



# TRETTER LETTER

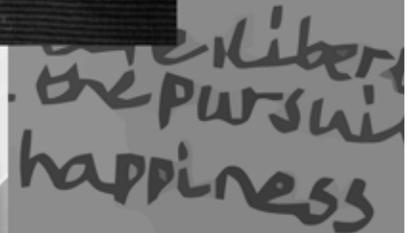


UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA  
LIBRARIES  
Archives and Special Collections

January, 2013  
Volume 8 Number 1

NEWSLETTER FOR THE FRIENDS OF THE TRETTER COLLECTION

## Minnesotans United to Archive at Tretter



MINNESOTANS  
UNITED  
FOR ALL FAMILIES  
MINUNITED.ORG

THIS FAMILY WILL  
**VOTE NO.**

### Inside this Issue:

- Minnesotans United Vote Tretter
- Unique Summer Study Program a Success
- Students Connect to Tretter
- Tretter Website Grows
- ALMS Recap

For my friend and co-worker who helped me to understand the importance of solidarity and our common call to

## FROM THE CHAIR

At the time this newsletter is being prepared, we are still several weeks away from the November elections. It is times like these that trying to “capture the moment” of LGBT culture and history can be a challenge. Politics, culture, faith, community, family... everything is changing so fast.

LGBT culture is particularly unique, given that our community’s histories and culture are not passed down genealogically from our parents. Archives like the Tretter Collection are critically important for preserving and protecting our past.

So how does the collection stay on top of these changes? As you can imagine, there are a lot of people involved. There are groups of dedicated volunteers who not only help us find materials to add to the collection, but help us to catalogue and store them so they can be easily used by

visitors. There is the Tretter Collection Advisory Board made of volunteers and university faculty and staff that make recommendations on what to track down, and make important connections to members in the community on behalf of the library. There are dedicated members of the libraries staff who bring the resources of such a large university institution to the archive’s service. Students and faculty bring their own unique interests and specializations to bear on the collection and expanding the diversity of topics.

Lisa Vecoli, Curator of the collection, deserves a lot of credit for continuously reaching out to organizations, individuals and institutions and encouraging them to consider the overwhelming importance of saving our history.

Because of the work of so many people, rest assured that the collection continues to stay on top of everything. Among our many new acquisitions, we are pleased to announce that Minnesotans United for All Families – the leading advocate for civil rights during the Minnesota Marriage amendment debate – will be archiving their records with us. So often after a major political election, records quickly disappear as offices are cleaned out. Archives like ours were critical in helping understand how other states have approached this fight, and by donating their records to the Tretter Collection, the important work of Minnesotans United will continue to live as other states learn from the efforts here.



Eric Colleary

My apologies for resorting to cliché, but hopefully it’s clear that to continue to preserve our heritage for future generations, it does take a village. If you

have some time to spare, please think about volunteering on our Advisory Board, or helping us to catalogue new materials. As this tax season draws to an end, consider the Tretter Collection in your charitable giving which will help us continue to expand our acquisition and preservation efforts. The library staff would also be able to help you if you’re interested in long-term giving or estate planning to the collection. Whatever your gift of time, talents, or financial contributions, know they are appreciated and would be put to the best of use. No gifts are too small, or for that matter too large.

Many thanks to all who’ve made 2012 one of the collection’s best, and the very best wishes to you and yours in the coming year.

Eric Colleary  
Tretter Advisory Board Chair

## You Can Help!

The Tretter Collection relies on the support of organizations and individuals, like you! Please consider making a charitable donation to the Tretter Collection using the enclosed self-addressed envelope as part of your giving plan. Your support will help to preserve GLBT history now and for future generations.

Thank you.

## TRETTER LETTER

NEWSLETTER FOR THE FRIENDS OF  
THE TRETTER COLLECTION

<https://www.lib.umn.edu/scrbm/tretter>

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Tretter Letter January, 2013

## Thanks to the generous support of our donors.....

*We gratefully acknowledge the following individuals for their support and give thanks to countless others whose generous spirits have made our work possible.*

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- Lisa Vecoli - Minneapolis, MN

## From the field....



What's happening in national & international circles.....

## Tretter to host two Andersen Scholars

Two applicants for the 2013 Elmer L. Andersen Research Scholars Program applied to use the Tretter Collection.

Both received at least partial funding to travel to Minneapolis to research in the archive. Both are Ph.D. candidates who hope to publish their work.

One will be doing research on the Log Cabin materials; and the other will be doing research on the Radical Faerie culture in Minneapolis.

Stay tuned for updates in the next newsletter.

Congratulations to both Andersen Scholars. We look forward to hosting your work and advancement in the study of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender history and issues.

To learn more about the Andersen Scholars Program, visit: <http://special.lib.umn.edu/ELAResearchScholars2012.pdf>.

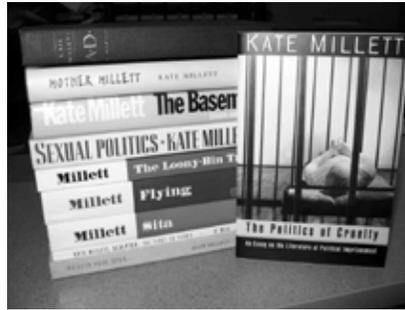
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## New Acquisitions

Presents often come with the holidays. At the Tretter Collection, every email or phone call may be offering a wonderful addition to the archive. This list is not inclusive of everything we have added but it offers an idea of the variety of material entering the archive.

In the past several months, we have been the fortunate recipient of works from several authors.

- Kate Millett, a '56 graduate of the University of Minnesota, generously gifted signed copies of a dozen of her works to the collection.
- Catherine Lundoff, a well established author of stand alone books and anthologies, donated several of her works as well as material from conferences and book fairs.
- Vanessa Sheridan, who works with businesses and faith communities to address the inclusion of transgender issues, was kind enough to present the archive with three of her published works.



In addition to these published works, the collection has received gifts from several prominent community members:

- Robert Halfhill donated a large number of materials related to Dignity, Act Up, Twin Cities Pride and +40 years of newspaper clippings.
- Michael McConnell gave the archive a large collection of publications, mostly from the early 1970's. These included both local and national GLBT publications.
- Ron Mattson, who was active in the Twin Cities Gay and Quaker communities passed away in May. We received several boxes of his materials to add to the collection.



New Acquisitions, continued on page 12

## Tretter Alum Publishes History of Queer Minnesota

By Eric Colleary

The Tretter Collection is very pleased to announce the publication of Stewart Van Cleve's



Land of 10,000 Loves: A History of Queer Minnesota. Van Cleve was a former volunteer and assistant curator at the Tretter Collection, and the extensively researched book draws heavily on the archive's holdings.

Through interviews, newspaper accounts, archival research, and copious illustrations, Van Cleve tells the rich stories that make up Minnesota's queer history. From the Ozawwendib of Leech Lake and the Goodtime Parties on Rondo Avenue, to the activist work of the Lesbian Feminist Organizing Committee and the local chapter of ACT-UP, this important volume is truly one of the first to so exhaustively detail LGBTQ histories in the oft-overlooked heartland.

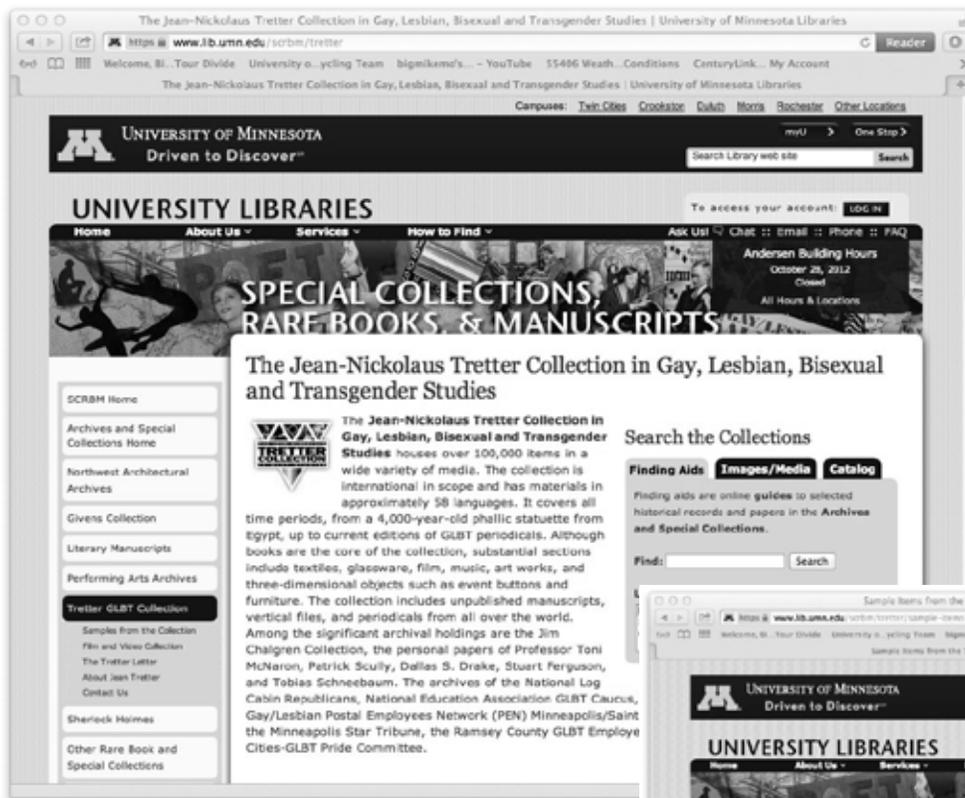
The Land of 10,000 Loves officially launched October 10 with a well-attended book-talk and signing at Magers & Quinn Booksellers. Published by the University of Minnesota Press, the book can be purchased at Magers & Quinn in Uptown, or any reputable bookseller.

# Tretter Collection Website Provides Invaluable Portal to the Archive Materials

All of the collections at the Andersen Library, including the Tretter Collection, have recently launched new web pages. Our transition, however, is much more than cosmetic. Building the collection over decades, Jean-Nickolaus Tretter has the opportunity to learn items as they arrived and had an encyclopedic knowledge of the collection in his head. This worked well for him and for the scholars that had the benefit of his experience.

Jean's retirement requires, however, that a different kind of organizing and finding process be developed. The past year has seen remarkable progress toward putting more of the collection on line.

New finding aids have been developed and posted for several collections including: Jamie Nabozny; Abigail Gardner; Dale Carpenter; Michael McConnell; and Charles Nolte. New material has been added and finding aids have been updated for: Log Cabin Republicans; Amazon Bookstore; and Nancy Manahan. And the cataloging of books and periodicals is happening more quickly, expanding what is available in the online catalog (MNCAT or



from the Tretter web page).

In addition, a list of over 700 publications, manuscript collections and topical files will soon be online for searching. (Please contact the curator if you need a working copy immediately – lvecoli@umn.edu.)

All of this will make the Tretter Collection more accessible to researchers. Recent use has included student, faculty and community members researching topics including: Radical Fairies; Amazon Bookstore; TC Pride and the 40th Anniversary of GLBT Pride in the Twin Cities; Michael McConnell and Jack Baker; Patrick Scully; Tobias Schneebaum; and Outfront MN.



To access our website, go to: <https://www.lib.umn.edu/scrblm/tretter>

# Minnesotans United for All Families' Historic

By Jada Hansen,  
Tretter Advisory Board member

Please Note: By the time you receive the newsletter, the election will be over. But at the time of writing, the outcome of the 2012 election is unknown. Regardless of the outcome, materials from Minnesotans United for All Families will be archived with the Tretter Collection.

In May of 2011, the Minnesota State Legislature voted to put a constitutional amendment onto the November 6, 2012 ballot in Minnesota that will read: "Shall the Minnesota Constitution be amended to provide that only a union of one man and one woman shall be valid or recognized as marriage in Minnesota?"

The day after the legislature voted to put the constitutional amendment on the ballot, the boards of OutFront Minnesota and Project 515 came together to form Minnesotans United for all Families, a group that could focus specifically on defeating the proposed amendment. While LGBT constituents and allies chanted, "Vote No!" in the halls of the capital, Project 515 and Outfront Minnesota were preparing for the fight that they knew was coming - the same fight that had already come to 30 other states across the U.S. The difference between the battle in Minnesota and that which occurred in other states is that we had 18 months to prepare for the fight. Most other states had only 3 or 4 months to organize.

In a conversation with Bee Rongitsch, Programs Director for Minnesotans United, I learned of the specific differences between Minnesota and the other states' battles. Minnesotans United put energy into learning from other key battle states, like California and Maine, which helped us to frame

the fight in a new light. Minnesota learned that arguments that frame the case in terms of discrimination and injustice do not resonate with voters; undecided voters do not see themselves as discriminatory people and pointing that out makes them defensive and leads to lost support. So Minnesotans United brought in "charged political strategist" and psychologist, Phyllis Watts, a woman that worked on Prop 8 in California and the "Personhood Amendment" in Mississippi, a case that most Americans felt certain would pass. In the latter case, Phyllis was able to craft an effective message that prevented the amendment from passing.

people in order to identify and humanize the issue. LGBT people want to get married for love and commitment just as everyone else does. What Minnesotans United learned from the states that had gone before, and failed, was that voters could be persuaded by only one argument—love.

At the writing of this article the outcome of the election is unknown. However, I can say as an LGBT individual that Minnesotans United was right in their assumption that people are swayed by love. A fight that felt like an attack against the Gay and Lesbian community soon blossomed into a rally for the recognition of love. The struggle



Phyllis develops strategies that speak to what triggers people and teaches volunteers to listen to the other side and draw from our own values and personal stories, this helps people to understand how people comes to terms with how strongly this hurts LGBT people. What Minnesotans United did was shrink the distance people feel between themselves and LGBT

was no longer meant for gays and lesbians to take on alone; from that first moment that State Representative Jeff Hayden lead tearful constituents at the capital in a chant, "We've just begun to fight!" to the moment that straight allies placed "Vote No" bumper stickers on their cars and began heated debates over the rights of LGBT people, Minnesota changed. I learned while taking my daughter

# VOTE NO Campaign to Archive with Tretter

to school and walking down the street of my new neighborhood that the majority of my neighbors embraced my family and that the “Vote No” sign on their lawns were symbols of what makes Minnesota unique. As a 4th generation Minnesotan, I was mad that my rights could be questioned, but it made my neighbors mad, too.

Minnesotans United made it possible to see those allies and feel hope that this amendment would not pass by putting a “Vote No” shirt on every ally and a sticker on every car. Minnesotans United did not allow for Minnesotans to think the fight was over...we had in fact just begun to fight. On the days that I saw a “Vote Yes” sign, MNUnited made sure that nearby synagogues and churches had “Vote No” banners stretched across their facades so everyone could see that this is a community issue. What Minnesotans United did was stand up and declare that this is not a gay or straight issue, this is a Minnesota issue. Just as Harvey Milk said, “Come out, come out, wherever you are,” Minnesotans United gave straight Minnesotans the means to come out and stand behind their fellow citizens, and for that we can all be grateful.

I had my opportunity to stand up and participate in the fight by phone banking at the Loring Park office for Minnesotans United. Walking into the office it is plain to see how deeply this amendment touches lives. Paper

hearts line the walls in every room as reminders to every volunteer as to why we were there this close to the election asking undecided voters to vote no. We were there because 60% of people that have conversations about the issue change their vote to a “no,” (67% if they know the person they have the conversation with). And we were there for our own personal reasons. When I was in the restroom, the one room that hadn’t been coated in paper hearts, I noticed that someone had placed one lone heart between



the sinks, “My partner died when he was in Madrid. When I asked how he died the officials told me to ask his parents...I still don’t know how my partner died.” That. That was why I was at the phone bank that night. Because people who are together for the sake of love and companionship are legal strangers, but that means so much more than taxes, parental rights, and inheritances. It means that Minnesotans are free to love and be there for those partners right until the end. More than

one undecided caller spoke to me about their desire to one day marry, and I could hear their smile on the other end as they spoke of a desire to demonstrate their love to friends, family and the world. They wanted to celebrate a lifelong dream and raise children under the warm umbrella of commitment. I smiled sincerely back and replied, “So you see how wonderful and important marriage is”...then looking at my script, “marriage is just as important to gays and lesbians who want to marry for the same reasons that you do.”

They got it. “Yes, I think I will consider leaving the door open for future discussions and pledge to vote no. “

I heard a lot of negative things during my phone calls that evening and was even hung up on a few times. But even one “I will vote no” conversation made it all worth it. The statistics I recorded during that call, and information about all aspects of the campaign and Minnesotans United will be donated to the archives of the Tretter Collection. Just as we learned from the fights in California and Maine, others

will be able to see what we did right, and wrong, and learn from our experience.

Preservation of this collection will allow for the LGBT community to look at our own narrative and tell the story through our own lens. It will tell a story of allies and outreach into communities across religious, cultural and geographical lines. The outcome, whatever you now know it to be, is important. But so is remembering and learning from the fight.

*Photos courtesy of the Tretter Collection*

# Unique Summer 2012 Program Connects High School Students to Tretter Collection

By Stewart Van Cleve

This past summer, I had the absolute pleasure of spending two weeks with a group of ten high school students. They were participants in a collaborative effort between the University of Minnesota Libraries and the Minnesota Historical Society called the “Summer History Immersion Program.” The SHIP program offered the students a substantial stipend, but only if they completed two weeks full of serious research.

Ryan Bean, who specializes in outreach for the YMCA archives, and Kyle Parsons, the Historical Society’s resident expert in the national “History Day” competition, oversaw the program. They invited me to participate because the students were tasked with researching LGBT history. This meant that they were going to work with material from the Tretter Collection.

When I first walked into the large conference room where SHIP was held, I was struck by how young the students looked. I was equally surprised—and very pleased—to see that the majority were students of color. Over the course of the program, I came to learn that many of the students identified as straight; they were simply curious about the idea of an LGBT past and wanted to know more.

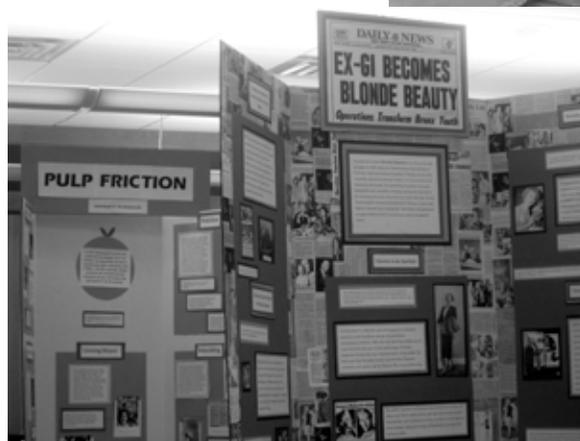
I had created eleven pre-determined topics for the students to work with: lesbian feminism in Minneapolis, the Two-Spirit Movement, the Harlem Renaissance, Twin Cities Pride, queer riots in the late 1960s, transgender history, Mattachine and the Daughters of Bilitis, Magnus Hirschfeld, the bisexual movement, “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell,” and Anita Bryant.

I took the students on a tour of the caverns where the Tretter Collection’s materials are kept. It was refreshing to see the wonderment on their faces as they registered the absolute vastness of information that the archive

contains. But within a day, they were compelled to focus their attention on material that they needed to begin their work. By

the third day, their silence was only interrupted by the rustling sounds of old paper, and their concentration was only broken when I stopped by to check in with a sing-songy “How’re we doing?”

Every student displayed their natural talents and called attention to areas that needed improvement. Three of the students spoke English as a second language, so they were challenged to expand their vocabulary to



accommodate complex ideas about sexuality and gender. Another student, a willowy young woman with a razor-sharp wit and a keen sense of comedic timing, wrestled with her own opinions (and commentary) about Anita Bryant. And, in a moment that betrayed the wondrous circumstance of the 21st

century, I clucked after a young Somali man wearing traditional Muslim dress for watching youtube videos of basketball games instead of researching the origins of the Two-Spirit movement.

Almost all of the SHIP students are now poised to be first-generation college students. This program shaped the students’ ideas about the history of gender and sexuality; it also prepared them for rigorous academic work. SHIP also shaped my own ideas about queer historiography, and evidenced a clear need for more programming dedicated to educating local youth.

*Photos courtesy of the Tretter Collection*

# Anwatin Middle School Student Group Relies on Tretter Archive to Complete Their Kowalski Documentary for National History Day Competition

By Annalee Tomsicek, Teacher - Anwatin Middle School

In May of 2012, two students from Anwatin Middle School in Minneapolis used the Tretter Collection to further their research for their entry in the National History Day competition. Earlier in the school year, the students were assigned a project that would be entered into the History Day competition. History Day is a progressive project that, depending on the students' dedication, can bring them from a school-wide competition to city, state, and national level.

While completion of the project is a regular classroom assignment in Hayley Forrest's 8th grade history classroom, these students were among those who chose to go above and beyond in their research. The students chose to create a documentary about the Sharon Kowalski case because they wanted to focus on something local, LGBT-centered, and that fit the competition's theme - Reaction, Reform, and Revolution.

The Kowalski case took place in Minnesota during the 1980s and 90s and consisted in a seven-year court battle for legal guardianship of Kowalski that was fought by her partner, Karen Thompson.

Upon coming to the Tretter Collection, the students had already been awarded a trip to the national competition in Washington, DC, where the emphasis on critical thinking skills and use of primary resources are key. They utilized their time with

the Collection by paging through local LGBT newspapers from the era of the case, scouring them for articles, photos and features about the Kowalski case. After a very successful visit they were able to include scanned versions of these items throughout their documentary as well as reference the text to help describe the case. The students also had the opportunity to visit Kowalski and Thompson in their home where they obtained critical primary resources as well.

At the national level, the students were beaming from ear to ear even when they did not make it past the preliminary level. Their teachers were especially proud that Anwatin Middle School was being represented by work of such quality from such exemplary students, and that Minnesota History Day chose to represent our state with a project whose topic is still controversial in many arenas.

An especially proud moment for those there to watch the students in DC was during the final presentation and defense of their project. While introducing their topic, one of the students referenced the relevancy of the Kowalski case in the fight for LGBT rights and said, "If this isn't love, I don't know what is."

## Tretter Collection opens doors and archive vaults to Log Cabin Republican Group

In July the Tretter Collection was proud to provide a tour for the Board of the Log Cabin Republicans (LCR). The archive houses the papers of this national organization dating back to regional organizing in the 1980's and the founding of the national organization in 1990. (The newly added papers of Dale Carpenter also offer LCR materials from Texas.) Board members were in town for a meeting and took advantage of this opportunity to tour the archive. They also hosted a reception for members of the Tretter Board.



Photos courtesy of the Tretter Collection

## History Pavilion Draws Crowds at 2012 Twin Cities Pride

By Eric Colleary

The long weekend of Pride festivities kicked off in Loring Park with a celebration of archive founder Jean Tretter's retirement and life-long contributions to the community. Members of the Twin Cities Pride Committee, representatives from the University of Minnesota, and well-wishers from every corner of the state came to honor Tretter.

Each year, the Tretter Collection displays an exhibit on LGBT history and culture at the park's History Pavilion. More than 2,000 people toured the exhibit over the course of the weekend, which described a variety of topics including



the Stonewall Riots, the history of Pride festivals and the fight for marriage equality debate in the United States that has been happening in various ways since at least the 1950s.

University Libraries designer Darren Terpstra designed the 40th anniversary commemoration poster for this year's Pride Festival and proceeds from its sale went directly to the Tretter Collection.

Many thanks to all who came out to see us, and we look forward to seeing you again next year!

*Photo courtesy of the Tretter Collection*

## Some Photo Highlights from Jean Nickolaus Tretter Retirement Celebration



Pictured: Founder and former staff member, Jean-Nickolaus Tretter with new Curator, Lisa Vecoli. Photo © Copyright 2012 Sophia Hantzes All Rights Reserved.



Pictured: Founder and former staff member, Jean-Nickolaus Tretter with family members (Jean Tretter with his neice Nicole Ringrose, her husband Michael and their son Daniel.) Photo © Copyright 2012 Sophia Hantzes All Rights Reserved.

# Amsterdam! Recap of 2012 ALMS Conference and Canal Pride

In 2006, the Tretter Collection and Quatrefoil Library co-sponsored the first GLBT ALMS (Archives, Libraries, Museums and Special Collections) Conference. This drew an international field to Andersen Library to learn about efforts around the world to archive, display and interpret GLBT materials. Since then, follow up conferences have been held in New York and Los Angeles. The 2012 LGBTI Conference was hosted by IHLIA (Internationaal Homo/Lesbisch Informatiecentrum en Archief) at the new public library in Amsterdam.

Tretter Curator Lisa Vecoli presented a paper on the role of Community Advisory Committees. Having served on the Tretter Board since its inception in 2000 (and been Board Chair during the inaugural ALMS Conference), Lisa was able to draw on her long experience to highlight the benefits of strong community engagement at Tretter and the potential for other organizations to create a similar body.

Among the themes of papers at the conference were: taking advantage of social media; the challenge digitizing existing material for global access; the impact of limited resources on what is available and who makes those decisions; queering existing collections at Tretter Letter *January, 2013*

mainstream museums, libraries and archives; and, in vast parts of the world, how to establish an archive that will survive into the future.

The conference ended on Friday so that participants could attend Saturday's Canal Pride. This unique Dutch celebration

accomplished with the 300,000 Euros (\$390,000) that IHLIA receives each year from the Dutch government. Overall, however, the Tretter Collection has much to be proud of: one of the best (if not the best) archival facilities in the world; strong community and



*Outserve float at Canal Pride with members of the US Military participating publicly with the end of "Don't ask, don't tell"*

features over 100 decorated floats passing through the canals of Amsterdam. It draws a large and diverse crowd. Lisa's viewing cohorts were three straight couples, one from Norway and two from rural Holland, leading her to wonder if all the Gays were on the floats!

In reporting back to the Advisory Board after the conference, Lisa briefly imagined what could be

institutional support; freedom of speech and press that generates a lot of culture and archival content; and strong collections that draw scholarly and community use.

The dates for the next conference are still in flux (sometime in late 2014 or early 2015), but the site is selected and the host will be the Stonewall National Museum and Archives in Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

*Photo courtesy of the Tretter Collection*



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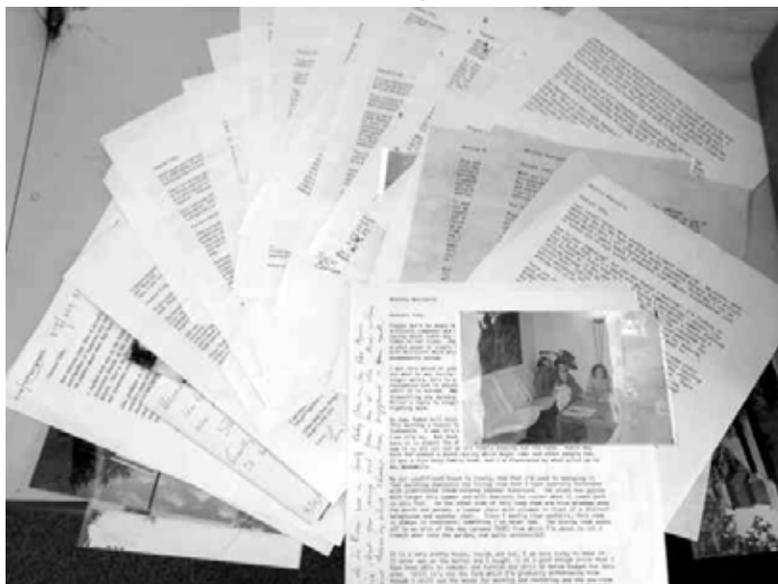


New Acquisitions, continued from page 4

- Our friends at ONE National Gay and Lesbian Archive were kind enough to offer copies of ONE Magazine to archives around the world. We were able to fill in several of our 28 missing issues and now have an almost complete set of ONE Magazine from 1953 to 1972.
- Harvey Hertz, owner of the former bookstore “A Brother’s Touch,” donated a number of vintage GLBT tee shirts and printed materials.
- Perhaps the most unique addition to the collection over the past 6 months has been a gift from Bettina (Tina) Bourjaily of Iowa.

For 50 years, Tina corresponded with Tobias Schneebaum, the noted anthropologist. We have a

large collection of his papers in the Tretter Collection, including thousands of letters that he received as part of ongoing correspondences with friends around the world. Many of



the letters he received praise “Toby” for his letter writing and faithfulness as a correspondent.

Tina had saved almost one hundred letters from Toby, dating back to 1951. Because we hold the Schneebaum papers, she offered them to the Tretter Collection. A check in the

archives revealed that Toby had kept the letters from Tina as well. Decades later, the letters have been united and form a conversation between long time friends. They also illuminate Toby as a friend and writer that inspired and maintained vibrant and longstanding friendships

through the mail.

*New Acquisition Photos courtesy of the  
Tretter Collection*