

IGRA ARCHIVES

2009 Convention Report

Saturday, October 14, 2009

I am very pleased to tell all of you that Wayne Jakino, God rest his soul and my years of being a packrat paid off! When I started working in the office in 1993, I thought that maybe I should start sorting through the many boxes of stuff that Wayne and some others over the years had collected that pertained to IGRA and it's events. I began organizing it by year and made a decision that there was enough for me to continue saving items from IGRA events going forward, so I did. I told Larry Lindstrom and David Hill that we needed to remodel the office we had in the basement of Charlie's in Denver, so I could begin archiving information, records, etc. from our events. Larry and David thought I was out of my mind, but could see I was serious about my new project and agreed to help me remodel the IGRA office!

Ten years after that beginning, I stepped down as the IGRA Administrative Assistant, I told everyone that whoever took over as the Admin, that I expected them to continue collecting items from our events, and that someday it would pay off! The first thing I told Tommy Channel when I began training him to replace me, was that he had to continue collecting items from our events and that I would store it and keep it organized. He too thought I was out of my mind, but I said that I was serious and that he had better do it!

Then the last year, Brian Helander was contacted by a gay writer Gregory Hinton that wanted to write a book about Gay Rodeo and wanted to know if we had any Archives from previous years of IGRA. Brian replied, "Well as a matter of fact, yes we do" and put him in contact with me. Conversations began and Gregory was actually coming back to Colorado where he had go to school, and we made arrangements to meet at Charlie's in Denver. He arrived and I took him downstairs to the office, that wasn't even being used any more, except for storage of the IGRA Archives and junk from Charlie's and CGRA. Of course the Archives were not junk and had to be kept separate behind closet doors, away from the other junk!

We started going through the boxes and Gregory was just amazed at how much there was and how orderly it was, to which I replied "well duh!!!!!!!" He then told me he had been in touch with the Gene Autry Heritage National Heritage Museum about displaying the famous "Brokeback Mountain Shirts" that were in the movie, that a gentleman had purchased at an Auction for \$100,000 and didn't know what to do with them. Well the Autry Museum was very interested and asked if he knew of any other "Gay Western Heritage" and he replied that he knew of the International Gay Rodeo Association and would contact them and that is how our connection was made. After spending three long 12 hour days in that office, going through everything, he asked if he could take a small sample of the Archives back to them to look over. So, he did and they were very impressed with what he had and asked how much did we have in the Archives? His reply was, you can't even imagine, there are 18 large file boxes and 4 flat boxes, full of Archives! Then they replied, "Well when can we take a look at them?", to which he told them he would find out and that is where the ball started to roll.

Next we had to figure out how to get all of those boxes to LA, without being damaged, as some of it could not be replaced. We were able to secure a vehicle large enough to drive all of those boxes to LA,

thank you very much John Nelms, General Manager at Charlie's Denver. Then we had to figure out who could drive them out and when, so we could get them there as soon as possible. I talked Tommy Channel into going with me to take them to LA and drive back in 5 days, as that is all of the time we had in August with our busy schedules. So, we loaded up everything and hit the road August 12, 2009, stopping overnight at the wonderful Palace of Andrew Goodman! Thank you Andrew for your wonderful hospitality! The next day we drove the rest of the way to the museum, arriving around 1pm. They greeted us with a very positive attitude and were excited to begin going through all of those boxes! So we unloaded them all and they recorded what they had received. Then we were taken on a tour of the museum, what a treat that was, as they even took us behind the scenes and showed us the process of preserving and cataloging the stuff in the boxes. It was a very interesting tour, but we were already exhausted and knew we had to turn around and head home the next day. We went down to Laguna Beach to visit our dear friends Rohn Roldan and his partner Michael. We had a wonderful dinner, and late partying evening. The next day we hit the road for the long haul home, arriving back in Denver two days later.

Then on September 15, 2009, IGRA received a letter from the Autry Museum, notifying us that they had accepted the IGRA Archives for the museum of the American West! They said they were "Delighted with the stuff they had received and feel that it will make a important and lasting addition to the museum's collection!" I had to fill out a Deed of Gift form, sign it and send it back to them, completing the transaction and giving them full ownership of said items. What a feeling that was, that all of those years and all of that stuff had paid off and was now going to be recognized in a beautiful museum, telling to history of The International Gay Rodeo Association's history! They told they would notify us when some of the items would begin appearing on display and that the items would also be preserved for research, for many years to come. I will continue to collect items and send them more on a continual basis, adding to the collection of IGRA Archives.

Respectfully Submitted,
Patrick Terry
IGRA Archivist