



**New** Online Exhibition

# Queer Santa Cruz: Stories of the LGBTQ+ Community in Santa Cruz County

**When:** Opens Tuesday, April 28th, 2020

**Where:** Online at [santacruzmah.org/exhibitions/queer-santa-cruz](https://santacruzmah.org/exhibitions/queer-santa-cruz)

**Synopsis:** Visitors will develop a deeper understanding of the LGBTQ+ community contributions as part of a larger, shared Santa Cruz history in the MAH's first online exhibit.

*"We envision a healthy, vibrant, and diverse LGBTQ+ community in Santa Cruz County, free from fear, hatred, and prejudice and safe in their persons, work, and homes; fueled by a spirit of collaborative leadership that fosters the sharing of resources, talents, and gifts with each other and with the greater community."*

– The Diversity Center of Santa Cruz County

What is community? How does it shape our identity? These questions define who we are and how we fit within the places we call home. Opening virtually in the MAH's first-ever online exhibit, [Queer Santa Cruz](https://santacruzmah.org/exhibitions/queer-santa-cruz) explores the history of the LGBTQ+ community in Santa Cruz County and the impact diversity has both locally and globally.

In 2014 The Diversity Center of Santa Cruz County donated a rich archive of visual materials to the MAH. Working to activate their mission of advocating, supporting, and celebrating the LGBTQ+ community of Santa Cruz County the Diversity Center worked alongside the MAH to preserve, document, and collect supplemental personal stories for years, resulting in the inspiration for this year-long exhibition at the MAH.

Since many of the groups mentioned inside the Diversity Center archive were collaborative in nature and supportive of one another, the archives that were amassed provide a vast selection of materials that document important relationship development and poignant change dating

back to the first Santa Cruz Pride Parade in 1974. Objects include photographs from the first Santa Cruz and Watsonville Prides, early queer local newsletters, and a collection of oral histories organized by the Diversity Center. These videos capture the stories told by the early trailblazers of the local LGBTQ+ community.

*"Talk to a member of our community today who was here and LGBTQ+ in the 1970s and 80s, and they've lived through and struggled for a revolution in laws and public attitudes, says Pat Dellin, who began organizing the Diversity Center archive. "Talk to a young person today, and that's ancient history. For both our veterans of LGBTQ+ activism and the young queers/gender fluid/non-conforming individuals of today, for straight people as well as LGBTQ+s, for families, supporters, and historians, recording our memories of the beginning work towards these momentous changes is important, illuminating, educational, inspirational."*

Originally going to open in the MAH's Ongoing [Santa Cruz County History Gallery](#) as a breakout pod, the exhibition will be 100% virtual until the MAH is safely able to reopen its doors following the impacts of COVID-19. In conjunction with the online exhibit, related programming is also pivoting into the virtual space. Together with the MAH, the Santa Cruz Diversity Center is hosting a series of webinars inviting folks to share their personal accounts of the stories found throughout the exhibit. For upcoming events, please visit [santacruzmah.org/events](http://santacruzmah.org/events).

*Queer Santa Cruz is proudly sponsored by  
The History Forum & The Diversity Center of Santa Cruz County.*

### **Collaborators:**

The Diversity Center of Santa Cruz County, Queer Youth Task Force, Safe Schools Project, Pat Dellin, Rob Darrow, Emilio Barajas, John Laird, Phillip Longo, Bristol Cave-LaCoste and the students from UCSC's Queer History class, Wyatt Young, Sharon Papo, Alex Santana, Jerry Solomon, Jo Kenny, Gloria Nieto, Kater Pollock, Ernie Sanchez, Larry Friedman, Lauren Cruz, Sandy Stone, Stella Moreno, Adam Spickler, Jane Schwickerath, Oscar Paz, Dan Dickmeyer, Stuart Rosenstein

### **[Images](#)**

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