

FROM THE CHAIR

It was about ten years or so ago that Jean Tretter and I celebrated a bit of a milestone. Jean had signed an agreement with the University Libraries to house his not inconsiderable collection of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender books, papers, films and other materials that he had been gathering locally, nationally and internationally. The movement of those materials into Andersen Library was about to happen. At that time and in the position I then held at the University of Minnesota, I saw incredible potential in Jean (as living historian) and his collection. I felt fortunate to be just one of several individuals to help shepherd the unbelievable work Jean had done over many years to a place in a "Research 1" university where scholars from around the globe could visit, study and produce scholarship, all about us. As someone who had used archives and research libraries in the course of completing my dissertation, I knew how vital it was to have access to all kinds of material.

But as a member of that community of communities, I also strongly felt the need to make certain that our many and varied histories would be preserved. And I wanted anyone who had an interest to be able to visit, study and learn from our histories. Scholarship would be produced, yes. But also art, documentaries, films, and so on—the stuff of culture. I wanted young people to know who and where and how GLBT communities came into being, what they

thought, and what actions they took. The move of these materials from Jean's apartment to the cool caverns of Andersen Library seemed like a godsend to us all.



Linnea Stenson

with something bubbly (soda). I lit a cigar (Cuban) I'd been saving for a special occasion. (And yes, I think Jean still has the cigar band somewhere in the collection.) Over the following ten years we've strengthened our relationship with the University Libraries, and have come to feel at home there. The Libraries have clearly made a commitment to support us, and we are happy to be there, too.

This coming fall, we'll be celebrating in style with everyone! Starting November 1, 2010 we will have a special exhibit up in Andersen Library called "Saving Our Lives." This exhibit will be up through February, and I encourage you to come on by and visit

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And indeed, it was just that.

We had a quiet celebration there in the sunny courtyard of Klaeber Court, Jean and I. We toasted the move

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

<http://special.lib.umn.edu/rare/tretter.phtml>

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Tretter Letter June, 2010

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. If we neglected to include your name in the list in this issue, please send us a quick note and we will gladly make sure to include your name in our next issue.

- Roger Arvid Anderson – San Francisco, CA
- Nick Baer – Las Vegas, NV
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From the field....



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

By Stewart Van Cleve

Jean Tretter first mentioned Outhistory.com's "Since Stonewall" local histories contest to me last summer. The competition inspired research on the histories of urban and rural areas outside of New York, L.A., Chicago, and other "Gay Meccas" that unequally receive the attention of historians—Jean told me "It's right up your alley!" with his characteristic enthusiasm.

The \$5,000 grand prize was appealing at the time, but I was busy processing the Log Cabin Republican Collection and gave it little thought. One semester in Amsterdam and a finished Bachelor's degree later, I found myself penniless and in need of some quality Tretter Collection time. I started what later became "100 Queer Places in Minnesota History" in the arctic grey of February.

My backgrounds are in Urban Studies and GLBT Studies—I did considerable research on the creation of Minneapolis' Gateway District (a hotbed of "vice", thus queer activity) for my senior thesis. This study served as the foundation of 100 Queer Places, and I quickly realized that I had to divide the number of places between Minneapolis and St. Paul equally.

The task was daunting—I cannot
From the Field, continued on page 8

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The Charles M. Nolte Collection for

By Eric Colleary

In 2009, Dr. Charles M. Nolte donated his papers to the Tretter Collection. The papers – including private journals, correspondence, manuscripts, lecture notes, photographs and films – document his remarkable life as an actor, director, playwright, librettist, and professor. The donation forms the basis of a new open collection for LGBT-related performance and film materials, with Nolte’s papers at its core.



Born in Duluth in 1923 and raised in Wayzata, Nolte’s father Julius Nolte was the Dean of Extension Services at the University of Minnesota (Nolte Center on the East Bank is named in his honor). Charles was actively involved in theatre at the University of Minnesota during the early 1940s before enlisting in the Naval Air Corps during WWII.

After the war, he received his BA from Yale in 1946. His first professional production was in the company of Tin Top Valley at the American Negro Theatre in Harlem in 1946,

which led to his first Equity job in Guthrie McClintic’s production of Shakespeare’s *Antony and Cleopatra* starring the legendary Katharine Cornell and the then-unknown Charlton Heston.



Over the next decade, during the heyday of Broadway’s golden years, Nolte appeared in nine Broadway productions, including the title role in Louis Coxe and Robert Chapman’s *Billy Budd* and Herman Wouk’s *The Caine Mutiny Courtmartial*, sharing the stage with the likes of Judith Andersen, Vincent Price, Martha Scott, Henry Fonda, and Christopher Plummer. Nolte’s performance in *Billy Budd* – Melville’s subtly Gay-oriented tale of innocence and justice – made him a cult figure in the burgeoning New York Gay scene.

In 1962, Nolte returned to Minneapolis and enrolled as a graduate student at the University of Minnesota. He received his MA in 1963 and his PhD in 1967, after which he became an Assistant Professor at the University. He wrote over ten plays – including *A Night at the Black Pig* and *A Summer Remembered* – and directed more than 100 productions

the Performing and Cinematic Arts

at theaters in the Twin Cities and elsewhere. The Nolte Experimental Theatre at the University of Minnesota was named in his honor in 1997, and he was named Professor Emeritus of Theatre in 1998.



Charles passed away on January 14, 2010 and is survived by his partner of over 50 years, Terry Kilburn. I am deeply indebted to the Tretter Collection for introducing me to Nolte. Over the past year, I worked with him on organizing his papers and interviewing him to fill in gaps the collection did not cover. Charles was a great supporter of the Tretter Collection – attending events and donating financially in support of the work being done there. His papers,



consisting of over ninety boxes of material, constitute one of the largest single donations to the collection since Jean Tretter's original gift to the university ten years ago. Detailing over 86 years in the extraordinary life of a Gay man, this collection will be an invaluable resource to scholars for years to come.

The anticipated completion of the collection's processing is August, 2010 when it will be available to the public. A selection of the Nolte journals are currently being prepared for publication.



Tretter Collection Acquires Complete Run of Groundbreaking French Homophile Magazine

by Gerard Koskovich

The Tretter Collection has acquired a complete set of *Arcadie, Revue Littéraire et Scientifique*, the groundbreaking French homophile journal which brought out 11 issues annually from January 1954 through a final triple issue for June–August 1982. The longest-running homosexual periodical ever published in France, *Arcadie* offers an exceptional resource for research in a wide variety of disciplines. Articles published during its nearly three-decade run cover an array of topics related to male homosexuality, with extensive discussions of history, religion and ethics, sociology, law and public policy, sexology, literature, drama and film. In addition, *Arcadie* published excerpts from forthcoming novels, as well as short stories with homosexual themes.

The journal and the organization which sponsored it are the subject of a recently published book, Julian Jackson's *Living in Arcadia: Homosexuality, Politics, and Morality in France from the Liberation to AIDS* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009). As Jackson notes, *Arcadie* was more than a periodical; it also was a private club in Paris where homosexual men gathered for cultural and social events. Founded during a period of extreme conservatism in France following World War II, *Arcadie*

developed cautious strategies for survival that ultimately would attract criticism from the young militants of Gay liberation in the 1970s. Yet by creating a modest voice and a small space in the face of harsh antihomosexual attitudes, *Arcadie* had opened the way to the French movement for homosexual equality.

The complete run of *Arcadie* in the Tretter Collection is noteworthy for a number of reasons. The



set not only is in exceptional condition overall, but also includes 61 scarce black-and-white plates reproducing 122 images of partially nude young men. The plates were inserted by hand into the issues of the journal and therefore commonly fell out or were removed, but the subscriber who received this set had the issues bound into volumes with the plates permanently affixed. Also included are nine exceedingly rare items of *Arcadie* ephemera, among them a mimeographed letter signed in ink by the founder of the organization, André Baudry.

Equally extraordinary is the provenance of the set. A signature on the front of the January 1967 issue and a postcard laid in to

the 1979 volume indicate that it was owned by Pierre Gros—an individual not mentioned in Julian Jackson's book. In response to an e-mail asking about Gros, Jackson kindly phoned André Baudry, now age 87 and living in Italy. Baudry readily identified Gros, saying he was born around 1924 and died around 2000, remembering him as a regular at the *Arcadie* club, and noting that he owned the firm which handled the accounts for the organization. Jackson added that "Baudry cannot remember why or how Gros heard of *Arcadie* at the start, but is sure he was there from the beginning."

Baudry also recalled an even more remarkable fact about Pierre Gros: he was physically disabled as a result of maltreatment in the Dachau concentration camp, where he had been interned by the Nazis because of his participation in the French resistance. No publication to date has discussed Gros, yet the story Baudry recounts about him makes Gros one of the very few Gay men known to have been members of the French Resistance and one of the very few French Gay men identified as survivors of the Nazi concentration camps. The complete run of *Arcadie* at the Tretter Collection thus not only offers a wealth of texts for scholarly investigation, but also serves as a reminder of an as yet little-known Gay man whose extraordinary life undoubtedly merits further research.

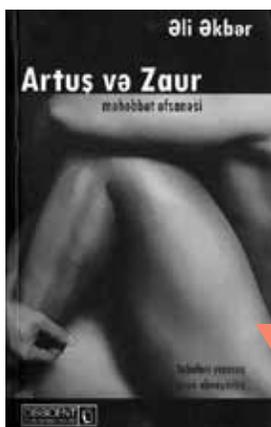
Gerard Koskovich is a San Francisco-based editor, writer and antiquarian book dealer from whom the Tretter Collection acquired its run of *Arcadie*.

New Acquisitions

“Liberty and Justice for All”, a video documentary about Gays in the military donated by the Pritzker Military Library.



1



2

Artush ve Zaur, the first Gay-themed novel published in the Azeri language, describes the relationship between an Azerbaijani and an Armenian, against the backdrop of the 1990's war between their two countries.



3

Amazon Bookstore softball team jacket, donated by Gail Lewellan, a local activist and lawyer.

A video from Norwegian Public TV interviewing a Gay couple from Minnesota that had gotten married in Iowa when that state legalized same sex unions.



4

From the Chair, continued from page 2

it. It's sure to have some surprises. We'll also have an expanded "First Fridays" event on November 5th centered on the Tretter Collection. Be sure to watch this web site <http://special.lib.umn.edu/firstfridays.phtml> for updated information. In addition, we'll host a special fundraising dinner as well as a community-wide event. And of course, look for us on Facebook!

As Pride season approaches, I become more aware of how deeply appreciative I am to be part of who we all are. I want to thank each of you for your continued support of the Tretter Collection and the work it does each and every day to "save our lives."

Story continued from Cover Page

One interesting thing about Jean Tretter is his peculiar attachment to each item in his collection. Ask him about any little thing here ("What's the deal with that old knapsack, Jean?") and Jean will respond with a personal story about just what that thing means to the GLBT community, who it once belonged to, and how it eventually made it into the archive.

Jean invests some of himself in these items -- or perhaps more accurately, in the unlimited stories these items contain. He invests so much of himself, in fact, that when you look at a collage like this, you are also looking at a portrait of Jean. Just as every detail of a good portrait reflects some detail of the portrait's subject, so every item in this collage presents some aspect of Jean. In fact, this is also true of the entire newsletter. As you read the pages inside, we the writers and editors and members of the Advisory Board sincerely hope your thoughts turn toward our friend, Jean Tretter.



TRETTER LETTER



NEWSLETTER FOR THE FRIENDS OF THE TRETTER COLLECTION

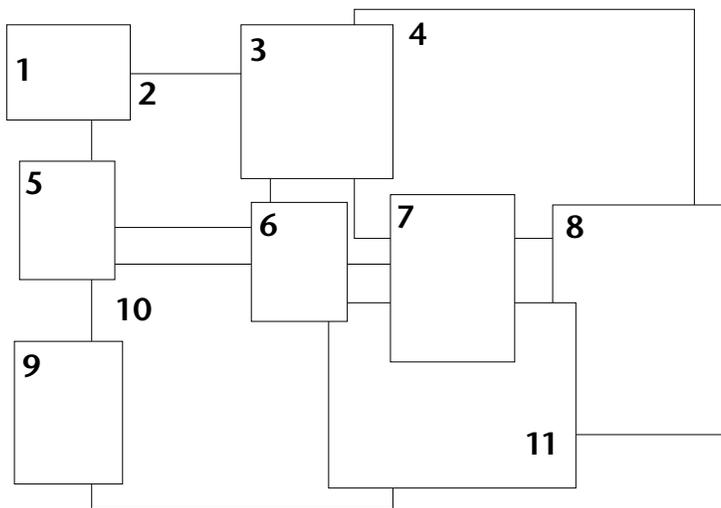
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From the Field, continued from page 3 recall why I decided on 100 sites of geographic interest instead of, say, 50. My selection attempts to present the sheer diversity of our community and its history; this could only be accomplished by noting changes in identity, behavior, and self-perception. Thus, I focused on readily apparent sites, such as the Gay 90s, Loring Park, and Foy’s Bar. I also selected forgotten or contested sites, such as the Cathedral of St. Paul, the Alexander Ramsey House, and the State Bar in the old Gateway.

In effect, the exhibit was a unique opportunity to show the intriguing and amazing holdings of the Tretter Collection to the world—without risking the safety of the materials. The pages are open to public commentary and editing; you can take a look, learn something, and contribute to the history of GLBT people all in the same place!



Key to photo images on Cover page:

1. Photo of Jean Tretter circa 1980
2. Knapsack from Anthropologist Tobias Schneebaum (1922-2005)
3. Polo shirt from explorer Ann Bancroft
4. Photo of Jean Tretter as Grand Marshal, Duluth-Superior Pride
5. “Madame Butterfly” : Lesbian novel by Malaysian-Taiwanese author Chen Xue
6. Delft porcelain figures, two boys kissing
7. “Odd Girl Out”: example of Lesbian pulp fiction by author Ann Bannon
8. Partially burned book rescued from Hirschfeld Library, Germany 1930s
9. Poster - Advertisement for Towel Rationing to Support US Troops, WW II
10. Phallic Scribe, Clay, Ptolemaic Egypt (ca. 300 CE)
11. ALMS Conference, Andersen Library, 2006