

Idaho LGBTQ Oral History Project

Mary Evelyn “Evie” Smith



BOISE STATE UNIVERSITY

ALBERTSONS LIBRARY

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This Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer (LGBTQ) Oral History Project began as a key component of a cross-listed Boise State University course, Intro to LGBTQ Studies (GEN 380, HIS 381, SOC 497). Dr. Riley Caldwell-O’Keefe taught the course and designed the project as an interactive learning tool to help students understand LGBTQ history, with special emphasis on Idaho history, and the impacts of this history on local individuals. In addition to this history and context, students learned interviewing techniques throughout the semester. We discussed ethical considerations and obtained Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval for the project. Throughout the process, we worked with Boise State Special Collections and Archives librarians, Alan Virta and Cheryl Oestreicher. The culmination and digital release of the collection would have been impossible without them. We are thrilled and honored to offer these first-person insights which help provide a more well-rounded and comprehensive story of Idaho history.

Name: Mary Evelyn “Evie” Smith

Biography: Mary Evelyn “Evie” Smith was born in Washington DC in 1942, but grew up in Arlington, VA. She identified as a lesbian feminist. Smith moved to Idaho to participate in a maternal infant care program after becoming pregnant. During her time in Idaho, Smith has worked as a barmaid at Shuckey’s and in many different capacities for the state until her retirement in 2002. She is one of the founding members of The Community Center. She discusses the challenges of the gay community from the 1977 Boise Police Department lawsuit to the No On One Campaign. After having received many accolades for her service in the gay community in Boise, Evie is now approaching a retirement from activism.

Keywords: Stonewall, Brian Fisher, The American Family Association, Boise Police Department, Flying M coffeehouse, No Nudity Legislation, Shuckey’s, Pride parade

Interview date: 12/9/2011

Interviewer: Debra Groberg

Interview duration: 55:02

City: Boise

Timed Notation:

| | |
|-------|---|
| 00:00 | Demographic information/growing up |
| 02:00 | First sexual experience/sexual identification |
| 03:00 | moving to Boise/pregnancy |
| 04:30 | Jobs |
| 05:00 | Boise queer community/sexual identification |
| 06:15 | Coming out story |
| 09:15 | Religious background/current religion |
| 10:45 | Places you are not out |
| 11:30 | Work in Idaho |
| 13:00 | Living in England |
| 13:30 | Sexual Identity |

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|-------|---|
| 13:45 | Where you feel comfortable/uncomfortable |
| 14:15 | Life in Boise |
| 15:15 | Boise queer community/Pride |
| 16:30 | Activist work (The Community Center/YFFN) |
| 22:45 | Attending Pride memories/Nudity Legislation |
| 25:30 | YWCA/Discrimination story |
| 26:15 | Work done by Lesbian Feminists |
| 27:30 | Partner Relationships |
| 29:15 | Sustaining relationships in Idaho |
| 30:15 | 1977 Boise Police Department Lawsuit |
| 32:15 | Work Discrimination |
| 34:00 | Current activist work |
| 34:30 | Partner Relationships |
| 37:00 | Shuckies/Bars |
| 40:30 | 90's AntiGay Legislation |
| 41:45 | Interest in Family |
| 42:30 | Gay Marriage |
| 44:30 | Human Rights Rally speech |
| 46:30 | Being a queer community figure |
| 47:45 | Awards |
| 50:45 | Currently meeting people |
| 52:15 | Staying active in the community |
| 53:30 | Potential Interviewees |
| 54:45 | Final Words |