it was one of the first discos in Atlanta. It reopened as Mother's in 1974 and was targeted by arsonists in both 1975 and 1976. The building survived both fires. The owner, Peter Winokur, was murdered in 1976 by a hitman who was likely hired by Robbie Llewellyn, the co-owner of several Atlanta discos alongside his mother, Elizabeth DeBoard. In the late 1970s, the location was reopened as the Academy.
Bill Smith's House and The Barb Headquarters	374 5th Street NE	Extant	1970s	This was the house Bill Smith lived in when he was editor of "The Barb," Atlanta's first LGBTQ newspaper. He was also on Atlanta's Community Relations Commission at the time and was the second LGBTQ+ person on that commission.
Black Pride Labor Day Picnics	1500 McLendon Avenue NE (Candler Park)	Extant	1990s - 2000s	Black Pride began as annual Labor Day picnics held in Atlanta as part of the circuit of Black LGBTQ+ events that were hosted throughout the year across the nation. Henri McTerry hosted picnics at his home through the 1970s and 1980s. Candler Park was also mentioned as one of the sites of earlier picnics when the event returned to the space in 2018.
Blake's Bar & Grill	112 10th Street; Jocks & Jills	Extant	1987 - 1990s	Mark Ramey opened Blake's Bar & Grill at this location in 1987. According to members of the YLIGA Facebook group, Ramey was forced to relocate due to homophobic actions from the property owner. In the late 1980s, Jocks and Jills, a sports bar opened in this space. On November 10, 1990, the Atlanta chapter of the LGBTQ+-rights organization Queer Nation held their first protest outside of Jocks & Jills to protest the management's calling of police to remove LGBTQ+ people showing affection in the bar. In early 2023, the facade of the building was demolished, the roof was removed, and renovations were being completed on the interior.
Blake's on the Park	227 10th Street	Extant	1989 - Present	Mark Ramey reopened his bar, Blake's Bar & Grill, at this location in 1989, after being forced to close the earlier location at 112 10th Street. He shortened the name of the bar to Blake's, but it remained an LGBTQ+ neighborhood bar. Similar to other bars of the same type during this period, Blake's hosted themed nights throughout the week. By 1997, it was known as Blake's on the Park. This is still the name of the bar as of 2023.
Blue Room, The	86 Cain Street	Extant	early 1960s - 1980	The Blue Room at 86 Cain Street was in the same building as the Americana Motor Hotel, which was built in 1962. The Blue Room was open by 1964 and was directly south of the bus station. Based on photographs of the hotel and the description in Directory 43, the bar likely had an underground entrance on the north side of the building, across from the bus station. Though it occupied space within a newly built hotel, the Blue Room still maintained a reputation for a rough crowd. The Blue Room operated at least until 1980 but was not regularly included in Atlanta's mainstream LGBTQ+ publications through the 1970s.

Name	Address/ Location/ Other Names	Extant	Significant Dates/ Decade	Description
Boy Next Door, The	1447 Piedmont Avenue NE	Extant	1980s - Present	A men's clothing store that opened in 1983 and has always catered to LGBTQ+ people. They stock items that are popular among gay men. In January 2023, the store relocated to 1000 Piedmont Avenue, at the intersection of 10th Street and Piedmont Avenue. This building was purchased by the Atlanta Botanical Garden in preparation for their expansion on the north side of Piedmont Park. As of late 2022, they were planning to preserve and incorporate this building into their expanded grounds.
Briarcliff Hotel	1050 Ponce de Leon Avenue NE.; currently known as the Briarcliff Summit Apartments	Extant	1940 - 1950s	The owner of this hotel helped give gay and lesbian Atlantans jobs in the 1940s and 1950s after they were arrested for sodomy and had their information published in the papers, resulting in the loss of their jobs. George Hyde, the pastor of Eucharistic Catholic Church, coordinated with Father Roy Pettway, pastor of an Episcopal church in the Virginia Highland neighborhood who had a connection with the hotel owner, to secure new jobs for LGBTQ+ Atlantans who were fired after being outed.
Brookwood Park Apartments	26th Street NW; Brookwood Commons	Extant	1970s - 1980s	A large apartment building that has been converted to condos. In the late 1970s and 1980s, it was a popular living space for LGBTQ+ people, particularly gay men. Similar to Yorke Downs, it was located on 26th Street, which was a popular neighborhood for LGBTQ+ people at the time.
Brushstrokes #1	780 North Highland Avenue	Extant	1989 - early 1990s	The original location of Brushstrokes, an LGBTQ+ clothing and gift store. Owned by Mark Jackson, the store relocated to Ansley Square in the early 1990s.
Brushstrokes #2	1510 Piedmont Avenue	Extant	early 1990s - Present	Brushstrokes originally opened in the Virginia Highland neighborhood but relocated to this space in the early 1990s. They sell a combination of clothing and gift items that are popular with gay men.
Buckhead Book Mart	3105 Peachtree Road	No Longer Extant	early 1970s	One of the earliest known bookstores in Atlanta to carry LGBTQ+ materials.
Bulldogs	893 Peachtree Street NE, Bulldog and Company	Extant	1978 - Present	Bulldogs still operates at this location. It was established in 1978. During the 1980s, Bulldogs was a major bar on Midtown's "gay strip," and was frequently the host of community events. At the time, the bar was trucker themed and was popular with white gay men. By the late 1990s, the bar had transitioned into a space that was popular with Black LGBTQ+ men, and the customer base remains mostly Black today.
Burkhardt's	1492 Piedmont Avenue; Midtown Moon; the Eagle; the Atlanta Eagle	Extant	1987 - Present	Burkhardt's opened in 1987 as an LGBTQ+ neighborhood bar that was mostly popular with men. Through the 1990s and into the 21st century, the bar hosted events throughout the week, including drag shows. In the late 1990s, the bar regularly advertised in Black LGBTQ+ publications, unlike many other mainstream LGBTQ+ neighborhood bars at the time. In the 21st century, the bar was forced to close after the public discovered racist social media posts by the owner. Through the late 2010s the space operated as Midtown Moon, and in 2022, the Eagle relocated here.

Name	Address/ Location/ Other Names	Extant	Significant Dates/ Decade	Description
Camellia Garden	1851 Peachtree Road	No Longer Extant	1950s	A Chinese restaurant that had a rear bar known as the Wisteria Garden Cocktail Lounge. The rear bar was a popular after hours hangout among gay men in the 1950s.
Cameo Lounge, The #1	182 Spring Street	No Longer Extant	1961 - 1970s	The Cameo Lounge was opened by 1961 at 182 Spring Street (no longer extant), southeast of the bus station, but relocated to 188 Williams Street (no longer extant) in the early 1970s. It was a working-class bar and had a reputation as a mildly dangerous place. According to guides from the period, the Cameo Lounge was frequented by white and Black men and was mostly popular with “rough trade,” a term for working class men that did not identify as gay but were willing to have sex with men. It operated until at least 1980 but was not often included in the mainstream LGBTQ+ publications in Atlanta.
Cameo Lounge, The #2	188 Williams Street	No Longer Extant	1970s - 1980s	Second location of the working-class LGBTQ+ bar, the Cameo Lounge.
Carnegie Education Pavilion	North side of the intersection of Peachtree Street NE and Baker Street NE	Extant	1996	The Carnegie Education Pavilion was designed by Atlanta architect Henri Jova, a gay man who led the preservation movement in the residential portion of Midtown and designed several notable buildings in the city.
Catacombs, The	14th Street Gate	No Longer Extant	1967 - 1970	The house that sat on the southwest corner of the intersection of Peachtree and 14th Streets was a major center on the Strip. Mother David, a leader among the Strip and a gay man, established the Catacombs here, a countercultural coffeehouse and bar that was on the basement level of the building.
Cavco, Inc. #1	3604 Piedmont Road	No Longer Extant	1976 - 1978	First office of Cavco, Inc., the publisher of Cruise and Cruise Weekly.
Cavco, Inc. #2	572 Armour Circle	No Longer Extant	1978 - 1981	Second office for Cavco, Inc., the publisher of Cruise and Cruise Weekly.
Celebrity Club, The	306 Ponce de Leon Avenue NE; Renegades Saloon and Cafe; Atlanta Eagle	Extant	1980s-2020; September 10, 2009	In the early 1980s, the building was known as the Celebrity Club, and was a frequent hangout for RuPaul Charles and his midtown-based friend group, which included other famous drag queens, such as Lady Bunny. It was also the home performance club of the LGBTQ+-friendly band the Now Explosion from 1983 to approximately 1985. In 1987, Texas Drilling Company owner Jay Evans opened Renegades Saloon and Cafe, a western-style bar that only lasted a few months. In early 1988, Evans reopened the space as the Eagle. In the 1990s, it was purchased by Richard Ramey, and it operated in this location until 2020. This location of the Eagle is also the site of the September 10, 2009 Police Raid that led to changes in policing in Atlanta.
Central City Park (now Woodruff Park)	91 Peachtree Street	Extant	Sunday, June 11, 1978; February 27, 1994	Starting point for the Anita Bryant Protest March on June 11, 1978. The park was later used as a prominent LGBTQ+ protest space when the newly formed Olympics Out of Cobb County staged their first protest in the park on February 27, 1994.

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Charis Books and More #1	421 Moreland Avenue NE	Extant	1974 - 1994	The South's oldest independent, feminist bookstore. This was the original location in the L5P neighborhood from 1974 to 1994, when it moved across the street on Euclid Avenue. Charis was one of the first, if not the first, bookstore in Atlanta to provide LGBTQ+ people with literature that focused on their experiences. They also hosted programming that was relevant to LGBTQ+ Atlantans and offered their space to local LGBTQ+ organizations for events and meetings. Charis Books & More relocated to 184 S. Candler St. Decatur, GA in 2019.
Charis Books and More #2	1189 Euclid Avenue NE	Extant	1994 - 2019	Second location of Charis Books and More. The store relocated to this converted house in 1994. In 2019, they relocated to another converted house in Decatur near Agnes Scott College.
Charlie St. John Apartment	1170 Virginia Avenue NE.	Extant	Early 1970s	The home of Charlie St. John. He was the first LGBTQ+ person to serve on Atlanta's Community Relations Commission and one of the founding members of the Georgia Gay Liberation Front. He was fired in 1973 from the Atlanta Journal, where he worked as a copy boy, for distributing GGLF materials at work. He was evicted from this apartment in 1973 after the police raided the residence for drugs, though they never found any. St. John was also harassed by the police in the early 1980s while working at Christopher's Kind Bookstore. They arrested him for selling obscene material, though the store did not sell pornography. St. John is also credited with starting Atlanta's LGBTQ+ film festival, now known as Out on Film, in 1982.
Charlie's	Address Unknown, Corner of 10th Street and West Peachtree Street	No Longer Extant	1960s	LGBTQ+-friendly cafe that was popular with young LGBTQ+ people, particularly gay male teenagers. It was alcohol free and operated on similar hours to bars, giving young LGBTQ+ a public social space.
Cheshire Square Parking Lot	2345 Cheshire Bridge Road	Extant	1990s	The parking lot of the Tara Theater in the Cheshire Square shopping center was a cruising location for LGBTQ+ by the 1990s.
Christopher's Kind Bookstore	70 13th Street	No Longer Extant	1982 - 1986	LGBTQ+ bookstore opened by Gene Loring in 1980. The original location of the bookstore was on the second floor of the Atlanta Gay Center at 931 Ponce de Leon Avenue, but Loring relocated to a converted house at this location in 1982. The bookstore was targeted by police for selling obscene materials, though they did not carry any pornography - only erotic coffee table books. The bookstore closed in 1986.
Chrysalis Project, The	2045 Manchester Street NE	Extant	1989 - 2003	Established in 1989, the Chrysalis Project was a women's health center that provided care for all women but with a sensitivity to the issues confronting lesbians. Medical professionals that offered services through the Chrysalis Project included psychologists, chiropractors, counselors, and meditation experts. The center closed in 2003.

Name	Address/ Location/ Other Names	Extant	Significant Dates/ Decade	Description
Chuck's Rathskeller	931 Monroe Drive	No Longer Extant	1969 - 1972	Chuck's Rathskeller was the first large LGBTQ+ club in Atlanta. The site of Chuck's Rathskeller had previously been home to several nightclubs, including the Rose Room. The original Rose Room was opened in the 1930s but burned in 1964. A new building was built at the site in the mid-1960s, and by 1969, a new iteration of the Rose Room was operating in the space. Though it was not specifically LGBTQ+, the late-1960s iteration of the Rose Room is remembered as a welcoming space for LGBTQ+ people. Chuck Cain opened Chuck's Rathskeller in the new building in 1970. Chuck's Rathskeller left an impact on Atlanta's LGBTQ+ social scene as one of the city's first large dancing bars where people of all races, genders, ages, and sexualities were able to socialize together, and this helped to transition LGBTQ+ social spaces from the small, dark, hidden places into the large, bright, well-known clubs that developed over the following decade. The club closed in 1972. Cain's restaurant, known as "The Other Room," was also in this building.
Clayton Maxey's Neighborhood Store	336 Fletcher Street	No Longer Extant	1950s - 1960s	Black LGBTQ+ artist Freddy Styles was working at Clayton Maxey's store as a teenager when he began painting. Maxey was the first person to purchase one of Styles' works. Following Styles' graduation from high school, Maxey funded Styles' education at Morris Brown College. Though the walls of the store are still standing as of 2023, none of the other architectural elements remain.
Clikque Magazine	931 Monroe Drive, Suite 102-279	Extant	1998 - 2000s	The offices for Clikque Magazine, one of Atlanta's first Black LGBTQ+ publications. Clikque covered LGBTQ+ news and social events in Atlanta and throughout the southeast.
Climax Book Mart	1845 Piedmont Road NE	No Longer Extant	early 1970s	One of the earliest known bookstores to carry LGBTQ+ materials in Atlanta.
Club Centaur	1037 Peachtree Street NE	Extant	1970	One of the most significant LGBTQ+ show bars during the transition of female impersonation acts from occurring in mostly-heterosexual supper clubs to LGBTQ+-focused spaces. Billy Jones (Phyllis Killer/Shirley Temple Jones) and Diamond Lil both performed here. It was only open from May to November 1970, when it was closed by the city. Officials stated that the owners had criminal ties. Club where Dimond Lil, a famous early Atlanta-based female impersonator/drag queen, performed. Opened in May 1970 and closed by November of that year.
Club Exile	846 Peachtree Street; Peachtree Manor Hotel	Extant	1982	Club Exile was a short-lived LGBTQ+ club in Atlanta that occupied the third floor of the Peachtree Manor Hotel. In the summer of 1982, the Atlanta Police Department raided the club and arrested two people for sodomy.
Club Three, The (Club III)	1139 West Peachtree Street, R.J.'s Disco, Chez Cabaret, Frank Powell's, Cybil's	No Longer Extant	1970s	The Club Three (The Club III) opened in 1973 and had dancing and drag shows. Through the 1970s, this location also operated as R.J.'s Disco and Chez Cabaret. In the late 1970s, Frank Powell purchased it and operated a cruise bar here through the early 1980s.

Name	Address/ Location/ Other Names	Extant	Significant Dates/ Decade	Description
Colonnade, The	1879 Cheshire Bridge Road	Extant	1960s - Present	A historic meat and three Atlanta restaurant that is known for its popularity among the “gays and the grays.” According to Cliff Bostock, the Colonnade has been popular among LGBTQ+ people since at least the 1970s, which may have developed due to its location along Atlanta’s “great gay way” of the late 1970s.
Colony Square	1197 Peachtree Street	Extant	1967 - Present	Colony Square was the first design project that the architectural firm Jova/Daniels/Busby was contracted to complete. One of the firm’s members was Henri Jova, a gay Atlantan who lead the preservation movement in the residential part of Midtown.
Copa Caprice	355 Peachtree Street, Imperial Hotel	Extant	1950s	The Copa Caprice was an early 1950s hotel bar with entertainment. It was located inside the Imperial Hotel at 355 Peachtree Street in downtown Atlanta and was popular among gay men.
Country Place	1197 Peachtree Street	Unknown	1978 - 2000	Owned by Dick Dailey and Steve Nygren, the Country Place was part of their family of Peasant restaurants. Similar to other locations, this restaurant hired a largely LGBTQ+ staff. The exact commercial space occupied by the restaurant at Colony Square is currently unknown.
Cove, The	586 Worchester Drive	No Longer Extant	1969 - 1994	Established in 1969 by Frank Powell and Jim Nalley, the Cove was a cruise bar for LGBTQ+ men. It was one of the first bars opened specifically for LGBTQ+ people in Atlanta, and one of the longest operating LGBTQ+ bars in the city during the 20th century. In the mid-1970s, Powell sold the Cove to Lloyd Russell. This was the bar Michael Hardwick was working for at the time of his arrest.
Cox-Carlton Hotel	683 Peachtree Street. Currently the Hotel Indigo; Site of the Black Easter Raid	Extant	late 1940s	Site of a police raid of a party of gay men over Easter weekend in 1947 or 1948 according to a 1975 interview with Bishop George Hyde. Hyde stated the raid was later known as “Black Easter.” The names, occupations, and addresses of those were published in the papers resulting in many of the individuals leaving the city. In response, Hyde and several of his congregants at the Eucharistic Catholic Church held a silent picket and protest in front of Mayor William Hartsfield’s home.
Cozy Cinema	433 Moreland Avenue	Extant	early 1970s	The Cozy Cinema was an adult movie theater that played both heterosexual and homosexual pornographic films. It is the earliest known adult theater in Atlanta to show LGBTQ+ pornographic films.
Crazy Ray’z	1492 Piedmont Avenue NE. Mixx (present)	Extant	1980s - 1990s	Popular LGBTQ+-owned restaurant and bar during the 1980s and early 1990s. Opened in 1980. Owned by Ray Ferris and Ted Binkley, who also opened Illusions in 1982, after the closure of the Sweet Gum Head in 1981. Crazy Ray’z slogan was “where the mix is perfect.” Though it is possibly a coincidence, the location is now home to Mixx, another LGBTQ+ bar.
Crisis Community Center	1013 Peachtree Street NE	No Longer Extant	late 1960s - early 1970s	A community center located on “the Strip” that operated between the late 1960s and early 1970s, when the counterculture occupied Midtown. Early LGBTQ+ gatherings were held here, including the Georgia Gay Liberation Front’s organizational meetings for the first Gay Pride March in 1971.

Name	Address/ Location/ Other Names	Extant	Significant Dates/ Decade	Description
Cruise Quarters	1020-1026 North Highland Avenue NE. Cruise Corners, Tex's, Texas Drilling Company. The basement space currently houses the Highland Tap restaurant.	Extant	1970s - 1980s	An early 1970s gay bar. According to A Night at the Sweet Gum Head, this is where Rachel Wells, one of Atlanta's most well-known drag performers of the 1970s, first performed. By the mid-1970s, this bar had closed, and in 1977, reopened as Tex's, a Levi/western/leather bar. In 1980, the owner purchased the commercial space below Tex's and moved the business downstairs. They also renamed it Texas Drilling Company, though the theme remained. It operated through the 1980s.
David Atlanta	1117 Peachtree Walk, Suite 123	Extant	1999 - 2000s	After the Florida-based LGBTQ+ magazine David ceased publication in the mid-1990s, the owners established David Atlanta as a weekly LGBTQ+ bar and entertainment magazine for Atlanta. Though it was originally published in Florida in 1998, David Atlanta moved to this address by 1999. Lot is currently being developed as of March 2023 - the building may no longer be extant. Need to visit the site and check.
Deana's One Mo Time	1890 Cheshire Bridge Road; Hoedowns (first location)	No Longer Extant	1980s	This was the location of Deana Collin's two country-themed LGBTQ+ bars, Deana's One Mo' Time and Hoedowns. Deana's One Mo' Time opened in 1987 as an LGBTQ+ women's bar that welcomed everyone, but it quickly became associated with country line dancing. In 1992, she rebranded the space as Hoedowns, and it continued to offer country music and line dancing for LGBTQ+ Atlantans. Collins held AIDS fundraisers here through the late 1980s and early 1990s, and allowed LGBTQ+ activist organizations to meet in the bar. In the mid-to-late 1990s, Collins relocated Hoedowns to Midtown Promenade.
Diamond Lil's Home	788 Bonaventure Ave NE; Lonesome Oaks	No Longer Extant	2000s (Possibly Earlier)	Diamond Lil occupied this home in the later years of her life, and published recordings of her music from this house.
Dignity	972 Peachtree Street NE.	No Longer Extant	1977; 1979 - 1980	This Peachtree Street office building was used by multiple LGBTQ+ organizations during the late 1970s. In 1977, the gay Catholic organization Dignity established an office here, in Suite 202. The Atlanta Gay Center operated at this location from September 1979 to May 1980. This was the first location of the reorganized Atlanta Gay Center. An earlier version of the Atlanta Gay Center, which mostly focused on providing a help line, was located on 4th Street. This temporary location was used until the organization was able to raise enough money to buy the converted house at 931 Ponce de Leon Avenue.

Name	Address/ Location/ Other Names	Extant	Significant Dates/ Decade	Description
Dignity Atlanta at Saint Thomas More Catholic Church	636 West Ponce de Leon Avenue, Decatur, GA/972 Peachtree Street NE, Atlanta, GA.	Extant	1974 - 1980s	Gay Catholic organization that was founded in California in 1969 and established a chapter in Atlanta in 1974. They began meeting here in December 1974, but created their own office at 972 Peachtree Street, Suite 202 in 1977 (in the same suite that the Atlanta Gay Center later occupied in 1979). Dignity operated in Atlanta until at least the late 1980s.
Down Under	45 8th Street	No Longer Extant	1977 - 1980	Adult gay bookstore located on Cypress Street, a street known for male prostitution. Down Under was established in 1977 and had a section of pornographic books, a small theatre with adult films, and private areas for cruising. The bookstore was raided many times and government officials and members of religious groups wished it closed. In 1980, it was bombed. After the bombing, little was done to uncover who/what had caused it. The rear wall of the store was damaged in the explosion, which exposed the cruising area at the back of the store.
Dunk 'N Dine	2277 Cheshire Bridge Road	Extant	1960s - 1990s	The Dunk 'N Dine was a diner that developed an association with the LGBTQ+ population that lived and/or gathered on Cheshire Bridge Road. Its proximity to LGBTQ+ bars made it a popular after hours and early morning dining option for LGBTQ+ people who patronized bars such as the Sweet Gum Head, the Locker Room, and the Magic Garden/Numbers. The Dunk 'N Dine closed between the late 1990s and the early 2000s.
Dupree's Grill	640 Glen Iris Drive	No Longer Extant	1950s	Restaurant owned by Lillian Dupree, a lesbian bar owner in Atlanta during the 1950s.
Dupree's Lounge	715 Ponce de Leon Avenue	No Longer Extant	1960s - 1970s	Dupree's was a lesbian bar owned by Lillian Dupree that opened in the mid-1960s. It was known as a working class women's bar and operated through the mid-1970s.
El Chaparral	2715 Buford Highway NE	Extant	2000s	Latin club that hosted LGBTQ+ nights on Fridays and Sundays. Also had drag events. The property is not located within the City of Atlanta limits. Date of establishment is unknown.
El Matador	1544 Piedmont Ave NE. Also known as the New Order, Horse Feathers, The Hideaway	Extant	1973 - Present	Originally opened as El Matador in 1973, and was renamed the New Order in the mid-1970s. The space at the rear of the bar was opened as Horse Feathers, a separate bar operated by the same owner, in 1976. The owner, Howard Walters, was a member of the political group First Tuesday. He asked the bar's regular patrons, who were mostly older and retired, to help prepare the group's mailers. The bar continued to operate as the New Order through 2000. Since the turn of the 21st century, the bar has become the Hideaway, and it continues to operate as a LGBTQ+ bar.
Eros Book Mart	777 Ponce de Leon Avenue	Extant	1970s	Eros Book Mart was a bookstore that carried both heterosexual and homosexual pornographic materials. Though the building was expanded through additions in the late 20th century and is currently much larger than its original footprint, the building remains standing. The expansion likely took place in the mid-1980s, after the building was occupied by its current owner, Dugan's, a restaurant and bar.

Name	Address/ Location/ Other Names	Extant	Significant Dates/ Decade	Description
Express Bowling	1936 Piedmont Circle NE; Brunswick Lanes; Midtown Bowl	Extant	1977 - Present	Beginning in 1977, three LGBTQ+ bowling leagues (Atlanta Venture Sports [AVS], Atlas, and Lambda Bowling League) formed and began bowling at this bowling alley. AVS and the Lambda Bowling League sponsored the first Dixie Invitational Bowling Tournament at the bowling alley in April 1981. More than 200 men and women bowlers from throughout the United States and Canada attended the event, making it the largest LGBTQ+ bowling tournament held up to that date. Now known as the Dogwood Invitational Bowling Classic, it is the oldest continuous regional LGBTQ+ bowling tournament in the world. Today it is held in the nearby town of Lilburn.
Feminist Women's Health Center-Second Location	1924 Cliff Valley Way NE	Extant	circa 1990s - Present	Established in 1976, the Feminist Women's Health Center has long served LGBTQ+ people in metro Atlanta. Significant services that have been helpful for LGBTQ+ people in Atlanta include a donor insemination program and their Trans health initiative. The property is not located within the City of Atlanta limits.
Festival Lounge	142 Ted Turner Drive (formerly Spring Street) NW, Festival Lounge and Eatery	Extant	1983 - 1987	Opened in the autumn of 1983 in the former Festival Theater, which showed adult films in the 1970s. The Festival Lounge was a Black LGBTQ+ restaurant, disco, and show bar. According to an interview with Dave Hayward and Maria Helena Dolan, the Gay Atlanta Minorities Association (GAMA) regularly held their meetings at the Festival Lounge under the direction of GAMA leaders Melvin Ross, Gene Holloway, and Greg Worthy. The Festival Lounge closed in late 1987.
First Baptist Church of Atlanta	754 Peachtree Street	No Longer Extant	February 1986	After the pastor of First Baptist Church of Atlanta, Reverend Charles Stanley, claimed that AIDS was God's punishment for homosexuality, 350 LGBTQ+ people protested outside the church in February 1986. Through the late 1980s, when the Atlanta Pride marches/parades passed by the church, many of the participants continued to express their anger toward both First Baptist.
First Existentialist Congregation	470 Candler Park Drive NE	Extant	circa 1980s - Present	The First Existentialist Church has been a supporter and general safe space for LGBTQ+ people since at least the 1980s. During that period, Franklin Abbott hosted the Circle of Healing biweekly meetings here for four to five years, a hands-on meditation process for HIV+ people and allies. The Feminist Women's Chorus also first began practicing here and the church has hosted a number of other LGBTQ+ events and performances. This was also one of the early meeting spaces for Congregation Bet Haverim, Atlanta's first gay-affirming Jewish congregation.
First Southern Comfort Conference	2115 Piedmont Road NE, La Quinta Inn	No Longer Extant	1991	Site of the La Quinta Inn, where the first Southern Comfort Conference was held for transgender people in the Southeast. Atlanta hosted the conference from 1991 to 1994.

Name	Address/ Location/ Other Names	Extant	Significant Dates/ Decade	Description
Five O’Clock Supper Club, The	160 Peachtree Street NW, Club Peachtree	No Longer Extant	1948	This was the location of a supper club opened between 1948 and 1949 as the Five O’Clock Supper Club. In 1951, the name was changed to Club Peachtree. Guy Dobbs, a female impersonator known as Little Gwendolyn and Terry Lynn, performed at this club in the 1950s. According to George Hyde, pastor of Eucharistic Catholic Church, the gay men who worked at downtown businesses such as Rich’s and David Paxon would meet here for drinks after work - during gay cocktail hour - but at 6pm the club became a heterosexual space. After going home and changing, the men would then go out for drinks at the hotel bars.
Flex Spas	76 4th Street NW. Also known as Flex Baths, Club Atlanta Baths, Club South Baths, Club Atlanta Health Club	Extant	1970 - Present	The longest operating LGBTQ+ space in Atlanta is Flex Spas, originally known as Club South Baths. It was opened in 1969 and continues operating today. In the mid-1970s, it was purchased by the owner of the Club Bath chain, Chuck Fleck, and its name was changed to Club Atlanta Baths. During the early years of the AIDS epidemic in Atlanta, officials forced the bathhouse to temporary close. Fleck fought the city in court and won, allowing the business to continue operating. In the early 1990s, the name was changed to Flex.
Foster’s Lounge	887 Peachtree Street	No Longer Extant	1984 - 1987	A mid-1980s bar popular with Black LGBTQ+ men. It opened in 1984 and was co-owned by Loretta Young. She opened another popular Black LGBTQ+ bar, Loretta’s, in 1987, and transferred the liquor license from Foster’s to Loretta’s that same year.
Four Seasons	1170 Woodland Avenue NE. Also referred to as 4 Seasons	Extant	1970s - 1980s	An apartment complex popular with LGBTQ+ Atlantans during the 1970s and 1980s. According to members of the Facebook group “You’ve Lived in GAY Atlanta,” several members of the Hollywood Hots cast from the Locker Room lived here.
Frank Powell’s Conference Room	567 Ponce de Leon Avenue, Home Plate, Why Not?, Frank Powell’s Conference Room, Pegasus, Phoenix	No Longer Extant	1970s - 1990s	By 1975, this location was operated as a restaurant called Home Plate, named for its proximity to the baseball stadium to the northeast (Ponce de Leon Park/Spiller Park). The owner of Home Plate, Nell Cofer, had previously worked as the head cook at Mrs. P’s. In the early 1980s, Frank Powell opened a piano bar here. Later, the space was operated as The Stud and the Phoenix.
Fulton County Department of Health, HIV/AIDS Testing Clinic	99 Jesse Hill, Jr. Drive (formerly Butler Street) SE	No Longer Extant	1985 - 2017	The only publicly-operated HIV/AIDS testing clinic in Atlanta (and along with the DeKalb County Public Health clinic) one of only two in the entire metro area during the 1980s. The building was designed by McDonald & Company and opened in 1961. It was sold to Grady Hospital and demolished in 2018

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Funtone USA World Headquarters	1714 Adolphus Street NE. Dick Richards' Residence	Extant	1980s - 2000s	The home of Dick Richards, the co-founder of the American Music Show. The show was produced out of this house from the mid-1980s to the early 2000s. Though the show was not specifically LGBTQ+, the American Music Show brought queer experiences to the televisions of Atlanta. Many of the reoccurring characters appeared in drag, and several were/are LGBTQ+. The American Music Show was produced by Funtone, which was also a record label created by Richards. Members of Funtone referred to his home as "Funtone USA World Headquarters."
Fusion	550 Amsterdam Avenue	Extant	1990s	A LGBTQ+ nightclub that opened in the 1990s and operated into the 21st century. Similar to contemporaneous neighborhood bars, Fusion hosted themed nights.
Gallus Restaurant and Lounge, The	49 Sixth Street	No Longer Extant	1974 - mid- 1990s	The Gallus was a restaurant located along Cypress Street, a street that was known for male prostitution during the 20th century. The restaurant opened in 1974 and had a central dining level, a lower cruise bar, and an upper level with a piano bar. It was popular with and hired LGBTQ+ people through the mid-1990s, when it closed and the building was demolished. According to the owner, Don Hunnewell, and previous staff members, the Gallus caught fire in the mid-1990s.
Gay Patee Cinema #1	90 Walton Street	No Longer Extant	1971 - 1977	Atlanta's only known LGBTQ+-specific adult theater. The theater opened in 1971, and relocated to 17 Houston Street in 1977. Though the majority of the films were LGBTQ+, the owner, Arthur Sanders, also had showings of the well-known heterosexual adult film, Deep Throat. After obtaining multiple copies of the film, he repeatedly played the film after having copies confiscated by Fulton County Solicitor General McAuliffe, likely in an effort to draw attention to McAuliffe's obscenity campaign.
Gay Patee Cinema #2	17 Houston Street	No Longer Extant	1977 - 1980	In 1977, the Gay Patee Cinema, Atlanta's only known LGBTQ+-specific adult movie theater, relocated to 17 Houston Street. According to coverage of the theater in Cruise, this venue was larger and had more facilities for cruising beyond the theater itself. Though there was no announcement for its closing, and it was not listed as one of the businesses that were forced to stop showing adult films in Atlanta in 1980, the Gay Patee Cinema stopped appearing in LGBTQ+ guides and publications in May 1980.
Gay Yellow Pages Office	1116 West Peachtree Street	No Longer Extant	1990s - 2000s	The office of the Gay Yellow Pages, a local publisher that created guides for LGBTQ+-friendly businesses in Atlanta.

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Gene and Gabe's	1578 Piedmont Avenue NE. Upstairs at Gene and Gabe's, Gene & Gabe's Upstairs, Smith's Olde Bar (present, not LGBTQ+-specific)	Extant	1970s - 1990	A restaurant with a cabaret upstairs that was popular with LGBTQ+ people in the 1970s and 1980s. Known for "I Love Laverne," a popular drag show featuring Laverne Edwards, as well as the long-running show, Della's Diner.
Georgia Division of Public Health, Epidemiology and Prevention Branch Offices	2 Peachtree Street	Extant	1994	The office tower housed the Georgia Division of Public Health, Epidemiology and Prevention Branch offices responsible for collecting statewide data on HIV/AIDS infections and deaths.
Georgia Gay Liberation Front Headquarters	128 Pine Street NE	No Longer Extant	1972 - 1973	The main office of the Georgia Gay Liberation Front was located here in from 1972 until the organization disbanded in the summer of 1973. This is where the first Pride marches were planned and it also served as a space for LGBTQ+ events at the time, such as voter registration drives, dances, and fundraisers. Briefly served as the original ALFA headquarters until the group moved into the first ALFA House in Candler Park in the fall of 1972.
Georgia Mental Health Institute	1256 Briarcliff Road NE, Emory Briarcliff Campus	Extant	1960s - 1970s	The Georgia Mental Health Institute was a short-lived gender identity clinic in the late 1960s/early 1970s according to Dallas Denny
Georgia State Capitol Building	206 Washington Street SW; AIDS Protest Vigil at the Georgia State Capitol; 1990 ACT UP Protest	Extant	1980s - 1990s	The Georgia State Capitol Building was the focal point of many LGBTQ+ protests during the second half of the 20th century. Beyond the several Pride-related protests at the Capitol, there have been several targeted events. Between May 7 and 8, 1988, more than 100 protesters held a 26-hour vigil on the steps of the Georgia State Capitol Building to protest Governor Joe Frank Harris slashing the Department of Human Resources request for AIDS funding by nearly 75 percent. On January 8, 1990, ACT UP activists held a two-hour protest demonstration on the opening day of the legislative session to call for an end to the state's sodomy law.

Name	Address/ Location/ Other Names	Extant	Significant Dates/ Decade	Description
Georgia World Congress Center	285 Andrew Young International Boulevard NW; First International AIDS Conference (IAC); NAMES Project Foundation AIDS Memorial Quilt Showing 1988	Extant	April 15-17, 1985; May 27-30, 1988	First International AIDS Conference was sponsored by CDC; the National Institutes of Health; the Food and Drug Administration; the Alcohol, Drug Abuse, and Mental Health Administration; the Health Resources and Services Administration; and the World Health Organization (Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report, August 3, 1984), and held April 15-17, 1985 at the Georgia World Congress Center. About 1,000 scientists and public health officials attended the conference. Three years later, over Memorial Day Weekend 1988, the NAMES Project Foundation AIDS Memorial Quilt was exhibited at the center.
Glen Iris Supper Club, The	614 Glen Iris Drive, The Queen of Clubs; the Clovis Club;	No Longer Extant	1950s	Originally this was the Glen Iris Supper Club, a dinner club that welcomed unescorted ladies in the 1950s - a practice that was uncommon and, in the case of restaurants in the city, illegal at the time. The Glen Iris Supper Club closed in 1954 and in 1955, it reopened as the Queen of Clubs, a supper club featuring female impersonators that was managed by female impersonator Guy Dobbs - known as Little Gwendolyn and Terry Lynn. This club was also popular among the lesbian community. By late 1955, the club became the Clovis Club - under the ownership of Lillian Dupree, who had owned the Glen Iris Supper Club. Dupree was later the owner and eponym for Dupree's, another lesbian bar located close by on Ponce. The Clovis Club closed in 1959 after its license was revoked for violating city ordinances.
Grady Memorial Hospital	80 Jesse Hill Jr. Drive (formerly Butler Street); Grady Adolescent AIDS Program	Extant	1987 - 1993	The hospital established the Grady Infectious Disease Clinic (IDC) in 1987 (later moved to Ponce de Leon Ave in 1993) and the Adolescent AIDS Program to provide care, education, and outreach for HIV+ adults and teens in metro Atlanta. In May 1991, ACT UP/Atlanta held a "die-in" outside the hospital to protest the months-long wait period for appointments at the IDC.
Grady Memorial Hospital Infectious Disease Program Clinic	341 Ponce de Leon Avenue; Ponce de Leon Center	Extant	1993 - Present	Founded in 1987, the Grady Infectious Disease Program is one of the largest and most comprehensive facilities dedicated to the treatment of HIV/AIDS in the U.S. The clinic moved into the former Presbyterian Center on Ponce in 1993 after the old location was unable to accommodate all the PWAs who needed appointments with the IDC.
Guide (Magazine) Office	1874 Piedmont Road NE	Extant	1980s	The strip mall contained the offices of Guide magazine, an LGBTQ+ magazine published in Atlanta from 1986 to at least 1995.
Hammonds House Museum	503 Peoples Street SW, Hammonds House Museum and Gardens	Extant	1988	The former residence of Dr. Otis Thrash Hammonds (1929-1985), a prominent Black gay physician and patron of the arts in Atlanta. Dr. Hammonds purchased the property in 1979 and went about restoring the house. Following his death in 1985, the house and grounds were purchased by Fulton County and reopened in 1988 as an African American arts gallery and museum.

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Haven House - AIDS Hospice	250 14th Street	No Longer Extant	1990s	Opened as an AIDS hospice in January 1992 according to an article in Southern Voice. The building was demolished in 2022.
Henri Jova House	421 7th Street NE	Extant	1965	This was the home of Henri Jova (1919-2014), a founding member of the Midtown Neighborhood Association and a well known Atlantan architect. He designed several Atlanta landmarks, including Colony Square and the Carter Center. Jova designed and built the Contemporary style house in 1965 and lived here with his spouse, David Rinehart.
Henry Grady Hotel	216 Peachtree Street	No Longer Extant	1925	In 1925, Mary E. Hutchinson, one of the earliest known LGBTQ+ visual artists in Atlanta, had her first public exhibition of her work at the Henry Grady Hotel.
High Museum of Art, The	1262 Peachtree Street	No Longer Extant	1930s	Mary E. Hutchinson, one of the earliest known LGBTQ+ visual artists in Atlanta, exhibited her art at the High Museum in 1932. Two years later, the museum purchased two of her works, including one of her most notable, Two of Them.
House of Wig	Address Unknown; on 14th Street near intersection with Peachtree Street	No Longer Extant	1970s - 1980s	House on Peachtree Street that was converted into apartments. Similar to other houses nearby, it likely served as a countercultural space during the late 1960s and early 1970s. According to Clare Butler, students attending the Atlanta College of Art lived here in the early 1980s and would host LGBTQ+-friendly parties that often involved partygoers dressing in drag.
Hubert Hall, Room 205	Brown Street NW, Morehouse College. Charles D. Hubert Residence Hall.	Extant	1992	Atlanta's ballroom community was established in 1992 in this dorm room on the campus of Morehouse University by three Morehouse freshmen.
Hyatt Regency Hotel	265 Peachtree Street NE	Extant	February 16-19, 1990	The third annual National Black Gay and Lesbian Conference was held at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in February 1990. It was sponsored by the Atlanta chapter of Black and White Men Together, as well as the African American Lesbian/Gay Alliance.
Ides of March	1544 Piedmont Avenue	Extant	1977 - early 1980s	The earliest known LGBTQ+-friendly retail collective in Atlanta. Stores in the Ides of March included Regalos, Ruffled Feathers, 4th Avenue, Body Bizarre, and Lady L. In 1983, Regalos was forced to relocate after Selig Enterprises, the owner of Ansley Mall, altered the lease for the Ides of March to restrict adult content from being sold - including Regalos' gay greeting cards. It is unknown whether the retail collective continued operating after 1983.
Illusions	1021 Peachtree Street NE. Later known as the Cotton Club in the 1990s.	Extant	1980s	Opened by Ray Ferris and Ted Binkley after the Sweet Gum Head closed. Their grand opening was held in early 1982, and as the successor of the Sweet Gum Head, they took the old bar's slogan - "The Showplace of the South." Many of the staff and cast of Illusions had previously worked at the Sweet Gum Head. Illusions was known for its high-quality productions.

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Indigo Arts Gallery and Playhouse	1850 DeKalb Avenue	Extant	late 1990s	This building formerly housed Indigo Arts, which commonly hosted ZAMI fundraiser events and dances benefitting the Audre Lorde Scholarship Fund and for ZAMI Just AU Women meetings.
International House of Pancakes	129 North Avenue NE. IHOP	Extant	1970s - 1980s	This IHOP on North Avenue was a popular dining space for LGBTQ+ Atlantans, and appears to have been welcoming to LGBTQ+ people based on its continued advertising in LGBTQ+ publications and support of Pride. It was a late-night gathering space for LGBTQ+ people who went out at night in Midtown.
Jerusalem House	831 Briarcliff Road	Extant	1989 - Present	Located in a former residence on Briarcliff Road, the Jerusalem House opened in 1989 as an early non-profit HIV/AIDS hospice facility in Atlanta. The facility is the oldest and largest provider of permanent supportive housing for the city's homeless and low-income population living with HIV/AIDS.
Jocks	887 Peachtree Street, In-Between, Zebra's Lounge	No Longer Extant	1980s	Jocks opened next door to Bulldogs in 1980. Billed as a "man's disco," the interior was painted all black and was known as one of Atlanta's only Black gay discos, according to Cruise Weekly. In 1982, the location reopened as "In Between," which was still a dance club, though it also had pool tables and other games. A contemporary article noted that the crowd at In Between was typically made up of both Black and white LGBTQ+ people. In 1985, the bar was renamed Zebra's Lounge, but it remained a dance club and bar.
John Howell Park	797 Virginia Avenue NE	Extant	1989 - Present	Park named for Atlantan John Howell, a gay man who was active in the Atlanta Gay Center and the Virginia Highland Neighborhood Association. At the AGC, he served on the organization's board. Howell was also instrumental in the campaign to stop the destruction of the Virginia Highlands for Interstate 485. The park was built on land that was originally taken for the highway, where 11 homes had been demolished. The park was named in Howell's honor in 1989 following his death in 1988 from AIDS complications.
Jolly Twelve House	532 Wabash Avenue NE	Extant	1960s	The home of either Billy Heflin (sp?) or Robert Hodges, members of the Jolly Twelve, a Black gay social club. In the 1960s, the members of this group would meet here before going out to bars and clubs. They all wore blue pants with white button up shirts, and they walked in a line organized by height, from shortest to tallest, as they marched from place to place. Information about this group is included in the AHC oral history interview with Freddie Styles, and his presentation as part of the John Q Project.

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Joy Lounge, The and P's Annex	557/563 Ponce de Leon Avenue; The Annex	No Longer Extant	1967 - 1980s	The Joy Lounge was a late 1960s gay bar operated by Frank Powell. It opened in 1967. It was most likely in a commercial space within the two-story building next door to Mrs. P's. The Joy Lounge was one of the major LGBTQ+ bars at the beginning of the LGBTQ+ bar boom that lasted from the late 1960s to the 1980s, and Frank Powell owned many of the major bars during the earliest years of this growth in LGBTQ+ spaces (the Cove, Sweet Gum Head, Ms. Garbo's). Here, Billy Jones performed as Phyllis Killer and formed a troupe of drag queens known as Billy's Darling Daughters, who performed a show called "Phyllis Killer and Her Five Darling Daughters." The drag performances at the Joy Lounge were a pivotal moment in female impersonation in Atlanta, taking drag out of the mostly heterosexual supper clubs and bringing it to the majority LGBTQ+ spaces of Atlanta's gay bar scene. By the mid-to-late 1970s, P's, next door, had become a levi/leather/western bar that was extremely masculine and did not permit dancing. As large dance clubs took over Atlanta during this period, P's added their own dancing area in the building next door. P's Annex was established in 1978 as a all-male, masculine dance space - which contrasted with the more inclusive (meaning feminine and masculine) discos. By the early 1980s, it was hosting drag performances and the masculine theme had been toned down. It was no longer mentioned in local magazines in late 1981. Martin Padgett states in A Night at the Sweet Gum Head that the Joy Lounge was at 563 Ponce de Leon Avenue, which is also the address provided in want ads in the Atlanta Constitution, but Damron's Guide gives an address of 557 Ponce de Leon.
J's	939 Ponce de Leon Avenue NE (rear of building)	Extant	1990s	An underground Black gay bar that was operating in the 1990s. There is little documentation of this bar, but it was remembered by Marci Alt, the founder of the Gay Yellow Pages.
King's Kastle Inn	2140 Peachtree Road; Ms. Garbo's	No Longer Extant	1973	Billy Watson opened the King's Kastle Inn in the former Brookwood Hotel building in 1973. Though this bar complex only lasted a few months, it was the original location of Ms. Garbo's. Located in the basement of this large hotel, Ms. Garbo's was popular with lesbian Atlantans. After King's Kastle Inn closed, Frank Powell opened his own Ms. Garbo's on Cheshire Bridge Road.
Krystal	Southeast corner of Peachtree and 7th streets	No Longer Extant	1980s	This is potentially the Krystal location noted by RuPaul as the place of origin for the phrase "she done already had herses." RuPaul visited Krystal one night after leaving a nearby club and heard one of the employees state this phrase when a customer attempted to take someone else's food. This Krystal's proximity to several LGBTQ+ bars on the Gay Strip in the mid-1980s also suggests it may have been a late-night eating space for LGBTQ+ people (YLIGA, 02/07/2021, "Anyone remember the Cabana Hotel?").

Name	Address/ Location/ Other Names	Extant	Significant Dates/ Decade	Description
La Carrousel Lounge	822-830 Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive SW (formerly Hunter Street). Paschal's Motor Hotel and Restaurant.	Extant	1960 - 1996	The La Carrousel Lounge was founded by brothers James and Robert Paschal and within the larger Paschal's Motor Hotel and Restaurant complex, a landmark meeting space for the Atlanta Civil Rights movement. The jazz venue was a place where people of different races and sexualities were welcome and was reportedly LGBTQ+-friendly.
Lane's Drug Store	177 Peachtree Street	No Longer Extant	1940s	A 1940s gathering and dining space for LGBTQ+ people. According to George Hyde, "every gay [person] in town had to stop [at Lane's] on Saturday night and get a Coke and a sandwich."
Latinos en Accion	300 Peachtree Street Northeast	Extant	1994 - 1996	Latino LGBTQ+ organization formed by Aida Rentas in 1994. This address was listed here, so it is possible it was run out of a residence in Peachtree Towers. Source for address
Lenox Forest	3200 Lenox Road; 32Hundred Lenox	Extant	1980s - 1990s	Lenox Forest was one of the major LGBTQ+ apartment complexes associated with the LGBTQ+ enclave centered around Cheshire Bridge Road.
Limelight	3330 Piedmont Road	Extant	early 1980s	Limelight opened in 1980, and through the first part of the decade, it was one of the most well-known and popular discos in both Atlanta and throughout the southeast. The bar was popular with both heterosexual and LGBTQ+ Atlantans, and the owner's hosted many events targeted toward the city's LGBTQ+ population, including a benefit for the Atlanta Gay Center that featured Grace Jones as a performer.
Little Five Points Community Center	1083 Austin Avenue NE	Extant	1980s - 1990s	The Little Five Points Community Center is a central meeting place for many community groups in Little Five Points and throughout Atlanta, including LGBTQ+ and LGBTQ+-friendly organizations. In the early 1980s, as the center was being established, WRFG Radio relocated to this building. The original offices for Southeastern Arts, Media, and Education (SAME) were in this building, starting in 1985. In late 1990, the confrontational LGBTQ+-rights organization Queer Nation held the first meetings for the Atlanta chapter here.
Little Five Points Pub, The	1174 Euclid Avenue	Extant	mid-1980s	As the central fixture of the alternative community in Little Five Points, the Little Five Points Pub was an accepting space that welcomed LGBTQ+ people in the 1980s. The Indigo Girls were regular performers here, and viewed the bar as their "main gig." The duo was signed to Epic Records after a label representative heard them performing in the pub.

Name	Address/ Location/ Other Names	Extant	Significant Dates/ Decade	Description
Locker Room, The and Hollywood Hot	2329 Cheshire Bridge Road NE; Hollywood Hot; Locker Room Baths; Locker Room Disco; LaVita's; Lipstix	Extant	1970s - 1990s	Elizabeth DeBoard opened the Locker Room Bathhouse in 1975, and expanded to create a disco club in the commercial space next door in 1976. The Locker Room was one of Atlanta's most popular LGBTQ+ nightlife complexes during the second half of the 1970s. The bathhouse was closed in the early 1980s after being targeted by local officials during the beginning of the AIDS epidemic. In 1986, LaVita's opened in this space, which was a show bar named in honor LaVita Allen, an Atlanta drag personality and DJ who died from AIDS complications. The show bar was known as "the home of legends and entertainment," and many of the cast members were long-time drag performers in Atlanta, including Charlie Brown, Mickey Day, Tina Devore, Dina Jacobs, and Lisa King. Lavita's closed in early 1988 and was replaced by Lipstix in the same venue in 1989, which had similar shows and operated through the mid-1990s.
Loretta's	708 Spring Street	No Longer Extant	1987 - 1999	Loretta's was a Black gay club established by Loretta Young in 1987 after she transferred the liquor license from Foster's Lounge to 708 Spring Street. Located in a "cavernous warehouse," Loretta's was a two-story bar complex with several bars and dance floors. Though it was primarily a dance club, Loretta's also hosted drag shows during the week through the 1990s. In 2000, it became the Black LGBTQ+ club Sequel and hosted Traxx parties. The building was demolished in 2016.
Lounge, The	79 Forsyth Street NW; Margaret Mitchell Square	No Longer Extant	1940s	Formerly located at 79 Forsyth Street NW - now Margaret Mitchell Square. Owned by the Vocalis family. In the 1940s and early 1950s, white gay men would use the rear booths to socialize, though the establishment was not a "gay bar." This is an example of a heterosexual space that was utilized by LGBTQ+ people for socializing in public before the creation of their own spaces.
Luckie Street YMCA	145 Luckie Street	No Longer Extant	1970s - 1980s	Interracial gay social space as early as the 1970s. Crew Clay, founder of the LGBTQ+ Episcopal group Integrity, met his husband, Ernest Clay, in the sixth floor tea room of this building. Also identified as an important LGBTQ+ space by Duncan Teague.
Lucy Wood Cafeteria	64 Marietta Street, Beck and Gregg Building	No Longer Extant	late 1940s - early 1950s	Lucy Wood, the owner of this cafeteria helped give many LGBT Atlantans jobs in the 1940s/1950s after they were arrested for sodomy or similar charges and had their information published in the papers, resulting in the loss of their jobs. Wood coordinated with George Hyde, the pastor of Eucharistic Catholic Church, to help them.
Magic Garden, The	1890 Cheshire Bridge Road NE. Mama's Best, County Seat, Numbers, 1888, The Saint Disco and Sinners Lounge	Extant	1970-1980s	This bar first opened as Mama's Best in November 1976, but closed by the end of the year, and then reopened as the Magic Garden in late August 1977. It was renamed Numbers in December 1978, and the space became another disco, the Saint, by 1983. For a short period, while it was known as Numbers, the bar began advertising as "1888," the address for the building. This bar was adjacent to Frank Powell's Western bar, the County Seat at 1888-B Cheshire Bridge Road, which opened in August 1976.

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Marietta's Theater on the Square	11 Whitlock Ave NW	Extant	1993	Two productions at Marietta's Theater on the Square, "M. Butterfly" and "Lips Together, Teeth Apart," were deemed by the Cobb County Board of Commissioners to have too much LGBTQ+ content, and they passed two resolutions in 1993 in response
Marquette Lounge, The #1	809 MLK Jr. Drive (previously Hunter Street)	No Longer Extant	1960s - 1990s	Originally named Hunter Street. A new location has since opened at 868 Joseph E. Boone Blvd NW. Originally opened in the 1950s or 1960s. Though not originally a LGBTQ+ space, this developed into a gay friendly bar by the 1970s. It is one of the oldest known Black LGBTQ+ bars in the city. Discussed in Freddie Styles' oral history - the bar had a red door and Styles painted it in 1980.
Marquette Lounge, The #3	868 Joseph E. Boone Boulevard NW	Extant	2010s	This is the current location of the Marquette Lounge. Though it has changed locations multiple times, the Marquette is one of the oldest gay businesses still operating in Atlanta. It is also one of the oldest Black gay clubs in the South.
Mary E. Hutchinson's Apartment	120, 124 Lafayette Drive	Extant	1940s - 1970	Mary E. Hutchinson, one of Atlanta's earliest known LGBTQ+ visual artists, lived in this building with her mother and Mary's partner, Dorothy King, from the 1940s through her death in 1970.
Mary's	1287 Glenwood Avenue SE	Extant	1998 - Present	A queer and inclusive LGBTQ+ bar in East Atlanta Village. The bar opened in 1998, as the area was developing into an LGBTQ+ enclave of the city.
Metro, The #1	48 6th Street	No Longer Extant	1990s	The Metro opened in 1991 as an LGBTQ+ bar for dancing and drag performances. It was owned by Don Hunnewell. Throughout the early-to-mid 1990s, the Metro, as well as this area of 6th Street near Cypress Street, was home to the post-new wave arts and drag scene that had previously developed at the Nitery, the Celebrity Club, and Weekends. The annual event Wigwood, similar to Lady Bunny's Wigstock in New York, was held in this area during that period as well. In the mid-to-late 1990s, the Metro relocated to 1080 Peachtree Street. According to Hunnewell, the Metro was forced to relocate to Peachtree Street when this area was slated for demolition for the 1996 Olympics.
Metro, The #2	1080 Peachtree Street	No Longer Extant	1990s - 2000s	Second location of the Metro, a nightclub and show bar that was associated with the alternative drag culture that produced Wigwood.
Metropolitan Community Church #1	527 N. McDonough Street, Decatur, Georgia	No Longer Extant	1972 - 1974	The first location of the Metropolitan Community Church in Atlanta. The church moved into this space in July 1972, after having first utilized space at the Unitarian Universalist Church on Cliff Valley Way earlier in the year. In 1973, the church posted the 4th annual MCC general conference at this location. In March 1974, MCC relocated to their most well-known location in Atlanta, 800 N. Highland Avenue.

Name	Address/ Location/ Other Names	Extant	Significant Dates/ Decade	Description
Metropolitan Community Church #2	798-800 North Highland Avenue NE	Extant	1974 - 1996	Atlanta location of the Metropolitan Community Church, a Christian church formed in California by Troy Perry in 1968 that served the LGBT community. The Atlanta congregation was established in 1972. Their first official location was in a former theater in Decatur (no longer extant), but the congregation relocated to this former theater in the Atkins Park district of the Virginia-Highland neighborhood in 1974. LGBTQ+ political meetings, community benefits, and public discussions with officials, including the Atlanta Police Department, were held here. By 1996, the congregation relocated to a new location on Tullie Road.
Metropolitan Community Church #3	1379 Tullie Road	No Longer Extant	mid-1990s - 2015	The third location of the original MCC congregation in Atlanta, known as First Metropolitan Community Church. They relocated to this location in 1993 but moved again in 2015 to a property on Cliff Valley Way.
Metropolitan Gazette	123 10th Street	No Longer Extant	early 1980s	The offices for the Metropolitan Gazette, an LGBTQ+ newspaper that operated during the early 1980s.
Michael Hardwick's Apartment	811 Ponce de Leon Place NE	Extant	1982-2003	The rented apartment of Michael Hardwick, a gay Atlanta bartender at The Cove. In 1982, Atlanta Police officer Keith Torrick cited Hardwick with a ticket after seeing him drinking a beer while walking home from a shift at The Cove. Hardwick did not appear in court and Torrick attempted to issue the warrant for his arrest. When Torrick entered Hardwick's apartment, he found Hardwick having consensual sex with a man. Torrick arrested the two for sodomy in this house. This sparked a case that went to the U.S. Supreme Court, where they ruled that Georgia's sodomy law was constitutional. The law was struck down by the Georgia Supreme Court in 1998, but it was not until 2003 that the U.S. Supreme Court's decision was reversed.
Midtown Gym	1107 Peachtree Street	No Longer Extant	early 1980s	One of the earliest known mostly-gay gyms in Atlanta. Midtown Gym opened in 1982 on the Gay Strip, though farther up the road than most of the other LGBTQ+ businesses.
Midtowne Medicine Center	699 Piedmont Avenue NE	Extant	late 1980s and 1990s	Gay owned and operated pharmacy that provided HIV counseling, insurance coordination, medical equipment,
Miss Gay America Pageant either 1974 or 1975	160 Ted Turner Drive, Americana Motor Hotel	Extant	1974/1975	The Miss Gay America pageant, a national drag pageant, held their third annual contest in Atlanta in 1974 or 1975. Contemporary sources state 1974, but modern sources list the event as 1975. It was held in the ballroom of the Americana Motor Hotel, and Atlantan Roski Fernandez won first runner up. Source
Monroe Manor	1445 Monroe Drive NE. Morningside Chase; Carlyle Heights (present owner)	Extant	1970 - 1990s	One of the most well-known apartment complexes popular with LGBTQ+ people between the 1970s and 1990s. In 1993, the Southern Voice published an article that referred to it as Atlanta's "gay complex."

Name	Address/ Location/ Other Names	Extant	Significant Dates/ Decade	Description
Morehouse Alliance	830 Westview Drive, PO Box 8514	No Longer Extant	circa 1990s	The Morehouse Alliance served as a support mechanism for gay and bi-sexual students on the Morehouse campus. Address taken from the 1996 Atlanta African American Gay & Lesbian Community Directory (copy on file at Auburn Avenue Research Library)
MorningStar Inn	1451 Oxford Road, The New Morning Cafe	Extant	February 4, 1971	Also referred to as the New Morning Cafe, the health food cooperative hosted the first meeting of the Georgia Gay Liberation Front (GGLF) in early February 1971. The building is located in Emory Village, just outside the Atlanta city limits.
Mrs. P's	551 Ponce de Leon Avenue NE. P's Western and Leather Bar	Extant	1956 - 1980s	One of the earliest bars established specifically to serve LGBTQ+ people in Atlanta. It was created by Vera Phillips, who had previously operated the Piedmont Tavern with her husband, Hubert. The Phillip's earlier business was popular with white lesbian women, and she opened Mrs. P's after the number of patrons began to grow. In the 1960s, Mrs. P's was sold, but it continued to cater to LGBTQ+ people. During this decade, the customer base transitioned to more white gay men. By 1969, the bar was hosting drag shows, some of the earliest to occur outside of supper clubs in the city. By the mid-1970s, Mrs. P's had become a Levi/Leather/Western bar, and it became known as "P's," without the Mrs., during this decade. In the early 1980s, the bar was raided and closed down. In 1984, it reopened as 551, a bar and club that held drag shows and had dancing. It operated as 551 through the late 1980s and closed in 1991. The current restaurant in the basement of the Wylie Hotel is named Mrs. P's.
Ms. Garbo's	2200 Cheshire Bridge Road NE	Extant	1970s	Ms. Garbo's was originally established as a lesbian bar within a gay men's bar called the King's Kastle Inn. In 1973, Frank Powell reopened Ms. Garbo's on Cheshire Bridge Road, where it continued to operate as an LGBTQ+ women's bar. It was a private club for women only until it was purchased in 1976 by a new owner. They opened the bar to men as well, but it remained mostly popular with LGBTQ+ women. Ms. Garbo's operated into the late 1970s.
Music City	1544 Piedmont Avenue; Darla's Disco	Extant	mid-1970s - 1980s	An LGBTQ+-friendly music store. For most of the 1970s, this store was the go-to place for LGBTQ+ Atlantans to get disco and other popular dance music. The owner, Dale, also sold promotional 12" versions of singles that were distributed only to DJs and were not permitted to be resold. According to members of the "You've Lived in GAY Atlanta" Facebook group, Dale won a lawsuit that forced record companies to offer these versions to the public. Famous artists popular with LGBTQ+ people at the time visited the store for promotional events. The entrance to this store was next door to the Ansley Mall Mini-Cinema/Film Forum.
My House	774 West Peachtree Street	No Longer Extant	1972	Gay bar that opened in 1972. Same owner as Peaches Backdoor, though that bar closed prior to My House's opening.

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My Sister's Room	931 Monroe Drive	Extant	1996 - 1998	Though the exact space in Midtown Promenade is currently unknown, My Sister's Room was established here in 1996 by Susan Musselwhite. The original space was a small neighborhood bar with a game room. The bar was forced to relocate to Decatur in 1998 due to increasing rent prices at the shopping center.
National Association of People With AIDS (NAPWA), Atlanta Chapter	131 Ponce de Leon Avenue	No Longer Extant	1988	The December 8, 1988 edition of the Southern Voice reported NAPWA moved its southern regional office into the 131 Ponce de Leon Building. This space was also used by the AIDS Research Consortium of Atlanta (ARCA).
Nitery, The	600 Ponce de Leon Avenue NE (currently Eats restaurant)	Extant	1980s	Antonio DiMauro's club that was a regular performance space for the Now Explosion. Their shows here were welcoming to everyone, and the bar was a major LGBTQ+-friendly space in the early 1980s. RuPaul's first performance with his band Wee Wee Pole was at the Nitery. The bar closed by 1983 and the Now Explosion and the other regular bands and fans relocated to the Celebrity Club.
North Avenue MARTA Station	713 West Peachtree Street	Extant	1981	The North Avenue MARTA Station was designed by Atlanta architect Henri Jova, a gay man who led the preservation movement in the residential portion of Midtown and designed several notable buildings in the city.
Onyx, The	341 West Peachtree Street, The Onyx Club	No Longer Extant	1970 - 1981	The original location of the Onyx Lounge owned by one of the major LGBTQ+ bar operators in Atlanta, Jim Nalley. The Onyx was originally a cruise bar, but began hosting performances by female impersonators, including Mickey Day, Tiger Lil, Daisy Dalton. It eventually became one of the city's top show bars. The Onyx also had male performers, including the very popular R.C. Cola. After the Onyx closed in 1980, Nalley opened the Answer on Peachtree Strip. Another bar known as the Onyx II opened on Ponce in the early 1980s.
Otherside Lounge, The	1924 Piedmont Road	No Longer Extant	1990s	The Otherside Lounge was a lesbian bar that was popular with LGBTQ+ women and men. Dana Ford and Beverly McMahon opened the bar in 1990. It was often listed in the bar sections of Black LGBTQ+ publications during the 1990s, including Venus, suggesting it was welcoming to Black Atlantans as well. The Otherside Lounge was also a site of violence against the LGBTQ+ community. In 1997, Eric Rudolph, the man who set off a bomb at the 1996 Atlanta Olympics, also bombed the Otherside Lounge. Though the bar reopened, it did not fully recover and closed shortly after the turn of the new millennium.
Outreach, Inc. Office	863 MLK, Jr. Drive NW	No Longer Extant	1986 - mid 1990s	This was the general location of the Outreach Inc. office, the first Black AIDS service organization in Atlanta and the region, when it was founded by Sandra McDonald in 1986.

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Outwrite Bookstore and Coffeehouse #1	931 Monroe Drive	Extant	1993 - 1996	The original location of Outwrite Bookstore and Coffeehouse, opened by Phillip Rashoon in 1993. Though Charis Books and More had offered LGBTQ+ reading material since the 1970s, Outwrite specifically focused on LGBTQ+ literature, similar to the earlier bookstore, Christopher's Kind. Outwrite relocated to 10th and Piedmont in 1996.
Outwrite Bookstore and Coffeehouse #2	991 Piedmont Avenue NE (present occupant, LGBTQ+-friendly)	Extant	1996 - 2012	Location from 1996 to the store's closure in 2012. Outwrite was the cornerstone of the Midtown LGBTQ+ community in the late 1990s and through the first decade of the 21st century. It provided LGBTQ+ literature and community events. Today this building is occupied by Casa Almenara, a restaurant.
P. Street	1400 Peachtree Street	No Longer Extant	1981 - mid-1980s	LGBTQ+ clothing store that catered to the current fashion trends popular with gay men.
Pappy's Plantation Lounge at Mammy's Shanty	1480 Peachtree Road, Pickaninny Coffee Shop	No Longer Extant	1960s	Pappy's Plantation Lounge was a popular bar for white gay men in the late 1950s and early 1960s. The bar was attached to Mammy's Shanty, a restaurant. According to a historic menu, the two businesses were associated. The coffee shop appears to be associated with the restaurant as well and was listed in the 1964 edition of Directory 43, a gay guide. Depicted as a small one-story building, though described in comments on The Auction Finds webpage as having a large neon sign that was a fixture at Pershing Point. Description and historic images place it south of Rhodes Center, where the WWI memorial is today. The restaurant had a racist antebellum theme and many of its advertisements, menus, and memorabilia included racist depictions of Black people.
Peachtree Branch Library	1315 Peachtree Street NE	Extant	1985 - 1991	The Metropolitan Atlanta Council of Gay and Lesbian Organizations (known as MACGLO or the Metro Council) met at the Peachtree Branch Library every third Tuesday of the month. The group originally included approximately 20 member organizations, businesses, churches, and social groups. MACGLO was heavily involved in organizing events surrounding the 1988 Democratic National Convention in Atlanta and candidate forums during the 1989 Atlanta municipal elections.
Peachtree Playhouse, The	1150 Peachtree Street	Extant	1982	The Atlanta Gay Men's Chorus held one of the first concerts at the Peachtree Playhouse in the spring of 1982.
Peachtree Street Cruising Area	Peachtree Street	Extant	1960s	According to coverage of Atlanta's gay population in the Atlanta Constitution in 1966, Peachtree Street was a cruising area at the time, starting around the area of the Fox Theater.

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Pear Garden #1 and the Water Works Cafe	111 Luckie Street NW. Water Works	Extant	early 1990s	In 1986, a Chinese restaurant known as the Pear Garden was established at 111 Luckie Street on the first floor of the Atlantan Hotel. Located one block south of the Festival Lounge, the restaurant's bar quickly became a gathering space for Black LGBTQ+ Atlantans. The Pear Garden was a neighborhood bar, and like contemporary LGBTQ+ bars of the same type, it hosted a variety of events, including themed nights and live entertainment. It also sponsored an LGBTQ+ softball team, the Pear Garden Sluggers, which was the first Black team to play in the Gay World Series. An associated Black LGBTQ+ club known as Water Works was located next door to the Pear Garden in the early-to-mid-1990s, and the two businesses shared the 111 Luckie Street address during this time. Through the 1990s, the bar was also known as the Pearl Garden and the Palace. Both establishments were forced to close by the mid-1990s as part of the preparation for the Olympics.
Pear Garden #2	15 Simpson Street NW. The Pearl Garden, The Palace	Extant	mid-1990s	Second location of the Pearl Garden, a Black gay bar. It relocated to this location in 1995 after being forced from its previous Luckie Street location as the city prepared for the Olympics. By the late 1990s, the bar had relocated a second time, to 91 Broad Street.
Pear Garden, The #3	91 Broad Street; The Pearl Garden	Extant	late 1990s - early 2000s	In the late 1990s, the Pear Garden relocated to this location, where it operated into the first years of the 21st century. The Pear Garden was a Black LGBTQ+ bar that was previously located at 111 Luckie Street and 15 Simpson Street.
Peasant Uptown	3500 Peachtree Road	Unknown	1974 - 2000s	Owned by Dick Dailey and Steve Nygren, the Peasant Uptown was part of their family of Peasant restaurants. Similar to other locations, this restaurant had an upscale atmosphere and hired a largely LGBTQ+ staff. The exact commercial space occupied by the restaurant at Phipps is currently unknown.
Pershing Point Book Mart	24 17th Street NE	No Longer Extant	early 1970s	One of the earliest known bookstores to carry LGBTQ+ materials in Atlanta.
Pershing Point Hotel	1428 Peachtree St, Stratford Hall Apartments	No Longer Extant	1970s - 1980s	Hotel and apartment buildings that were next to each other on Peachtree Street. During the 1970s and early 1980s, Pershing Point was home to many LGBTQ+ people. Leslie Jordan lived here in the early 1970s and created a film in the 1990s that was centered around the hotel.
Pharr Library, The	550 Pharr Road	Extant	1979 - 1989	A gay bar that opened in this Brutalist office building in 1979 and was popular through the 1980s. The bar had a library theme, with a wall of books, and was popular with younger, college-age gay men. The target audience tended to be preppy gay men and the crowd was often filled with men in suits or branded polo shirts.
Piccolo Lounge, The	1139 Peachtree Street, Mama Mia Italian Restaurant	No Longer Extant	late 1950s - 1960s	LGBTQ+-friendly piano bar attached to Mama Mia Italian Restaurant, which was also welcoming of LGBTQ+ people. Both were popular with gay men between the late 1950s and the 1960s. The building burned in the 1970s and was briefly reopened as the Picadilly Lounge shortly after the fire. The Picadilly closed by the mid-1970s.

Name	Address/ Location/ Other Names	Extant	Significant Dates/ Decade	Description
Piedmont Park	1320 Monroe Drive NE	Extant	1940s - Present	Piedmont Park has long been a gathering place for LGBTQ+ people. In the mid-20th century, it was used by both LGBTQ+ and heterosexual, gender conforming people for “parking,” or public intimacy. The park was also used by LGBTQ+ people for socializing and cruising by the 1950s. Since the early 1970s, the park has been a focal point of Pride protests and celebrations.
Piedmont Park Sports Fields	Piedmont Park Active Oval	Extant	1950s - 1960s	Women’s softball teams, including the Tomboys and the Lorelei Ladies, played games at the diamonds at Piedmont Park. Though these teams were not exclusively LGBTQ+, many of the players were lesbian women. Both teams served as social networking spaces during the 1950s and 1960s for LGBTQ+ women. In August 1975, the Atlanta Lesbian Feminist Alliance’s softball team, the ALFA Omegas, sponsored the First Annual ALFA Invitational All Women’s Softball Tournament and held the games on the diamonds at Piedmont Park. In the 1980s and 1990s, other teams and leagues played here, and the 1993 Army Sports Classic’s soccer games were played here.
Piedmont Park Tree Trails	Westminster Drive Tree Trails	Extant	1960s - 1980s	Gay cruising area of Piedmont Park during the 1960s-1980s, and potentially even earlier. It was on the north end of the park, where the Atlanta Botanical Garden is now located. The area of Piedmont Park that contained the tree trails was bounded on the east by the Atlanta Belt Line Railway, on the north by Westminster Drive, on the west by Piedmont Avenue, and on the south by both the Park Drive bridge and the modern location of the Atlanta Botanical Gardens’ Dorothy Chapman Fuqua Conservatory, which is located on a slightly elevated section of land that was known as gay hill in the 1970s. In the 1960s, the Atlanta Police Department’s Vice Squad began monitoring this area, as well as other areas of the park, for cruising - often using entrapment to charge men.
Piedmont Tavern	1142 Piedmont Avenue NE, The Nook (present, not LGBTQ+-specific)	Extant	1944 - 1956	Vera Phillips, who later owned and was the eponym for Mrs. P’s, opened the Piedmont Tavern here with her husband Hubert. In the early 1950s, the restaurant was a popular gathering space for lesbian women, and when Phillips opened Mrs. P’s in 1956, they followed her to Ponce. Eventually Mrs. P’s became more popular with gay men. The building that was Piedmont Tavern is now the Nook.
Pierremont Plaza Hotel	590 West Peachtree Street; Crowne Plaza Hotel	Extant	April 1988	In mid-April 1988, the 13th Annual Southeastern Conference for Lesbian and Gay Men was held at the Pierremont Plaza Hotel. Over 400 people attended the networking event from across the country, which included workshops on homophobia, fundraising, AIDS statistical information, and organizing within small, rural communities.
Plaza Adult Book Store	1051 Ponce de Leon Avenue	Extant	1970s	An adult bookstore that sold both heterosexual and homosexual pornographic material in the 1970s. Today this space is occupied by the Righteous Room.

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Plaza Station Apartments	3399 Buford Highway	No Longer Extant	mid-1990s	The head members of the House of Escada (then known as Miami de Trois/the House of Evangelista) moved into an apartment at the Plaza Station Apartments complex in the summer of 1993, and this served as an important social space for the group during its early years.
Pleasant Peasant	555 Peachtree Street NE	Extant	1973 - 2000s	Restaurant chain originally opened at this location in 1973. Operated by Steve Nygren and Dick Dailey, who employed many LGBTQ+ staff members.
Poster Hut #1	1964 Cheshire Bridge Road	Extant	1967 - mid-1970s	The first location of the Poster Hut, one of the first stores in Atlanta to cater to the LGBTQ+ population, particularly gay men. It is unknown whether the store had a strong connection with the LGBTQ+ community at this location since it developed its reputation as an LGBTQ+ space under the ownership of Gary Goldberg, who only operated this store at this location for a couple of years.
Poster Hut #2	2175 Cheshire Bridge Road NE	Extant	1967 - 2011	Originally opened in 1967 at 1964 Cheshire Bridge Road, and relocated to this location by 1977. Through most of the 20th century, the store was operated by Gary Goldberg. The Poster Hut sold posters, music, clothing, pipes, small home goods, and the city's first collection of LGBTQ+-inclusive greeting cards. Billed as "Atlanta's only LGBTQ+ department store." The store closed in 2011.
Prince George Inn	115 6th Street	No Longer Extant	1964 - 1999	The Prince George Inn was a restaurant founded by Bill Copeland in 1964 that quickly became popular with LGBTQ+ Atlantans. Initially opened as a bar, Copeland added a kitchen in 1966. The restaurant was one of the early meeting locations of the Apollo Club, an underground gay men's social group in Atlanta. The Prince George Inn remained a popular LGBTQ+ dining space until it closed in 1999.
Purple Grotto, The	Address Unknown; on Forrest Avenue (now Ralph McGill Boulevard)	Unknown	1960s	Likely a Black space that was welcoming to LGBTQ+ people. Location is unknown, though it was likely in the Old Fourth Ward. Mentioned by Freddie Styles in his oral history interview.
R & R Publishing (Cavco, Inc. #3)	729 Piedmont Avenue	Extant	1981 - mid 1980s	R & R Publishing, Inc. became the name of the publishing company that distributed Cruise and Cruise Weekly in 1981, taking over from Cavco, Inc. It was still owned and operated by one of the founders, Richard Swinden. Following the name change, the business relocated to this address. It is the last known place Cruise was published in Atlanta.
Ray Kluka Memorial Park	800 Block of Monroe Drive NE	Extant	1990 - Present	Park named for Ray Kluka, an LGBTQ+ community leader (President of Midtown Neighbors Association)

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Resurrection Antiques and Otherworldly Possessions in the Church of the Living Room	465 Flat Shoals Avenue	Extant	mid-1990s	This was the antique store operated by Grant Henry when he began creating his artwork from previously painted religious imagery in the mid-1990s.
Rich's	3393 Peachtree Road; Macy's	Extant	1980s - 1990s	In the late twentieth century, the restroom of the Lenox Square Rich's was a cruising location for LGBTQ+ men.
Saint Mark United Methodist Church	781 Peachtree Street NE	Extant	1990s - Present	In 1990, Saint Mark United Methodist Church received a new pastor, Dr. Mike Cordle, who used the church location on Peachtree in Midtown to outreach to the LGBTQ+ community. It was one of the first established churches in Atlanta to affirm LGBTQ+ people. By the early 2010s, approximately 90% of the congregation was LGBTQ+.
Scandals	1510-G Piedmont Avenue; Felix's	Extant	1990s	A gay bar and restaurant in Ansley Square that operated through the 1990s. It was established in 1990 by Evelyn Downing. In 2002, Felix's, another gay bar, opened in this space. It still operates here as of 2023.
Score One	1184 West Peachtree Street	No Longer Extant	1974	One of the earliest LGBTQ+ discotheques in Atlanta. Operated during the mid-1970s, beginning in 1974.
Shallowford Presbyterian Church	2375 Shallowford Road	Extant	October 22, 1996	The Presbytery of Greater Atlanta met at Shallowford Presbyterian Church on October 22, 1996 to vote on whether Erin Swenson could retain her ordination after transitioning. In 1995, the Presbytery began an investigation into whether Swenson could maintain her ordination status after she requested a name change on the official register of ordained ministers. After a committee, which was tasked with the investigation, twice affirmed their belief that she should be able to remain ordained, the Presbytery set a date for a vote. In a 186 to 161 decision, Swenson was able to remain ordained, becoming the first known person to retain their ordination in a major church after transitioning.
Sheraton Hotel	265 Peachtree Center Avenue NE, Now the Atlanta Marriott Marquis	Extant	1999	Location of the 1999 Southern Comfort Conference, a trans conference based in Atlanta between 1991 and 2014. It was moved to Fort Lauderdale in 2015. The first conference was held at the La Quinta Inn on Piedmont Road (no longer extant) in 1991.
Showcase Cabaret	1544 Piedmont Avenue	Extant	1977 - 1980	An LGBTQ+-friendly cabaret theater, established in 1977 by Michael Chafin and Patrick Cuccaro, who had previously produced "The Boys in the Band" at the Academy Theater. This theater was popular among LGBTQ+ Atlantans, and was the first place to produce Della's Diner - a show that was extremely well received by Atlanta audiences. Showcase Cabaret also held a benefit for the First Tuesday Association for Lesbian & Gay Rights in 1980.

Name	Address/ Location/ Other Names	Extant	Significant Dates/ Decade	Description
Silver Grill, The	900 Monroe Drive	No Longer Extant	1950s - 1990s	The Silver Grill was a diner that was welcoming to LGBTQ+ people. Atlanta drag personality and musician Diamond Lil wrote and recorded a song about the diner, "Silver Grill Blues." It was one of her biggest hits. During the early years of the AIDS epidemic, Peggy Hubbard, a waitress at the Silver Grill, helped raise money at AIDS benefits and carried food to patients in the hospital. In an interview, Hubbard remembered serving gay men at the Silver Grill in the late 1950s.
Smuggler's Inn	1718-1720 Peachtree Road NW; Shelly's Place; Currently known as Peachtree 25th and operates as an office building	Extant	1970s - 1980s	In the early 1970s, this space operated as Smuggler's Inn, a gay bar that added between 1974 and 1975. In 1976, the space was reopened as Shelly's Place, which was a restaurant and disco, as well as a piano bar. Shelly's Place operated in this commercial office building from the mid-1970s through the early 1980s. It was popular with gay men. Known for Sunday brunch and T-dances.
Softball Country Club	3460 Jonesboro Road SE, Atlanta Southside Sports Complex	Extant	1983 - 1990s	In 1983, the first annual Atlanta Armory Classic Softball Tournament was held at the Softball Country Club. In 1993, the event was renamed the Armory Sports Classic. The Softball Country Club also hosted the 1989 and 1998 Gay Softball World Series tournaments. The Hotlanta Softball League organized the event and Atlanta fielded several teams, many of which were sponsored by local LGBTQ+ businesses bars.
Sojourner Truth Press, The	432 Moreland Avenue	Extant	1971 - 1972	The Sojourner Truth Press feminist press that relocated to Little Five Points from the Strip in Midtown in 1971. Supported and operated by lesbian women, including members of ALFA, this press published LGBTQ+ materials.
Southeast Gay and Lesbian Conference	659 Peachtree Street NE, Georgian Terrace and Fox Theater	Extant	1978	In 1978, the Southeast Gay and Lesbian Conference was held at the Georgian Terrace and the Fox Theater.
Southeastern Arts, Media, and Education (SAME) Offices	75 Bennett Street	Extant	1990s	By the early 1990s, Southeastern Arts, Media, and Education (SAME) relocated their offices to this location, from their original space in the Little Five Points Community Center.
Southern Bell Buildings	25 Auburn Avenue NE	Extant	1984 - 1987	According to a Georgia Voice article by Craig Washington, Henri McTerry hosted parties in a restaurant, known as "Skirt," that occupied a space in "the Southern Bell building." Between 1984 and 1987, McTerry hosted Friday night parties, referred to as "Skirt," here. Historic Atlanta states in a post on their website that the building at 25 Auburn Ave was renovated to be a restaurant in the 1980s.
Southern Voice Office	1189 Virginia Avenue	Extant	1990s	Though Southern Voice originally had an office within the larger Southeastern Arts, Media, and Education offices, by the mid-1990s they relocated to this space and had their own office for publishing the Atlanta-based LGBTQ+ newspaper.

Name	Address/ Location/ Other Names	Extant	Significant Dates/ Decade	Description
Spelman College Lesbian, Bi-Sexual Alliance	160 Belmonte Drive, SW	Extant	circa 1990s	A student organization available to all students in the Atlanta University Center. Weekly meetings to provide support and networking for LGBTQ+ students and fighting homophobia. Address taken from the 1996 Atlanta African American Gay & Lesbian Community Directory (copy on file at Auburn Avenue Research Library)
Sports Page, The	2069 Cheshire Bridge Road NE; 2069; the Heretic.	Extant	1979 - Present	A LGBTQ+ women's bar complex that was opened by Betty Collins (known as BC) in 1979. It was extremely popular, particularly among lesbian Atlantans, in the early 1980s. Cruise Weekly reported in 1982 that it was "one of the largest gay women's entertainment complexes in the United States." The Sports Page closed in 1990. In the early 1990s, Bev Cook reopened the bar as 2069, a male-oriented LGBTQ+ bar, and in 1992, it was rebranded as the Heretic. Cook's new club was dark and cruisy. The Heretic remains open as of 2023, and in the 21st century, they opened their space up to segments of the LGBTQ+ community that lost their bars, including the leather community, people interested in country line dancing, as well as the Atlanta-based drag troupe, the Armorettes.
St. Anthony of Padua Catholic Church	928 Ralph David Abernathy Boulevard SW	Extant	late 1980s	The African America Lesbian/Gay Alliance met in the community room in the basement of St. Anthony of Padua Catholic Church in the late 1980s.
St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church	1790 Lavista Road	Extant	1980s	This was the first official gathering space for Integrity, the Episcopalian gay religious and social organization. Beginning in 1975, the group met here on the second and fourth Sundays of the month. In 1988, the Atlanta chapter of Project Open Hand cooked meals for People With AIDS (PWAs) in an annex kitchen building at St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church.
St. John's Lutheran Church	1014 Ponce de Leon Avenue	Extant	2000	In 2000, St. John's Lutheran Church hired an openly gay pastor, Bradley Schmeling, to lead their church. In the early 2000s, he became the focus of a national discussion in the Evangelical Lutheran Church about LGBTQ+ clergy, and he had the support of the congregation at St. John's.
St. Jude the Apostle	717 Glenridge Drive NE	Extant	1974	This address was listed as a contact location for Dignity, a Catholic religious and social organization for gay people. Though the group met at St. Thomas More Catholic Church in Decatur, Reverend Liam Tuffy of St. Jude the Apostle was listed as a contact for the organization in 1974.

Name	Address/ Location/ Other Names	Extant	Significant Dates/ Decade	Description
Start of the First Atlanta Gay Pride March	878 Peachtree Street NE, Federal Building	Extant	June 27, 1971	Georgia Gay Liberation Front organizers began Atlanta's first Gay Pride March on June 27, 1971 in front of the former Federal Building at 7th and Peachtree streets to protest the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare's (HEW) firing of lesbian and gay federal employees under the Nixon Administration. Denied a permit by the City of Atlanta, the approximately 125-200 LGBTQ+ marchers and allies were confined to the sidewalks as they moved north along Peachtree Street to Piedmont Park, where the event ended with a rally composed of a group of speakers and a street theater performance.
Sting, The	2359 Peachtree Road, Mama Dee's Yum Yum Tree, Cabaret, Utopia	Unknown	1970 - 1980s	Unsure of exact location, but likely in this shopping center. Originally it was a bar known as the Sting, but it became Mama Dee's Yum Yum Tree in the mid-1970s. Owned by Elizabeth DeBoard, the woman who later also owned the Locker Room with her son, Robbie Llewellyn. Robbie was later charged for hiring a man to kill another bar owner, Peter Winokur, who owned Mother's on Peachtree Road.
Sutton Place	3540 Buford Highway	No Longer Extant	1970 - 2000	Sutton Place was an apartment complex that was popular with LGBTQ+ Atlantans in the 1970s and 1980s. Though the address of Sutton Place during the 1970s/1980s is unknown, Apartmentratings.com lists this as the location of "Highland at Sutton Place." Members of the Facebook group stated it was on Buford Highway, and a 2008 street view of this complex shows rainbow banners on the property.
Sweet Gum Head	2284 Cheshire Bridge Road NE	Extant	1971 - 1981	One of the most well-known Atlanta show bars of the 1970s. The Sweet Gum Head was opened by Frank Powell in 1971. Known as the Show Place of the South, the show bar featured large productions and included several popular and successful female impersonators/drag queens (in terms of notoriety and winning competitions). It closed in 1981, but was quickly followed by its successor, Illusions, which was established by gay Atlanta business owners who loved the Sweet Gum Head.
Telephone Factory Lofts, The	828 Ralph McGill Boulevard	Extant	mid-1990s	Grant Henry, also known by his pen name Sister Louisa, first displayed his artwork at an art show at the Telephone Factory Lofts in the mid-1990s. His pieces, which are now well known and are associated with his bar - Sister Louisa's Church of the Living Room and Ping-Pong Emporium, mixes previously created religious artwork and photographs with phrases that refocus the meaning of the images.
Tempo Parkway Apartments	2572 Lenox Road NE. Now known as Lenox Place Apartments	Extant	1970 - 1980s	Tempo Parkway Apartments was an apartment complex popular with LGBTQ+ Atlantans during the 1970s and 1980s. According to members of the "You've lived in GAY Atlanta" Facebook group, members of the Hollywood Hots that performed at the Locker Room lived here.
Texas Restaurant	10 Park Place SE; 10 Pryor Street SE	Extant	1990s	Site of the Texas Restaurant, a popular business and nightclub for Black lesbians in Atlanta during the 1990s and early 2000s. Hospitality Atlanta and ZAMI hosted several events in the Texas Restaurant during that time.

Name	Address/ Location/ Other Names	Extant	Significant Dates/ Decade	Description
The Barb Offices	40 Peachtree Place	No Longer Extant	1976 - 1977	The Barb, Atlanta's first LGBTQ+ newspaper, moved its offices and publishing operations into this former house at 40 Peachtree Place in June 1976. It was also a hub of the gay community prior to the discontinuation of the paper in 1977. Near Peachtree Place and Spring Street.
The Chanticleer Offices #1	1132 West Peachtree Street, Suite 112; AID Atlanta Office #3	No Longer Extant	1988	Between 1973 and approximately 1975, Jack Gilley published The Chanticleer from the office space in suite 112. Over a decade later, a classified ad in the December 8, 1988 issue of the Southern Voice noted AID Atlanta maintained its office in Suite 112 in this building by this time.
The Chanticleer Offices #2	828 Barnett Street, JAGGA Inc.	Extant	mid-1970s	Jack Gilley published The Chanticleer from this address beginning approximately 1975. It also served as the office for Gilley's printing business, JAGGA Inc. By early 1976, he had relocated the office to North Highland Avenue. Though the building marked here does not currently have an address, it is likely that this small building at the rear of the lot for 870 Greenwood Avenue was the space occupied by The Chanticleer. It aligns with the Barnett Street address, was extant in aerials from the 1960s and 1970s, and was used as a business in the first decade of the 2000s.
The Chanticleer Offices #3	1046 North Highland Avenue, JAGGA Inc.	Extant	1976	This was the last known address used as offices for The Chanticleer, Atlanta's earliest known LGBTQ+ publication. Jack Gilley relocated his printing business, JAGGA Inc., as well as the magazine he published, The Chanticleer, to this space between late 1975 and early 1976. The latest known copy of The Chanticleer dates to May or June 1976, and it is unknown whether it continued being published beyond that time.
Tick Tock Grill, The	1935 Peachtree Road NW	Extant	1950s	A bar and grill that was popular with white lesbian women during the early-to-mid 1950s. The bar was targeted by police after they discovered it was a popular hangout for gay women. Louise "Lou" Allen, the owner of the Tick Tock Grill, was forced to surrender the bar's alcohol license under pressure from the police because of its association with LGBTQ+ people.
Toolulahs	3041 Piedmont Road	Extant	1980s	An LGBTQ+ women's bar that was opened by Dot Elliot in 1983. It was welcoming to both men and women, and hosted drag performances.
Tower Lounge	735 Ralph McGill Boulevard NE (previously Forrest Road); The Tower; The Tower II; Club Sheba	Extant	1952 - 2000s	The Tower Lounge was established by Charles Denny Gamas in 1952 as a working class bar and restaurant that was popular with lesbians. In 1974, it was purchased by two lesbian women, Betty Jo Fisher ("Jo") and Betty Collins (BC). It continued to have a working class character, but also developed an association with ALFA during this period. The Tower Lounge closed briefly in 1979 and operated as "Club Sheba," a Black lesbian bar. In mid-1980, it was operating as the Tower Lounge again, and continued to cater mostly to lesbian women. Though the name was changed to the Tower II in the late 1990s, it continued to serve as an important lesbian bar into the twenty-first century. The building currently houses the Bantam Pub.

Name	Address/ Location/ Other Names	Extant	Significant Dates/ Decade	Description
Traxx	306 Luckie Street, 339 Marietta Street	No Longer Extant	1983 - 2007	Traxx was originally opened in 1989 by Phillip Boone and David Hampton. Traxx was a large Black LGBTQ+ club. The club had multiple levels, including a balcony level that overlooked the large dance floor. Later, 339 Marietta Street, the address for the street on the other side of the block, was used as the address for the club. It was originally known as the Warehouse and held Traxx parties. By the late 1990s, it was known specifically as Traxx. There were also Traxx Parties held at other bars, and sometimes the addresses for these bars are listed as the address for Traxx itself. This likely reflects the origins club, which began as house parties in the early 1980s. By 2007, the building at this location had been demolished. A later midtown location of Traxx was opened at 151 Pine Street. The original location of the club was known for its great sound system and was visited by famous singers/rappers, including Evelyn Champagne King, Martha Wash, Little Kim, and Jennifer Hudson. In 1996, the House of Escada held their first ball, the Winter Solstice Ball, at Traxx, which established the ballroom scene in Atlanta.
Tripp's Bar	1931 Piedmont Circle NE	Extant	1998 - Present	A neighborhood gay bar that opened in the late 1990s. It is still operating as of 2023.
Trust Company of Georgia Northeast Freeway Branch	2160 Monroe Drive	Extant	1961	A unique bank branch building designed by Atlanta architect Henri Jova, a gay man who led the preservation movement in the residential portion of Midtown and designed several notable buildings in the city.
T's & Things	896 Peachtree Street	Extant	1982 - mid-1980s	T's & Things opened in 1982 and operated at the height of LGBTQ+ Midtown as one of the Gay Strip's LGBTQ+ gift stores. The store sold t-shirts, greeting cards, and small gift items. By summer 1982, the stores in this building were billing themselves collectively as "Peachtree 800," running ads that stated they were "the block that cater[ed] to the gay community."
TV Dinner	1028 Peachtree Street	No Longer Extant	1980s	A new wave club from the 1980s that was LGBTQ+-friendly. The Now Explosion performed at this venue.
Union Station	436 Armour Circle	No Longer Extant	1975 - 1976	Owned by Robbie Llewellyn and his mother, Elizabeth "Mama Dee" DeBoard. This short-lived disco occupied an old warehouse that sat adjacent to the railway. It was billed as the largest disco in the continental United States. According to Diamond Lil, the interior was railroad themed and the decor included large train cars that were brought into the building. Likely due to high cost, it was quickly transformed into another short-lived venture - a show bar. For a short period in 1976, it was the home of the Hollywood Hots, until they relocated back to the Lock Room Disco.
Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Atlanta	1911 Cliff Valley Way	No Longer Extant	1970s - 2000	Early supporter of LGBTQ+ equal rights in Atlanta. Allowed the Metropolitan Community Church to use their space for worship services in 1972 prior to MCC finding its own location. Published the "Unitarian Universalists Lesbian and Gay Community Newsletters" from 1982 to 1990. Located outside the Atlanta city limits, the original church building was demolished in 2018.

Name	Address/ Location/ Other Names	Extant	Significant Dates/ Decade	Description
Uptown, The	2293 Peachtree Road	Extant	early 1980s	An LGBTQ+ women's lounge that was opened in 1981 by Deana Collins, one of Atlanta's most well-known LGBTQ+ bar owners of the late twentieth century. This was her first bar, though she had previously worked in other LGBTQ+ bars in the city, including the Sports Page. Advertisements for the bar included the phrase, "our brothers are always welcome," expressing a sentiment that was common in the spaces owned by Collins.
Virginia-Highland Church	743 Virginia Avenue; Virginia Highland Baptist Church	Extant	1990s	Virginia-Highland Baptist Church, now known as Virginia Highland Church, began welcoming LGBTQ+ people to their congregation in 1990. During the early 1990s, Virginia-Highland Baptist Church made their buildings available to LGBTQ+ organizations for meetings and events, including the Black gay men's group Second Sunday and the Atlanta Gay Men's Chorus. Between 1995 and the early 2000s, Redefined Faith Worship Center (originally known as Redefined Faith Unity Fellowship Church), one of the earliest known gay-affirming Black churches in Atlanta, began meeting here. The church also ordained a gay congregation member as a deacon and began renting their sanctuary out for same-sex union ceremonies. In 1999, the Georgia Baptist Convention voted to exclude the church from the convention for accepting and affirming homosexual people rather than asking them to repent for their sexuality.
Weekends	1022 Peachtree Street	No Longer Extant	mid-to-late 1980s	An LGBTQ+-friendly, new wave dance club. RuPaul performed here as a go-go dancer in the mid-1980s. The club moved to 688 Spring Street in 1989.
Winecoff Hotel	176 Peachtree Street NW. Eucharistic Catholic Church; Cotton Blossom (now the Ellis Hotel)	Extant	1946	George Hyde held the first meeting of his all-inclusive Christian congregation at the Winecoff Hotel in a meeting room after being ordained by John Kazantks, a Greek Orthodox Bishop who left Greece after being accused of homosexuality. The congregation included about 20 people at that time. It was formed after a member of the Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Atlanta was not served communion following his confession to the church's priest that he was homosexual and then refusing to denounce his sexuality when the priest asked him to do so. Hyde stood alongside him at communion the following week and was also refused by association with him, which then initiated the formation of a group of church members that wanted a more inclusive space to meet. Though the new church, known as the Eucharistic Catholic Church, was not specifically formed for homosexuals, it welcomed everyone and many of its members were homosexual. It also included Black members. Later, the congregation moved to an old house a few blocks from the downtown district of Atlanta (address unknown), and in December the Winecoff Hotel caught fire. The church was partially funded by the management of the Winecoff Hotel, who also owned the Cotton Blossom - a gay cocktail bar in the hotel.

Name	Address/ Location/ Other Names	Extant	Significant Dates/ Decade	Description
Winn Park	32 Lafayette Drive NE	Extant	1970s	In the 1960s and early 1970s, this park was a gay male cruising area that was targeted by police for entrapment. In 1973, when he was vice mayor, Maynard Jackson spoke to a crowd here and voiced support for the gay community. Bounded on the north by Westminster Drive, on the west by Peachtree Circle, on the south by Lafayette Drive and Barksdale Drive, and on the east by The Prado.
Wishing Well Apartments	3151 Buford Highway	Extant	1980s - 1990s	Wishing Well was one of the major LGBTQ+ apartment complexes associated with the LGBTQ+ enclave centered around Cheshire Bridge Road. Though the northern portion of the complex is extant, at least four buildings on the south side of the complex have been demolished.
Wit's End	50 5th Street, 60 5th Street, Peaches Stardust, Stardust Lounge, Payton Place	No Longer Extant	1950s - 1970s	A cabaret opened by Phil Erickson, who was once in the Merry Mutes with Dick Van Dyke. The bar portion of the cabaret was popular with gay men in the 1950s. At least one female impersonator was a member of the cast here. In the early 1970s, Billy Jones referenced the drag performances here while performing at Club Centaur, stating "Dick Van Dyke was one of the first to play drag many years ago at the Wits' End down the street." (Quote from article in David Vol. 1, No. 2, p. 7). In 1974, Peaches Stardust, also known as the Stardust Lounge, opened in this building. Likely opened by John McBride, who previously owned Peaches Back Door. There was a man known as "Peaches" (Jim Brooker) who was likely the eponym for "Peaches Backdoor," an earlier bar located in the building that later became Backstreet. Brooker bartended at Backstreet as well, so maybe a famous bar owner/worker. The ad for Peaches' Stardust stated that "Peaches' Back Door is open again." Frank Powell operated a piano bar named "Payton Place" at this address by 1975.
Women's Center	1315 Stillwood Dr NE	Extant	1971	While not specifically LGBTQ+, according to an article in the January 25, 1971 edition of the Great Speckled Bird, this building served as an early community meeting location for Atlanta's Women Liberation in the Virginia-Highland neighborhood.
Woolworth's	1544 Piedmont Avenue; L.A. Fitness	Extant	1970s - Present	As early as the 1970s, the restroom of the Ansley Mall Woolworth's was a cruising location for LGBTQ+ men. Today the anchor retail space is occupied by L.A. Fitness and remains an important LGBTQ+ location in Atlanta.
WRFG Radio	1091 Euclid Avenue NE, 89.3 FM	Extant	1970s - 1980s	WRFG (Radio Free Georgia) was founded in 1973 as an alternative radio station that would give marginalized populations, who did not typically have access to mainstream stations, a place to produce and air content. This included LGBTQ+ people, and several of the first shows on the station were hosted by lesbian women, including Elaine Kolb, a founder of ALFA, who began broadcasting the "Lesbian Woman" on WRFG in 1973. The station's original location was at 1091 Euclid Avenue NE (now Elmyr). WRFG moved to its current location on Austin Avenue in the early 1980s.

Name	Address/ Location/ Other Names	Extant	Significant Dates/ Decade	Description
Yea Man Wine House	262 Auburn Avenue NE	Extant	1960s	The Yea Man Wine House was a bar popular with Black LGBTQ+ Atlantans in the mid-1960s. The police raid of the Yea Man Wine House, a Black-owned nightclub located in the small, one-story commercial building on 262 Auburn Avenue, occurred in the spring of 1967. Acting on complaints the business operated “as a hangout for female impersonators and homosexuals,” two white vice detectives conducted the raid just before midnight on Saturday, May 6, 1967. Upon entering the club, the police officers stated they found “female impersonators, drunks and a lot of people loafing and not buying anything,” according to their account of the event published two days later in the Atlanta Constitution. The police arrested three women and five men during the raid between the ages of 22 and 53. All eight people were jailed and were charged with drunkenness, impersonation of a female, and loitering
Yorke Downs	200 26th Street NW	No Longer Extant	1970s - 1980s	A Tudor style apartment complex that was popular with LGBTQ+ people in Atlanta in the 1970s and 1980s, particularly gay men. It was at the end of 26th Street, which was home to several apartments that welcomed LGBTQ+ people.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH NEEDS

The development of this historic context statement involved extensive research, oral history interviews, and the creation of a preliminary inventory of LGBTQ+ associated properties, both extant, and non-extant, to assist individuals, organizations, local governments, and historians in understanding these resources through the lens of the NRHP. What this context statement revealed was that LGBTQ+ resources differ from a traditional historic property in many ways. The research involved the typical research of archival collections, but also relied on more non-traditional culling through social media LGBTQ+ history pages—the project historians simply needed to go where the history was located.

LGBTQ+ people have always lived in Atlanta, but the freedom to live openly in the city only really began evolving during the last 40 to 50 years. Therefore, the research approach needed to be flexible, sensitive, and understanding of this history. The places that became the home to LGBTQ+ social activities, religious and spiritual life, how individuals and groups of people took care of their medical and emotional health and advocated for their civil rights – it all evolved over time. Most of these places were not purpose built but used existing space wherever it could be found. For many buildings and locations, low visibility was a priority, so LGBTQ+ people would feel safe. Because this history is relatively recent and an evolving one that often required the consultation of non-traditional sources, there is much history left to be told, and additional significant places to discover.

Similarly, the approach to viewing these properties through the lens of the NRHP needs to account for how the property types are similar- many are similar in that they are all different. It is typical to find a bar or business under the Social Spaces theme that changed names and locations frequently. It is also typical to see LGBTQ+ associated places operate in an existing historic building and retrofit that building for different uses and needs. Additionally, many LGBTQ+ associated buildings, sites, and structures will need to be assessed as properties that are less than 50 years of age, simply because much of this important history is part of our recent past.

It is essential that this work continue and that significant LGBTQ+ places and spaces be recognized, interpreted, and preserved. The inventory research alone tells us that we have lost so many places already. To ensure documentation and preservation efforts continue, the following recommendations are suggested for the City of Atlanta, Historic Atlanta, Inc., and other community partners that are focused on history and historic preservation in the City of Atlanta:

- Undertake a comprehensive city-wide historic resources survey that is targeted at (but not limited to) the included Inventory in this report. The survey should include field work and engagement with community stakeholders to assist with the identification of properties and assessing National Register integrity. Community engagement will be crucial when documenting these properties in order to help inform each property's key character defining traits through historic photos and oral history interviews.
- Develop new nominations for listing in the National Register of Historic Places of the

following places and spaces in the City of Atlanta: Outwrite Bookstore and Coffeeshop (10th & Piedmont Building); Michael Hardwick Home (811 Ponce de Leon Place, NE); AIDS Research Consortium of Atlanta (965 Virginia Avenue, NE), ALFA House #1 & #2 (1190 Mansfield Avenue, NE); 1326 McLendon Avenue, NE); Atlanta Gay Center (931 Ponce de Leon Avenue); Bulldog's (893 Peachtree Street); Charis Bookstore (419 Moreland Avenue); Ansley Mall; Funtone World Headquarters (1714 Adolphus Street); Grady Memorial Hospital; Grady Ponce De Leon Center; Metropolitan Community Church (80 North Highland Avenue); Mrs. P's (551 Ponce de Leon Avenue); The Sweet Gum Head (2284 Cheshire Bridge Road); The Jerusalem House (831 Briarcliff Road); and The Strip (Between 10th & 11th on Peachtree Street).

- Amend existing listings in the NRHP in the City of Atlanta to include LGBTQ+ history as an area of significance. These include but are not limited to: the Winecoff Hotel (176 Peachtree Street), Piedmont Park, Midtown, Ansley Park, Candler Park and Virginia-Highland historic districts.
- Explore the creation of City of Atlanta Historic or Landmark Districts in areas of the City of Atlanta with high levels of LGBTQ+ significance, through the City of Atlanta's regular designation process contained in the City of Atlanta's Historic Preservation Ordinance including extensive community engagement, discussion, and consultation with the potentially affected property owners. These areas may include: Piedmont Park, Midtown, Ansley Park, Candler Park, Little 5 Points Community Business District and Virginia-Highland.

- Establish a prioritized list of significant places & spaces that would be potential candidates for designation as City of Atlanta Landmark Buildings/Sites. Their potential actual designation would follow the City of Atlanta's regular designation process contained in the City of Atlanta's Historic Preservation Ordinance and take into account extensive community engagement / discussion and consultation with the affected property owners. The list should prioritize those properties that are in perilous condition and in greatest need of preservation action, whether through neglect or if threatened by encroaching development. It is suggested the first prioritized list be generated within six (6) months of the release of this historic context statement report and subsequently updated as an addendum to this report no less than every two (2) years.
- Consider developing an LGBTQ+ history Interpretive Plan for the City of Atlanta (taking into account extensive community engagement and discussion) that would highlight LGBTQ+ places and spaces through interpretive signage including but not limited to: Georgia Historical Society markers, public exhibits, virtual / in person walking tours, social media campaigns, educational programs, and other means. The goal of the Interpretive Plan should be to raise public awareness of the importance of these places and spaces and the need to preserve them as a part of the City's future physical heritage.
- Consider creating a Legacy Business program for the City of Atlanta that recognizes and provides assistance to long-standing business in the City. In such a program, businesses serving the LGBTQ+ community for a period

of 20 years or more should be considered candidates for recognition and assistance.

- Incorporate the information and recommendations of this Historic Context Statement work into the initiatives and programs of the City of Atlanta’s Future Places Project and use recommendations of the Future Places Project’s “Call to Action ” to advance the understanding of LGBTQ+ history in the City of Atlanta.
- Incorporate the preservation of historic LGBTQ+ places and spaces into existing and future City of Atlanta master planning efforts.

FUTURE RESEARCH NEEDS

Because the period of significance of this context ends in 2000 and the project scope generally limited the research and resource identification to those properties located within the City of Atlanta limits, it was clear from the outset that additional work would be needed to accurately and comprehensively capture the extensive breadth of LGBTQ+ history in the metropolitan area. With this understanding, the following topics are recommended for future research:

- Additional LGBTQ+ contextual histories are needed to identify the historic themes and significant historic resources in other parts of metropolitan Atlanta, particularly in the City of Decatur and other incorporated and unincorporated areas of the Clayton, Cobb, DeKalb, Fulton, and Gwinnett counties.
- Additional research and documentation of Black LGBTQ+ historic resources in Atlanta

are urgently needed. Archival materials of significant Black LGBTQ+ people, organizations, places, and events are still underrepresented in local repositories and at this time, much of this important information has only been recorded in oral histories, contemporaneous media, or in recent social media posts.

- More research is also required on the histories of other important ethnic LGBTQ+ groups in metropolitan Atlanta, particularly LGBTQ+ people in the Asian and Latin communities, which largely began to settle in surrounding areas outside the City of Atlanta during the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries.
- The history of Atlanta’s transgender community is another area of the larger LGBTQ+ story that requires additional research and documentation. As with some ethnic LGBTQ+ groups, many trans healthcare, political, and social organizations did not become active until the early twenty-first century and other metropolitan areas located beyond the Atlanta city limits.
- This historic context statement provides a strong foundation and context for LGBTQ+ history in the City of Atlanta. However, additional significant people, places, and events associated with LGBTQ+ history that are within the period of significance are likely to be identified, as well as new information gathered on previously identified places and spaces. As such, it is recommended that this additional information be included as an addendum to this report with updates no less than every five (5) years.

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APPENDIX A: GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Source: Human Rights Campaign

Ally | A term used to describe someone who is actively supportive of LGBTQ+ people. It encompasses straight and cisgender allies, as well as those within the LGBTQ+ community who support each other (e.g., a lesbian who is an ally to the bisexual community).

Asexual | Often called “ace” for short, asexual refers to a complete or partial lack of sexual attraction or lack of interest in sexual activity with others. Asexuality exists on a spectrum, and asexual people may experience no, little or conditional sexual attraction.

Biphobia | The fear and hatred of, or discomfort with, people who love and are sexually attracted to more than one gender.

Bisexual | A person emotionally, romantically or sexually attracted to more than one sex, gender or gender identity though not necessarily simultaneously, in the same way or to the same degree. Sometimes used interchangeably with pansexual.

Cisgender | A term used to describe a person whose gender identity aligns with those typically associated with the sex assigned to them at birth.

Coming Out | The process in which a person first acknowledges, accepts and appreciates their sexual orientation or gender identity and begins to share that with others.

Cruise | The act of searching for a sexual partner, typically for a casual or anonymous encounter. The act was usually performed in a public place, often on foot or in cars.

Gay | A person who is emotionally, romantically or sexually attracted to members of the same gender. Men, women and non-binary people may use this term to describe themselves.

Gender Binary | A system in which gender is constructed into two strict categories of male or female. Gender identity is expected to align with the sex assigned at birth and gender expressions and roles fit traditional expectations.

Gender Dysphoria | Clinically significant distress caused when a person’s assigned birth gender is not the same as the one with which they identify.

Gender-Expansive | A person with a wider, more flexible range of gender identity and/or expression than typically associated with the binary gender system. Often used as an umbrella term when referring to young people still exploring the possibilities of their gender expression and/or gender identity.

Gender expression | External appearance of one’s gender identity, usually expressed through behavior, clothing, body characteristics or voice, and which may or may not conform to socially defined behaviors and characteristics typically associated with being either masculine or feminine.

Gender-Fluid | A person who does not identify with a single fixed gender or has a fluid or unfixed gender identity.

Gender Identity | One's innermost concept of self as male, female, a blend of both or neither – how individuals perceive themselves and what they call themselves. One's gender identity can be the same or different from their sex assigned at birth.

Gender Non-Conforming | A broad term referring to people who do not behave in a way that conforms to the traditional expectations of their gender, or whose gender expression does not fit neatly into a category. While many also identify as transgender, not all gender non-conforming people do.

Genderqueer | Genderqueer people typically reject notions of static categories of gender and embrace a fluidity of gender identity and often, though not always, sexual orientation. People who identify as "genderqueer" may see themselves as being both male and female, neither male nor female or as falling completely outside these categories.

Homophobia | The fear and hatred of or discomfort with people who are attracted to members of the same sex.

Intersex | Intersex people are born with a variety of differences in their sex traits and reproductive anatomy. There is a wide variety of difference among intersex variations, including differences in genitalia, chromosomes, gonads, internal sex organs, hormone production, hormone response, and/or secondary sex traits.

Lesbian | A woman who is emotionally, romantically or sexually attracted to other women. Women and non-binary people may use this term to describe themselves.

LGBTQ+ | An acronym for "lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer" with a "+" sign to recognize the limitless sexual orientations and gender identities used by members of our community.

Non-Binary | An adjective describing a person who does not identify exclusively as a man or a woman. Non-binary people may identify as being both a man and a woman, somewhere in between, or as falling completely outside these categories. While many also identify as transgender, not all non-binary people do. Non-binary can also be used as an umbrella term encompassing identities such as agender, bigender, genderqueer or gender-fluid.

Outing | Exposing someone's lesbian, gay, bisexual transgender or gender non-binary identity to others without their permission. Outing someone can have serious repercussions on employment, economic stability, personal safety or religious or family situations.

Pansexual | Describes someone who has the potential for emotional, romantic or sexual attraction to people of any gender though not necessarily simultaneously, in the same way or to the same degree. Sometimes used interchangeably with bisexual.

Queer | A term people often use to express a spectrum of identities and orientations that are counter to the mainstream. Queer is often used as a catch-all to include many people, including those who do not identify as exclusively straight and/or folks who have non-binary or gender-expansive identities. This term was previously used as a slur, but has been reclaimed by many parts of the LGBTQ+ movement.

Questioning | A term used to describe people who are in the process of exploring their sexual orientation or gender identity.

Same-Gender Loving | A term some prefer to use instead of lesbian, gay or bisexual to express attraction to and love of people of the same gender.

Sex Assigned at Birth | The sex, male, female or intersex, that a doctor or midwife uses to describe a child at birth based on their external anatomy.

Sexual Orientation | An inherent or immutable enduring emotional, romantic or sexual attraction to other people. Note: an individual's sexual orientation is independent of their gender identity.

Transgender | An umbrella term for people whose gender identity and/or expression is

different from cultural expectations based on the sex they were assigned at birth. Being transgender does not imply any specific sexual orientation. Therefore, transgender people may identify as straight, gay, lesbian, bisexual, etc.

Transitioning | A series of processes that some transgender people may undergo in order to live more fully as their true gender. This typically includes social transition, such as changing name and pronouns, medical transition, which may include hormone therapy or gender affirming surgeries, and legal transition, which may include changing legal name and sex on government identity documents. Transgender people may choose to undergo some, all or none of these processes.



Front Cover Sources

1. First location of WRFG at 1091 Euclid Avenue (Source: NSA, 2023)
2. The Heretic at 2069 Cheshire Bridge Road (Source: NSA, 2023)
3. Ansley Mall at 1544 Piedmont Road (Source: NSA, 2023)
4. Pear Garden and Mr. B's at 111 and 107 Luckie Street (Source: NSA, 2023)
5. Postcard showing the Greyhound bus terminal in Downtown Atlanta (Source: Greyhound Bus Station and Restaurant, Atlanta, GA, NSA Collection Item)
6. Two people sitting on the steps of the Atlanta Gay Center in 1989 (Source: *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* Photographic Archives. Special Collections and Archives, Georgia State University Library)
7. Postcard showing the Winecoff Hotel (Source: Winecoff Hotel, Atlanta, GA, NSA Collection Item)
8. Boy Next Door at 1447 Piedmont Avenue (Source: NSA, 2023)
9. Copy of the Backstreet logo submitted with the trademark application in 1975 (Source: Backstreet memorabilia. Vicki Vara papers. Kenan Research Center at the Atlanta History Center)
10. Entrance to Charis Books at 419 Moreland Avenue on August 22, 1987 (Source: *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* Photographic Archives. Special Collections and Archives, Georgia State University Library)
11. Cover of *The Chanticleer*, Volume 9, February 1974 (Source: Personal Collection of Paul Fulton, Jr.)
12. Postcard showing the Downtown theatre district in the early twentieth century. (Source: Looking South at Peachtree at Ellis, Atlanta, GA. The Tichnor Brother's Collection. Boston Public Library)
13. "Gay America Loves You" billboard overlooking the Downtown Connector (Source: *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* Photographic Archives. Special Collections and Archives, Georgia State University Library)
14. Postcard showing the hotel that housed Mrs. P's (Source: 551 Ponce de Leon Hotel, NSA Collection Item)
15. John Howell Park at 797 Virginia Avenue (Source: NSA, 2023)
16. Club Centaur at 1037 Peachtree Street (Source: NSA, 2023)

Back Cover Source: Crosswalk at the corner of 10th Street and Piedmont Avenue (Source: NSA, 2023)

