

PROVIDENCE PUBLIC LIBRARY
Special Collections
109-03-03
Kim Deacon collection
1974-2002

OVERVIEW OF THE COLLECTION

Number: 109-03-03

Title: Kim Deacon collection

Creator: Deacon, Kim

Dates: 1974-2002

Quantity: 3 containers (total 1.2 linear feet)

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Acquisition: Gift of Kim Deacon, 2021.

Accruals: No accruals are expected.

Custodial history: Material was acquired from the creator.

Processed by: The collection was processed by Kate Wells in 2021.

Conservation: Not applicable.

Language: Materials are in English.

RIGHTS AND ACCESS

Access: This collection is open under the rules and regulations of the Providence Public Library, Special Collections department.

Preferred Citation: Researchers are requested to use the following citation format:
[item number], [item title], Kim Deacon Collection, Special Collections, Providence Public Library

Property Rights: Copyright has been assigned to Providence Public Library.

INFORMATION FOR RESEARCHERS

Separated material Not applicable.

Published description Not applicable.

Location of originals Not applicable.

Location of copies	Not applicable
Publication note	Not applicable
Subject headings	<p>Bars (Drinking establishments) - Rhode Island - Woonsocket Gay bars - Rhode Island - Woonsocket Gays - Rhode Island Lesbians - Rhode Island Drag performance. Drag queens. Drag shows. Sexual minority community Sexual minority culture Sexual minorities Softball Flag football Roller skating Woonsocket (R.I.)</p> <p>homosaurus.org LGBTQ+ LGBTQ+ bars LGBTQ+ chosen families</p>

SEE ALSO

Kim Deacon oral history interview. RI LGBTQ+ Community Archive, Providence Public Library.
Rita Paux oral history interview. Rhode Island Historical Society. RHiX 1998.10.1.6c

HISTORICAL NOTE

Kings & Queens was a gay bar at 285 Front Street in Woonsocket in operation from 1977-2002. It was opened by Rita Paux (1922-2015) and operated by Kim Deacon (1951-) from that time until it closed in 2002. Rita had owned and operated several bars in Woonsocket including opening the Palm Garden in 1945 in the back room of a boxing ring. In 1968, she opened the Lincoln Inn and then the High Street Cafe before opening Kings & Queens in 1977. The bar was operated by Kim Deacon who purchased a residential property behind the bar for Rita to live in during her retirement.

Kim Deacon (1951-) is a lifelong resident of Woonsocket, R.I. She is a community activist, martial arts instructor and was the long-time manager of the Kings & Queens, Kim and Rita Paux were close friends and chosen family members after meeting when Kim began dating the daughter of Rita's partner. Rita called Kim her daughter and Kim referred to Rita as her "step-father". Together, the two women created a safe haven for members of the LGBTQ+ community to express

themselves.

Kings & Queens included a bar and small dance floor. During her time operating the bar, Kim increasingly added annual events and holiday parties, fundraisers, and drag shows as well as regularly scheduled evenings for live entertainment, karaoke, darts, card games, and movie nights. In addition, she created social opportunities for LGBTQ+ people including bowling, softball and flag football leagues, bi-annual picnics at Lincoln Woods and seasonal roller skating nights at a local rink.

SCOPE AND CONTENTS OF THE COLLECTION

This collection documents the Kings & Queen Bar in Woonsocket, R.I. as well as the LGBT community in Rhode Island from the 1970s-early 2000s. The bulk of the collection includes photographs and videos, but additional clippings, event calendars and ephemera are included. Materials represent the bar as a gay social space and include events such as holiday parties, drag shows and fundraisers as well as events for the LGBT community sponsored by the bar including bi-annual picnics, roller skating nights and leagues for softball, bowling, flag football and darts.

ORGANIZATION OF THE COLLECTION

The collection is organized first by format into series including photographs, videos, textual materials and ephemera. Photographs are sub-divided primarily by type of event.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE COLLECTION**Series 1: Photographs**

The photographs are primarily candid images of customers, staff and performers at the Kings & Queens bar or at various events hosted by the bar. When possible, images are arranged by the type of event and then chronologically.

Title	Date	Box	Folder
Bar	1983	1	1
Bar	1994	1	2
Bar, "Some of our Family who died of AIDS". Images and items from several scrapbook pages.	ca. 1980s	1	3
Bar, Identified people	1970s	1	4
Bar, Identified people	1980s	1	5
Bar, Identified people	1990s	1	6
Bar, Identified people	undated	1	7
Bar, Unidentified people	undated	1	8
Bar, Unidentified people	undated	1	9
Bowling	undated	1	10
Christmas parties	undated	1	11
Drag performances, miscellaneous	1970s-1990s	1	12
Drag performances, Lip sync contest	ca. 1987	1	13
Drag performances, Tropical Summer Nights	undated	1	14
Drag Performers - B.B. Hayes	various	1	15
Drag Performers - Bobbi K.C.	various	1	16
Drag Performers - LaDiva Jonz	various	1	17
Drag Performers - Lee Daniels	various	1	18

Drag Performers - Ricki Raquel	1974	1	19
Drag Performers - The Widow Norton	various	1	20
Halloween	1980	1	21
Halloween	1985	1	22
Halloween	1980s	1	23
Halloween - "Wizard of Oz" theme	undated	1	24
Halloween	1990s-00s	1	25
Headshots of Performers	various	2	26
Kim Deacon	undated	2	27
Mudball Tournament	1986	2	28
Lincoln Woods picnics	1990s	2	29
New Years Eve	1980	2	30
New Years Eve	1981	2	31
New Years Eve	1983	2	32
New Years Eve	1996	2	33
New Years Eve	1997	2	34
New Years Eve	1998	2	35
New Years Eve	various	2	36
Roller Skating	1986	2	37
Softball	undated	2	38
Softball - Snowball Tournament	1984	2	39
Softball - Busch Gardens trip	1987	2	40
Pride Parade	1987	2	41
Pride Parade - "Pride & Power"	n.d.	2	42

Pride Parade - "A Family of Pride"	n.d.	2	43
Pride - Misc	various	2	44

Series 2: Textual materials

This series is predominantly copies of monthly event calendars for Kings & Queens. Originally kept on oversized wall calendars, Kim Deacon copied the events before donation. Also included are clippings especially related to efforts around liquor licensing.

Title	Date	Box	Folder
Clippings	various	2	45
Event Calendars	1984-1988	2	46
Event Calendars	1989-1993	2	47
Event Calendars	1994-1998	2	48
Event Calendars	1999-2002	2	49

Series 2: Videos

Videos include a number of DVDs that hold VHS recordings that were digitized prior to donation. One DVD was found to be corrupted upon donation, but the disc is still maintained in the collection. Two additional VHS cassette tapes were digitized post-donation. All video files are available as a digital file.

Title	Date	Box	Folder
Drag Performance - Tropical Summer Nights	undated	2	50
Drag Performance - Tropical Summer Nights	undated	2	50
Drag Performance - Starlight Ball (Dennis)	4/24/1987	2	50
Drag Performance - Starlight Ball (Brian)	4/24/1987	2	50
Drag Performance - Drag Time	undated	2	50
Drag Performance - Drag Show	undated	2	50

Drag Performance - Lip sync	1991	2	50
Drag Performance - Lip sync	1991	2	50
Drag Performance - A Night of Illusion	undated	2	50
Drag Performance - A Night of Illusion	undated	2	50
Drag Performance - Lip Sync Content (VHS)	1995	2	
Gay Pride Parade	1999	2	51
Rita's 80th Birthday Celebration	2001	2	51
Weezie's Slideshow	undated	2	51
Halloween	1987	2	51
City Council	undated	2	51
LGTV #4	undated	2	51
Softball	1987	2	51
Buster Vanasse Fundraiser	1988	2	51
Collette's Fundraiser (file corrupted)	2002	2	51
Football in Cold Spring Park (VHS)	1997	2	

Series 4: Ephemera

Title	Date	Box
Softball jersey	undated	3
Softball cap	undated	3
Softball coin bank	undated	3