

PQHP

Pittsburgh Queer History Project · 2014

Lucky After Dark: The Pittsburgh Queer History Project

Organized by the Pittsburgh Queer History Project (PQHP), "Lucky After Dark" is a visual excursion through Pittsburgh's gay social clubs from 1967 to 1990. Utilizing an extensive collection of photographic images and material objects contributed by owners, employees, performers and patrons, materials include publications, posters, announcements and newsletters and reflect a world that is disappearing: a demimonde of drag names and pseudonyms, passwords and codes, a shared patois of high camp and a relationship to the state that could be fraught, deceitful, and criminal. Rather than designing an exhibit based on a linear narrative or chronological timeline, "Lucky After Dark" immerses the viewer in the twilight world of desire and camouflage that emerged in response to a culture that reacted to homosexuality with social opprobrium and legal prosecution.

In the postwar period, homosexuality was both stigmatized and criminal. In Pittsburgh, as in many other cities, a network of social institutions emerged as sanctuaries or safe havens in the postwar period. Exploiting existing Pennsylvania liquor control regulations, club owners opened a series of private clubs — the Transportation Club, the House of Tilden, and the Travelers Club — as free associations with memberships, officers, and a means of controlling access and egress. Nevertheless, these clubs were not free from the harassment and prejudices that characterized gay culture between 1960 and 1990, including police raids and harassment, acts of violence, and petty extortion and bribery.

Instead of joining the outmigration of labor during the downturns of the 1970s and '80s or the concurrent gay migration to larger urban centers, the men and women who stayed in western Pennsylvania maintained their identities as family members, employees, neighbors and citizens of the Steel City while forging a new community. Bars and clubs were some of the few places where gay identities could be maintained, acting as a breeding ground for the area's social support services, LGBT fraternal and social associations and other cultural organizations, networks, and activities. This Pittsburgh history is an alternative to those found in San Francisco, New York, or Los Angeles, and one that needs to be preserved in its richness and diversity.

"Lucky After Dark" transforms the Future Tenant Gallery on Liberty Avenue into a place of personal exploration. A darkened, intimate space, illuminated by slide projectors and VCR recordings

— the media of the era being examined — as well as reproductions of print material and light boxes that contain sample archival artifacts. Additional lighting and music will help approximate the atmosphere of bar life, and evoke the dimly-lit world of the bars, clubs, and after-hours venues that fostered gay culture for thirty years.

The decision to create an exhibit that emphasizes life inside the club — to choose an artistic installation of this material rather than a narrative history — is a means of exploring the opacity and malleability of gay and lesbian identity in this period. The use of light and dark as a central design motif is intentional, as are the transience and opaqueness of many of the images displayed, not only to highlight the atmosphere of club life but to illustrate as well the manner in which identities were constructed, hidden, and reinvented. Images, performance videos, and material objects are arranged idiosyncratically, in order to emphasize the parallel nature of a world that occurred behind closed doors and after dark.

Displaying a cross section of our archival material for the first time, the ephemera of club life — cocktail napkins, membership cards, matchbook covers — can be used as pedagogical guides, and

help visitors understand the discreet manner in which these everyday items helped establish social networks during this era. In addition, these items will be reproduced and inscribed with additional information relating to the exhibition and website.

This immersive environment will be connected to an online platform where the photographic and physical materials exhibited can be subject to further historical and cultural analysis, and whereby discussions can be facilitated by scholars and analysts, local activists and politicians, and onetime bar patrons, employees, and proprietors. Visitors can leave text, images, sound, and video to share their reactions and comments on the exhibit and PQHP. This information builds an archive of experience and evaluation for the project while also providing the opportunity for shared resources among LGBT networks.

"Lucky After Dark" is the inaugural event for the Pittsburgh Queer History Project, and examines only part of the rich history of the LGBT community in southwestern Pennsylvania. While this is the Project's first exhibit, we have been collecting, cataloging, and digitizing material for the past two years. Like all historical exhibits, we are dependent upon the archival material we have received or discovered.



Traveler's Club

Acknowledgments

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1970

Lucky opens the House of Tilden.

1975

Governor Milton Shapp issues an Executive Order 1975-5, prohibiting employment discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation in state government. Every Governor since has renewed his Executive Order, except Governor Tom Corbett.

1980

Traveler's Club opens. The third of Lucky's clubs, Traveler's is part of a growing resource of cultural activities and venues that are used by the region's LGBT population. By the 1980's, many of the other clubs such as the Norrth Club on Polish Hill or the Holiday Bar in Oakland are run by colleagues or former employees of Lucky's, establishing a network of gay bars. The bars help establish a series of social services for the LGBT community, including the Persad Center, the Shepherd Wellness Center, and the Delta and Lambda Foundations. Bars become centers of community-wide education and prevention efforts during the AIDS crisis, helping organizations like the Pitt Men's Study recruit clinical subjects and disseminate information.

1987

Enforcement of the PA Liquor Code transfers from local authorities to the Bureau of Liquor Control Enforcement with the Pennsylvania State Police. Concurrently, local authorities begin to regulate after-hours clubs and 'blind pigs' more stringently.

1988

The Valentine Day's Raid. State Liquor Control agents raid the Traveler's Club on February 14, citing consumption of alcohol by minors and serving liquor after-hours. Those who are arrested or physically assaulted during the raid begin legal proceedings against the State Police and renew lobbying efforts on behalf of LGBT members in the community.

1990

Mayor Sophie Masloff signs the city's first Gay Rights Ordinance in March



Left: Labor Day Picnic — September 3, 1984
Right: T.C. Club — Valentine's Day 1969-70



The Project is developing an archive of community materials that can be used for historical research and for future exhibits and publications. We are very interested in investigating at the lives of people of color, of women, and of transgendered and questioning people, as well as the roles that LGBT individuals played in the social, economic, and political transformation of the region. Additionally, we want to place Pittsburgh's queer history in broader historical context: how, for example, did the region react to the national or international movements for LGBT rights? How did it contribute to the politics of the AIDS crisis, or the inclusion of gay men and lesbians into the military, or to the ongoing fight for marriage equity? There is a real need to catalog and investigate these histories before they disappear. Please contact us if you would like to contribute to the Pittsburgh Queer History Project!

Arthur Colville

I first worked at the Venture Inn on Liberty Avenue in the '70s, where I was the coat check for two years in a row. I did clean up briefly at Mother Russia across the street, it was only open for about two years. Then there was a jump, because I had other jobs, but then I spent about five years at Travelers. Where I am now is 5801. I'll be there for 30 years on Thanksgiving. Oh, and I did happy hour every day at the Tender Trap during training for 5801, before it was open. I had employment at quite a lot of the bars.

I was always kind of quiet, but working at the bars brought me out and made me an extrovert, especially at the Traveler's. I mean, people knew me. In those days they had the Lambda Award, which isn't around anymore, but I won the waiter of the year three years in a row. Two years at Traveler's, and one year at New York New York, which turned into 5801. I still have the plaques. They had the awards at Pegasus, and everybody gave a long speech, but I just got up and said "thank you," and walked off, every time. It was packed with people, and there were pictures in the paper. I don't want to say I was well known, but in those days, a lot of people knew me.

I ran into people everywhere. Fifteen years ago, my roommate and I went to Amsterdam. We got off a train to go to the largest windmill in Holland, and there's only one guy walking past, all bundled up in winter clothes. He came up and said, "Arthur, what are you doing here?" It turned out he was a waiter at Traveler's. Again, when we went to Venice, at the Rialto Bridge, a man walks up and says "Arthur?" and it turned out he was a customer of mine. It was that kind of thing. It was kind of neat. Last year, we were traveling, and the guy who checked me in at the airport said that I had waited on him and his partner 27 years ago, and they were still together. On the airplane out I knew two of the airline stewards and on the way back I knew three.

I think when the bars were hidden and they had a doorman everywhere, and they screened people, they were much more crazy and wild. People were leaving, coming back to the dance floor, and leaving with somebody else. Everybody danced, and there was more noise. Old people talked to young people, and there was always an interaction. You'd walk into a bar and see an 80-year old gay guy and you'd talk to him and say "how are you?" or "what's up?" During the days with all the oppression, everybody was like

a unit. Probably not everybody, but a lot of people knew we were being oppressed in a really bad way, and we united.

I worked in straight places, and it's not like I would tell people, but if anyone asked me I was honest. Sometimes it was good and sometimes it was horrible, but I would always be honest. I worked with other gay men who would hide it. It was a weird time. Some straight men didn't even really know how to act around you. Now, you go to a bar and there are groups of men out drinking, and some are straight and some are gay and they don't care. Something happened along the way. I'm not saying there is no homophobia, because that would be a lie, but the percentages of the attitudes are way changed from before.

When I came out, in all my time at Traveler's, you would see lesbians, drag queens, maybe somebody into leather or something, but they would all be talking in a circle like they were all pals. You would see this strange interaction, like "we're all in this together." Now it seems to have separated, all the lesbians in one corner and all the gay men in another. There's a period in my memory where it's not how it is at all, though.

There were ups and downs. There was unhappiness and drugs and depression, but there was also this united feeling in the gay community. Things have changed a lot since then. It's a lot different now.

Connie Dorsett

A smallish elevator rumbles its way upward through a typical Pittsburgh apartment building. Bleak walls lead me past a litany of uniform doors until we finally stop at 3C. Harrison knocks gingerly at the door. As it opens, I see the "Queen of the Commonwealth," Miss Connie Dorsett. Her smile is simultaneously matronly and beguiling.

A true lady never reveals her birthdate, but the irrepressible Miss Connie made her debut into gay life as a young person of the 1960's. Raised on Pittsburgh's North Side, she frequented a short-lived neighborhood bar — the Greenwich Village Inn — during her youth. Connie describes the Greenwich Village Inn as a "drag bar," a joint where she could be amongst friends and feel "very comfortable." Following suit, she soon stepped out in drags for her first time, donning a black dress borrowed from her sister.

In the following years, drag became more than a pastime for Connie. She traveled the United States, performing in clubs and theatres, coiffed impeccably and sparkling in gowns sewn by friends. An opening act for the female impersonation troupe Pink Fantasy, Connie delivered monologues with eloquence and razor-sharp wit.

But let's go back to that pivotal night at the Greenwich Village Inn. Midway through her intrepid foray into drags, friends of her mother stopped by the Inn, putting the private Miss Connie in an uncomfortable position. They didn't speak to her. She returned the silence and left the Inn feeling embarrassed. Once home, her mother told her: "Well, if you're embarrassed when you put on them clothes, you shouldn't put them on. [...] Either they accept it or reject it. But never be embarrassed."

Those words of advice stuck with Miss Connie. She lived her daily, professional life unashamedly in "them clothes." Answering phones in the massage parlors, shopping at Joseph Home's, or riding on the long-forgotten streetcars of Pittsburgh, Connie faced

day to day life with the face she chose and never looked back. Past tense is inaccurate here, though.

At a diner in Squirrel Hill, a cell phone rings in Miss Connie's handbag. She's never without a handbag. They're part of her legend. She answers the call and chats leisurely with a friend who's under the weather.

"You didn't get a flu shot? Oh my goodness. Oh my goodness."

Connie continues to be a vibrant member of her community. Lively and living in the present, she is surrounded by friends and family who regularly check-in on the retired performer. In turn, Connie offers what help, compassion, and guidance she can. She is direct and honest in her critiques of newer performers, and unwavering in her belief that — both on and off stage — folks should carry themselves with a sense of pride and self-respect, even when that self-respect is questioned by society at large. With age, she has acquired a certain grace but has retained all of her tenacity.

For historians or the curious, she is willing to take short walks down memory lane. She remembers the great reading sessions she and her friends would have at now bygone Pittsburgh bars like the Silver Buckle or Hartzbergers. If you were rude to her, she'd call you by your "boy name." Those late nights undoubtedly shaped how she thinks of herself and how she faces the world. Those memories remain with her and endow her with a peculiar and queer wisdom about living in, and thriving in, the world as a lady. Yet she shows little patience for those who would have her live in the past, resigned to memories of a nightlife gone by. Present tense. Connie would want me to write about her in the present tense.

In a single minute, she will describe the illustriously coiffed wigs of her 1970s fashions, and then clock me for my "clown drags." She is inexorable, quick-witted, and careful. Her experience with monologue performance has bled into her quotidian storytelling and, while telling me about a girl from "back in the day," Connie punctuates her sentence by snapping off bits of a pretzel stick with her teeth. Somehow, she makes a pretzel stick theatrical and captures my attention.

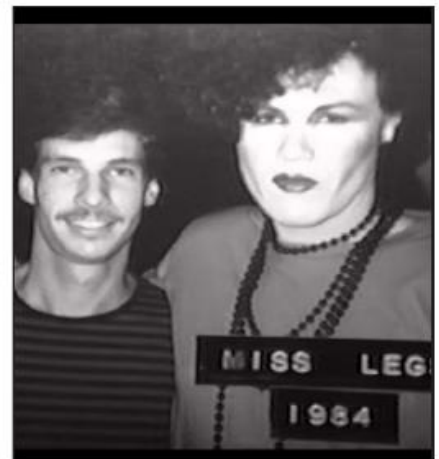
We often use writing to bury our elders before their time. We tell stories about their pasts while ignoring their presents — and their futures. But Miss Connie Dorsett is as fantastic and, as she might say, "grand" as she was in the 1970s. And I deeply suspect she will continue to be grand in the years to come.

Know that. Say it. Remember it. Miss Connie Dorsett is grand. Present tense. Grand.

Donny Thinnies

Before he went to Vietnam, Donny had the kinds of jobs that people get: he worked in a Shish Kabob place, and bartended at the Craig Street Inn.

After he went overseas, he came back to Pittsburgh, which was as changed as he was: riots had occurred on the Hill after the assassination of Martin Luther King, the city was still segregated but suddenly tense in a new way. Wandering into the Holiday Bar one day, Lucky — who owned the bar



Traveler's Club, 1984

at the time — asked him what was wrong. Donny explained how he needed a job and in short order he ended up working first as a janitor and then a bartender at the Holiday and the Transportation Club. As he explained later, “it didn’t hurt that I was young and good looking.”

Then he worked the door at the House of Tilden and learned the ropes of running a club. In a couple of years, Donny was ready to buy a place himself, and with \$35 in his pocket and some borrowed money, opened up the Norreh Club on October 13, 1973.

Like many of the gay bars in Pittsburgh, this one had an earlier incarnation, as a gambling club for its primarily Polish clientele. The building still sits between Polish Hill and the now-closed Iron City Brewery, though now it’s named “Donny’s.”

Putting together a club meant moving around a lot of material: the bar itself came from the Inner Circle after the owner went to Texas. Poker machines got wheeled in to keep people happy and to add revenue to the club’s till. Women were always welcome, but the bar downstairs would become a men’s only place, catering to a rapidly growing interest in leather. Eventually, the upstairs would become a dance floor or a performance space, with a lit dance floor that was worthy of *Saturday Night Fever*.

There might have been 25,000 members over the years, give or take. Very few of them realized that their membership cards were coded, so the club owner or doorman could verify identities by physical characteristics, such as race, gender, or eye and hair coloration. It was a precaution that was necessary, since forged membership cards or those that had been stolen or ‘borrowed’ were the easiest way for liquor board to gain entry and issue citations. According to Donny, it took the LCB seven years to get through the door.

It was a different crowd than you might find at Lucky’s clubs: older, perhaps, and one that showed up later in the evening and stayed until closing. There was a happy hour as well, where a drink could be bought for a roll of pennies.

Things changed: the club became a bar. The Liquor Control Board became less tolerant of places that served late, and after 2 raids, Donny changed the club’s hours (there is no third strike in this racket). After a couple of bad accidents involving drunken drivers and a new emphasis on enforcement — and the concurrent decline of a graveyard shift — late night clubs began to curtail their hours.

There are some things that have disappeared: after a late night out, people would gather at Ritter’s Diner on Baum Boulevard to eat something and sober up. If you needed a lift home you’d get one. Gay clubs have become less exclusive because they are less worried about the police, but maybe less necessary as well, as people become more comfortable in the broader community. But as Donny will remind you, the bars came first.

Douglas Rehrer

When I came out, it was rough. It still is now, but not like it was then. You could get beaten up, if people found out, or even lose your job. Shapp was governor, and he had an executive order that classified being gay as a handicap, so there was some protection. Of course, you still kept it quiet. We tended to move in packs, but even so, I remember friends walking down East Liberty on Highland and being beaten up, or held up at gunpoint. In grad school one of my classmates found out and he told all his fraternity brothers that I was queer. Then one night, I was working at the Tilden, and who did I see on the dance floor? So of course I made a beeline, asking, “How are you?” and “What are you doing here?”

Once I was out, it was nice to go to the gay bars and be able to be open and be around other people like myself. Not that I viewed myself differently than everybody else, other than what I was doing in bed, of course. I was taken to my first bar by one of my college roommates, the summer between college and grad school. I hated it! It just wasn’t my idea of what a bar should be. It was dark, and, for lack of a better term, it was seedy. It wasn’t the kind of place where I wanted to go. Other clubs were more pleasant, though.

I started working at the Tender Trap. I worked as a waiter for the next two years, and I was dubbed the

Dancing Waiter. I could dance through the crowd with a full tray of drinks without spilling them. That became kind of a calling card for the bar, because people would show up at the door and ask, “Is this the bar with the dancing waiter?” So then I ended up being the doorman. Then in ‘83 I moved to the Traveler’s, where I started working in the coatroom. Because I had been a waiter before, my first summer I was promoted to cocktail waiter.

When you’re working six nights a week, you’ve watched everyone have a good time, and you get all keyed up. Then you’ve got to go out and have a good time, too. One of the perks of working in the bars was that you didn’t have to have a membership at the others to get in, and I ended up meeting a lot of the bar owners that way. My best friend was the owner of the Tender Trap, and my coworkers were like a second family. There was a definite social hierarchy then. The bars were a social outlet, but it was like an onion, made up of rings. Essentially, Lucky was the core. The next set of rings were the bar owners, and further out were the bar employees. Then the outer layer were the patrons.

I was something of a minor celebrity. I didn’t know then, but the group I ran with was known as the Untouchables. We were the ones everybody wanted to party with, but nobody knew anything about us. We kept our personal lives and our bar lives separate, and that drove them nuts! It came with a cost though: it was hard to find a date, because no one wanted to be in my shadow. At my second or third party, a buzz started at the door and made it all the way upstairs to me: Lucky was here! So of course, I went out and met him on the front lawn and brought him in. He usually only went to the bar owners’ parties, but he came to all of mine after that.

I met a lot of the more colorful individuals in Pittsburgh’s gay society—a lot of the more notorious individuals. I knew people who ended up in the river. If I had kept a diary, and word of it had gotten out, one of two things would have happened: either I would have ended up in the river, or no one would have believed the journal. I should probably be dead because of some of the things I did.

It was before the bottom completely dropped out of Pittsburgh, and before AIDS. People today are lucky that there’s so much more information, with the internet and everything, but it’s good to remember what it was like back then. It was a different time, and we’ll never see the same nightlife again. Of course, as time passes, the bad recedes and the positive comes forward.

Richard Parsakian

Parsakian came to Pittsburgh in 1971 as a VISTA volunteer. He was introduced to Pittsburgh through the Architect’s Workshop, a program that gives free architectural services to nonprofits and low-income families. Last year, he received the Dignity and Respect Award from UPMC, which essentially recognizes people who treat everybody equally.

My roommate, Tim Hare, started the first gay newspaper in Pittsburgh called the *Gay Times*. We were roommates so I did all the photography and I did all the layouts for the ads. His focus for the magazine was more of arts and culture than politics at the time. This was Pittsburgh, not New York or San Francisco, so you’ve got to think of a more underground audience. In really big cities you would see women’s clubs, or leather clubs. Everybody would specialize because there were so many people, but in here it was just really nice to have all of that energy in one room.

One of my first assignments was to photograph a drag show at Lucky’s House of Tilden, which was the original one on Penn Avenue. It was torn down for reconstruction of the bus way. It was one of those underground clubs, but you would go upstairs. You would buzz in, like a speakeasy, and Lucky would be at the door with a bunch of other people. You had to have a membership to get in, which would require you proof of legal age. But there were still some underage people there, and that was part of the culture. It’s part of the straight culture, too.

Lucky’s was everybody together: gay, straight, men, women, twinks, leather daddies — it was everything. It was a party for everyone, our version of Studio 54. A lot of the time there would be cops



Top, Middle: House of Tilden — 1975
Bottom: House of Tilden — Inaugural Ball, 1977

playing cards there, and everybody was being paid off. It was one of those early, “if you didn’t play along, you couldn’t exist” kind of things. It was a ballsy move for owners to even put windows in their buildings, to let people see a boy touching a boy or a girl touching a girl. But we’re not as secret anymore.

At Lucky’s, I was supposed to photograph “Coco’s Review,” which was like an early drag review. Coco was the “mother hen” of all of these drag queens, and the image that I can still see in my head is one of the girls doing Marlene Dietrich from *The Blue Angel*. I remember big hair, and I sort of grew to love that place.

Lucky’s was the first place, but there was also a place downtown called David’s, which would cater to an older scene. Cruella deVillie burnt down, but you would go in and you would go up to the second floor and there would be drag queens on swings. There were other clubs such as the Bencher Inn on Liberty Avenue, the Crossover in the North Side, the Pittsburgh Trucking Company, and Travelers. A lot of places have changed their names.

Some people let the clubs sort of rule their lives, but I’m sort of the opposite. I need friends, but since I’m involved in so many other things. The club was a part of my life, and it was important to me because I knew it would be a fun place for me, culturally, to go to. I would go every week, and if there were a special night I would go. Lucky’s had Spaghetti Night, and it would maybe be a five dollar charge for all-you-can-eat spaghetti while they played pornos, and that was just fun. I knew that I would never want to go to a straight club. To me that would be so boring.

I got involved in other gay culture things like gay coffee houses. They used to be at the First Unitarian Church on Ellsworth Avenue, and my involvement was that I would create the atmosphere. I loved to do parties, so I would bring in plastic sheeting and I would drape it and just do lighting — I felt like I didn’t want to go into a cold place. I wanted to give friends who went there a sense of fun, instead of going to a church meeting hall. I always connected with the gay culture in that way, and when a friend of mine opened a vintage clothing store in 1988 called *The Vamp*, I used to do all the ads for it and we always supported the early artists, actors, filmmakers, and drag queens. I grew up in Pittsburgh with all those people as my friends, and I’ve always stayed involved and pushed for our equality. I don’t want to judge, I want to make sure that everybody has an equal chance at life. If somebody comes in my store and I know they’re a cross dresser I’ll make them feel comfortable. ●

A Curator's Note - By Harrison Apple

In 1936, his mother named him "Fortunato." A lucky boy indeed. Lucky is a celebrity. I really believe this is the best word for him. Some of you may not have known him well, or have ever known him at all. His accomplishments and tyranny may have passed decades before you were born. In our exhibition, we pause to talk about how this Italian-American Northsider changed the city of Pittsburgh forever, by setting in motion the formation of homosexual communities through the discreet doors of Steel City social clubs.

With undeniable charisma, he retells stories from his days in street gangs, US Army barracks, downtown corners, and 3rd floor nightclubs. In these places, moments of failure were cosmically rearranged to suit the needs of Lucky and "his people." That's what he calls us, "his people." - Prophet and Politician, in the same breath.

Lucky has been a gatherer all his life. And while the act of gathering - a rally, or a protest - holds a taste of the political, his story has more to do with the power of the "invisibility," or at least not leaving a paper trail.

In Repeat-era Pittsburgh, racketeers and mobsters captured club charters and liquor licenses to maintain

blind pigs, speakeasies, and vice houses catering to a mixed bag of "twilight people." They were places of gambling, prostitution, late-night dancing, and early morning exits. And according to our Lucky -- let's get used to the idea of being "his people" -- this is where it all began.

Behind glass block, plywood, and a membership desk, Lucky and others negotiated their place among underworld characters. He's been a bartender, a bar back, a therapist, a sympathetic shoulder to cry on, and great heaping tip jar. He spoke to us. He was popular, and he was connected.

While working for 'wheels' by the name of Grosso and Gambari, Lucky quickly learned how corruption cares. Every kickback and payoff was a personal relationship, from the beat cop laying his hat on the table to a cousin calling off the guns. If you don't know, a "wheel" moves things along. In politics, in city planning, in licensing, you name it. Even in the Army.

"When I was in the army there were faggots everywhere. And I was a barracks clerk, so I'd gather all our people and promote them. You didn't fuck with us. If you did, you didn't get paid."

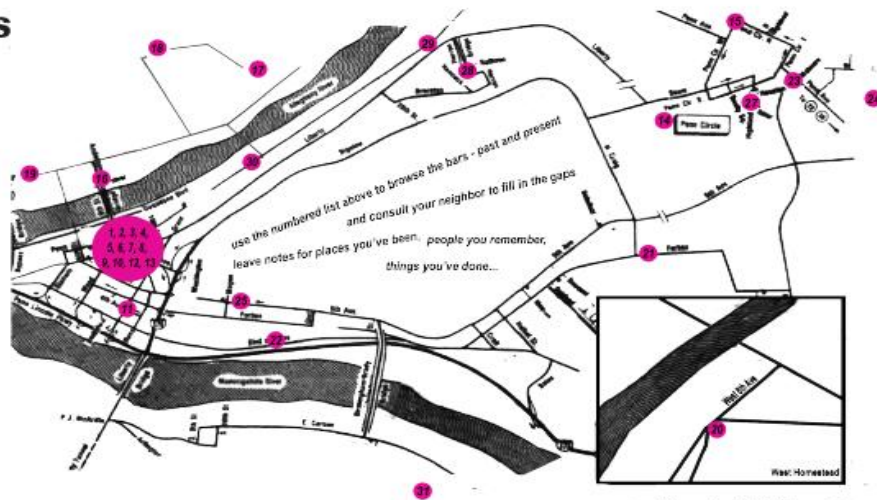
According to Lucky's employers, queers didn't own bars, they worked them. But Lucky didn't see much of a difference between "us" and "them." A relationship was a relationship, and everyone had something to offer. Becoming Lucky was a constant back and forth, the charismatic queen on a spinning wheel of fortune.

Working around Pittsburgh, he gathered favors from wheels and cogs, until it came time to step out from behind someone else's bar. Lucky's lover convinced him that all the money he was making should be used to create a place of their own. It was a sort of crucial moment that few of us ever hear about. Then again, history isn't always what we expect. In the spirit of that, I should mention that he didn't really decide to leave his previous job -- it burned to the ground... but details details.

In 1967, Lucky, D.B., and Louise, opened the T.C. Club on Blvd of the Allies. Some say the building is still there. Some remember the 300 members who crowded the main floor. Others recall the women's bar in the stone-walled basement. But everyone remembers the change. The system was working for Lucky, and Lucky was working for us. We were a part of the wheel.

Notable Bars & Clubs

1. *Loose Balloon* - 942 Penn Ave
2. *Venture Inn* - 923 Liberty Ave
3. *Images / Aunti Mames / Jazz on Liberty* - 965 Liberty Ave
4. *The Concord* - (no address)
5. *El Greco* - 136 9th Street
6. *David's* - 632 Penn Avenue
7. *The Horseshoe Bar* - 644 Penn Ave
8. *Pegasus / The Staircase Lounge* - 818 Penn Ave
9. *AVA Lounge* - Grant St. and Sixth Avenue
10. *The Gallery* - (no address)
11. *Icons / Zach's / Stock Exchange* - 333 4th Ave
12. *The Jockey Club* - (no address)
13. *Heaven* - 107 Sixth Avenue
14. *5801 / New York New York / Espirit* - 5801 Ellsworth Avenue
15. *Bruno's* - (no address)
16. *Jazi's / The Crossover Lounge* - Anderson and River Ave
17. *The Home Circle Club* - 1000 Vinial Street
18. *Allegheny Social Club* - 810 Concord Street
19. *2001 Club* - 214 W. General Robinson Street
20. *Players 430* - 430 W. 8th Avenue, West Homestead
21. *Holiday Bar* - 4620 Forbes Avenue
22. *The Transportation Club* - Boulevard of the Allies and Van Braam Street



23. *The Original House of Tilden* - 6308 Penn Avenue
24. *Travelers Social Club* - 6525 Hamilton Avenue
25. *Shawn's* - 1209 Fifth Avenue
26. *Tilden* - 941 Liberty Avenue
27. *Tender Trap* - 229 S. Highland Avenue

28. *Donnie's / Norreb Club* - 1226 Herron Avenue
29. *Brewer's Hotel and Bar* - 3345 Liberty Avenue
30. *Real Luck Café "Lucky's"* - 1519 Penn Avenue
31. *Wild Sisters / Bloomers* - 2700 Jane Street
32. *Hartzberg's* - Crawford Square - Center Avenue

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PQHP Events

MAY 30TH 6-9 PM — Opening of Lucky After Dark, featuring a talk by Harrison Apple and Tim Haggerty

JUNE 7TH 6-9 PM — An extended photograph archive will be open for viewing. During this event, we are inviting former bar patrons, employees, and owners, to identify individuals in photographs. Adding this information to our index helps us to stay engaged with the individuals who have made this history, as well as fleshing out histories which have yet surface.

JUNE 14TH (TBA) — Drive By Drag is celebrating their 5th year anniversary and will be using Future Tenant during "Lucky After Dark." Come to hear Dani Lamorte and Veronica Bleaus (John Musser) discuss how drive by drag came to be, what it did, and where it's going.

JUNE 21ST 6-9 PM — We're hosting a special archive screening of performers from the 70s and 80s. From drag queens, to go-go boys - strippers, magicians, and marionette artists. Join us in reviewing the entertainment that spoke volumes to the burgeoning after-hours community.

JUNE 28TH 6-10PM (OR LATER) — It's the 45th anniversary of the Stonewall Rebellion that marked the timelines of "gay and lesbian history." We're taking this opportunity to speak about the PQHP, and the potential for a queer history that focuses on the unique urban center of Pittsburgh, PA. It's also going to be a great excuse for an amazing ending party with music by our favorite DJ Alexis Icon, and visuals by Kevin Ramser (using footage from the PQHP of course!) Join us for food, drinks, thought, and disco.

1933

With the passage of the twenty-first Amendment, liquor is now regulated by the states. The Pennsylvania Liquor Control Board is established to regulate the distribution and sale of liquor in the state. Besides taverns and restaurants, liquor can be sold in private social clubs regulated by club officers.

1951

During the postwar period, Downtown Pittsburgh further establishes itself as a gay cruising area. In an investigation of corrupt police practices, vice officers are shown to routinely use entrapment proceedings to harass and arrest gay men in areas such as the Point, on Liberty Avenue, and in local parks, bars, and department stores.

1955

As part of the Pittsburgh Renaissance, several cruising areas are eliminated or re-designed as part of the effort to 'clean up' the red light district downtown. These include the open plan design of Mellon Square and the acquisition of Point State Park through eminent domain.

1958

Lucky is honorably discharged from the Army and goes to work downtown in a series of bars and restaurants. While serving liquor to gay men or women is technically a violation of the liquor control laws, a network of "sympathetic" establishments develops in the city.

1968

Lucky establishes the Transportation Club as a private social club with a private membership and board officers. As a private entity, the club may serve liquor after hours, host cabaret performances, and serve food. This is the first of a series of private social clubs in the city.