

**STONEWALL INN, 51-53 Christopher Street, Manhattan**

Built: 1843 (51), 1846 (53); Combined with New Façade, 1930; architect, William Bayard Willis

Landmark Site: Borough of Manhattan, Tax Map Block 610, Lot 1 in part consisting of the land on which the buildings at 51-53 Christopher Street are situated

On June 23, 2015 the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the proposed designation of the Stonewall Inn as a New York City Landmark and the proposed designation of the related Landmark Site (Item No.1). The hearing had been duly advertised in accordance with the provisions of the law. Twenty-seven people testified in favor of the designation including Public Advocate Letitia James, Council Member Corey Johnson, Council Member Rosie Mendez, representatives of Comptroller Scott Stringer, Congressman Jerrold Nadler, Assembly Member Deborah Glick, State Senator Brad Hoylman, Manhattan Borough President Gale A. Brewer, Assembly Member Richard N. Gottfried, the Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation, the Real Estate Board of New York, the Historic Districts Council, the New York Landmarks Conservancy, the Family Equality Council, the National Trust for Historic Preservation, the National Parks Conservation Association, SaveStonewall.org, the Society for the Architecture of the City, and Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays, New York City, as well as three participants in the Stonewall Rebellion—Martin Boyce, Jim Fouratt, and Dr. Gil Horowitz (Dr. Horowitz represented the Stonewall Veterans Association)—and historians David Carter, Andrew Dolkart, and Ken Lustbader. In an email to the Commission on May 21, 2015 Benjamin Duell, of Duell LLC the owner of 51-53 Christopher Street, expressed his support for the designation. Council Member Margaret Chin and the Municipal Art Society sent letters in support of the designation. In addition the Commission has also received letters or emails from 105 individuals supporting the designation of the Stonewall Inn and three other LGBT sites.<sup>1</sup> There was no testimony or written communication in opposition to the designation.



*Stonewall Inn, June 2015*



*Stonewall Inn, 1969*

**Summary**

The Stonewall Inn, the starting point of the Stonewall Rebellion, is one of the most important sites associated with Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender history in New York City and the nation. In the late 1960s, when few establishments welcomed gays and lesbians and

repressive laws made it impossible for a gay bar to obtain a liquor license, Mafia control of gay and lesbian clubs was a given and police raids were routine. At about 1:20 a.m. on June 28 1969, when the Stonewall Inn was raided as part of a police crackdown on gay clubs, the reaction of the bar's customers anything but typical. Instead of hurrying off, they remained waiting in front of the club where they were joined by friends and passersby, mostly members the LGBT community. As the crowd grew, its members became increasingly angry at the rough treatment some prisoners were receiving and resentful of the unfairness of the situation. Participants began chanting "gay pride" and "gay power" and throwing pennies and other objects. The police were forced to retreat into the bar, which became the focus of attack. Eventually they were rescued. But for more than two hours, the crowd fought back while anti-riot police tried to clear the streets. The protests and confrontations continued for the next few days until almost midnight Wednesday July 2, 1969, with the Stonewall often at the center of events.

The Stonewall uprising was the catalyst for a new more radical phase in the LGBT Liberation Movement. Within a few months, in direct response to Stonewall, several activist organizations were formed in New York City, including the Gay Liberation Front, the Gay Activists Alliance, Radicalesbians, and the Street Transvestites Action Revolutionaries. Soon new organizations were being established across the U.S. and throughout the world to promote LGBT civil rights.

On June 28, 1970, the first anniversary of the Stonewall Rebellion was commemorated as Christopher Street Liberation Day; the main event was a march from Greenwich Village to Central Park. That day, Pride marches were also held in Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Chicago in commemoration of Stonewall. Those celebrations have since grown into the internationally-celebrated LGBT Pride Month, with events held annually throughout the world.

The two buildings that comprised the Stonewall Inn were originally built in the 1840s as stables, and in 1930 were merged at the first story and given a unified façade. Their combined ground floor commercial space originally housed a bakery; in 1934 it was taken over by the Stonewall Inn Restaurant, and reopened in 1967 as a gay club retaining the name Stonewall Inn. Nos 51 and 53 Christopher Street are within the Greenwich Village Historic District, which was designated on April 29, 1969 – just months before the Stonewall uprising. From the time of the Stonewall Rebellion, the buildings still retain their brick cladding, arched entrances, small storefront windows, associated with LGBT bars of the 1960, and stuccoed upper stories.

## BUILDING DESCRIPTION

### Description

The Stonewall Inn is comprised of two, two-story former stable buildings erected in the 1840s on the north side of Christopher Street, which in 1930 were joined at the first story and given a unified Arts & Crafts brick-and-stucco façade. Sometime between 1966 and 1967 (prior to the Stonewall Rebellion) the stucco extending from the second-story window sills to the roofline at No. 53 and on the piers between the second-story windows at No. 51 was removed and replaced with stucco to match the remaining stucco from 1934. The columned entrance surround at the storefront of No. 53 (dating from 1934) was also removed in 1967 when the Stonewall Inn was altered for use as a gay bar. The vertical neon Stonewall Inn sign that was installed at No. 51 in 1934 was subsequently altered and taken down in 1989. Post-1969 changes have also included the widening of the storefront entrance façade at No. 51 in 1975 and window replacements; nevertheless the façade remains largely intact to the time of the Stonewall Rebellion.

**51 Christopher:** former four-bay-wide, three-story, stable building, reduced to two-story building with one-story wing at rear, apparently retaining original second-story façade, with trabeated window openings and projecting sills, which was simplified and refaced with stucco in 1930.

*Historic facade features (at the time of the Stonewall Rebellion):* stone building sill, unpainted brick cladding at first-story commercial storefront features decorative soldier courses above sill and at top of storefront and slightly projected entrance bay; horizontal (originally four-feet-by-eight feet) storefront window opening above high brick bulkhead; brick header sill course beneath window; scored stucco facing at east end first story continuous with upper-story facing; trabeated residential entrance, stone threshold, single light wood transom; entire second story faced with scored stucco; four trabeated window openings with historic pairs of six-light wood casements; curved iron flower-box holders beneath each window; tall parapet topped by simple coping; brick chimney at west side roof; metal supports for former vertical sign at southwest corner roof; four historic skylights

*Alterations (post-1969):* storefront entrance widened to match segmental entry at No. 53 (original bricks reused); rounded brick step to match entry at No. 53; replacement doors, door jambs, and fanlight transom in store entrance; replacement doors in residential entrance; storefront window opening slightly narrowed; store window glazing and window frame replaced; air conditioner vent hole above store door and two air conditioner vent holes above storefront sealed and re-stuccoed; horizontal wood sign board installed over storefront with smaller metal sign attached; retractable awning; two light fixtures beneath awning; small metal property owner's sign to east store entrance; electrical conduit and alarm boxes under storefront window; small louvered vent inserted in stone sill to west of store entry; piping extending from metal sidewalk basement door beneath storefront window to fuel watchman meter to east of store entry at No. 51; stucco appears parged and cracked above second story window lintels; vertical sign removed; chimney parged and vent caps replaced; air conditioners and mechanical equipment on roof.

**53 Christopher:** former three-bay-wide, two-story, stable apparently retaining original second-story façade with trabeated window openings and projecting sills, which was simplified and refaced with stucco in 1930.

*Historic façade features (at the time of the Stonewall Rebellion):* stone building sill, brick cladding at first-story commercial storefront; slightly projecting entrance bays, round-arched residential entrance, segmental-arched commercial entry, curved brick steps at both entries; small projecting concrete plinths and traces of mortar and paint on brickwork flanking store entry, remnants of 1934 entrance surround; horizontal (approximately four-foot-by-eight foot) storefront window opening above high brick bulkhead; brick header sill course beneath window; wood brick molding; wood jambs and transoms in both doorways; entire second story façade faced with scored stucco; three trabeated window openings, which in 1969 had paired three-light wood casements; iron squared flower-box holders beneath each window; tall parapet topped by simple coping.

*Alterations (post 1969)* stone sill parged; brick stretcher course above window replaced; stucco parged and patched in some areas, spalling on upper story west window sill; horizontal crack in stucco running above second-story window lintels; doors replaced in residential and storefront entrances, glazing replaced and plywood liners removed; suspended light fixture removed from store entrance; lights installed flanking both entries; Siamese sprinkler head beneath store window; speaker box above west end shop window; fire alarm and louvered vent above commercial entry, metal commemorative plaque and small metal property owner's sign to west store entrance; electrical conduit to east of entry; original three-light paired casements replaced with five-light casements; roof and roof joists replaced 2007; air conditioner units at southeast corner of roof, partially visible above parapet.

## SITE HISTORY

### Gay and Lesbian Discrimination in the 1950s and 1960s<sup>2</sup>

In the United States, the 1950s saw the passage of many anti-gay laws.<sup>3</sup> The Red Scare not only prompted a search for Communist spies and sympathizers, but included gays and lesbians, who were assumed to be easy targets for Soviet agents.<sup>4</sup> While there were no laws that actually made being homosexual illegal, the illegality of most homosexual acts made being gay a de facto crime.<sup>5</sup> Gays and lesbians could be fired or denied housing.<sup>6</sup> In the most extreme cases consenting homosexual adults who had sex within their own home could be convicted to life in prison, forced into psychiatric facilities, and even castrated.<sup>7</sup> Even the 1960s, an era known for its rapid political and social change, saw for most of the decade little legal progress in the way of LGBT rights.<sup>8</sup> By the end of the 1960s, homosexual sex was outlawed in every state but Illinois.<sup>9</sup>

New York City was no exception. It was, in fact, “the city that most aggressively and systematically targeted gay men as criminals.”<sup>10</sup> In New York anti-gay legislation prohibited same sex kissing and even dancing.<sup>11</sup> New York police could arrest anyone wearing less than three items of clothing that were deemed “appropriate” to their sex, and the State Liquor Authority made it illegal for a bar to serve someone who was known to be gay.<sup>12</sup> Plainclothes police officers would frequently attempt to enter gay bars with the intention of entrapping gay clientele, and bars with gay patrons were constantly at risk of being raided and closed.<sup>13</sup> In order to evade the law, many gay bars claimed to be private clubs and required clients to be members so as not to be regulated by the State Liquor Authority. Another outcome of New York's

discriminatory environment was that most gay bars were controlled by the Mafia, who could illicitly obtain liquor licenses and pay off the local police.<sup>14</sup>

### Activism and Resistance in the 1950s and 1960s<sup>15</sup>

The discriminatory environment of the 1950s and 1960s meant that very few people would acknowledge that they were homosexual.<sup>16</sup> In the 1950s, homophile activists and groups strove to merely have their right to exist recognized. The two major homophile organizations of the period were the Mattachine Society, which began in Los Angeles in 1950 and opened a New York branch in 1955, and Daughters of Bilitis, a women's organization, which started in San Francisco in 1955 and established a branch in New York City in 1958.<sup>17</sup> They sponsored conferences and published newsletters. Membership in these and other smaller groups tended to be urban, white, and middle class but did not attract the younger or more radical members of the LGBT community.<sup>18</sup>

There was, however, some resistance and success on the part of the LGBT community. From 1965-1969 a series of peaceful July 4<sup>th</sup> demonstrations demanding equality took place in front of Independence Hall in Philadelphia. These annual events were the largest peaceful demonstrations for gay rights of their time.<sup>19</sup> In New York, in 1966, members of the Mattachine Society staged "sip-ins," in which members of the group would approach bartenders and state that they were gay. Their actions prompted a court case, and the court's decision forbade the State Liquor Authority from refusing to serve gay men.<sup>20</sup>

### Greenwich Village and Christopher Street<sup>21</sup>

For more than 150 years, Greenwich Village has served as a center and a magnet for people who chose not to conform to society's expectations. Associated with creativity and political activism, Greenwich Village became known within New York City and the country as the mecca for Bohemian life and a place that embraced unconventional lifestyles.<sup>22</sup> The neighborhood's tolerance made the Village a haven for gays and lesbians as far back as the early 20th century and by the 1930s the Village's gay reputation was firmly established.<sup>23</sup>

Greenwich Village's gay reputation made it the focus of the aggressive anti-gay policing policy that emerged in the 1950s. During election years, gay bars became targets of clean-up campaigns.<sup>24</sup> As a result, gay bars typically only survived a few months at a time and frequently maintained the atmosphere of a speakeasy.<sup>25</sup> These discriminatory practices continued in the 1960s and were particularly acute during the 1964-1965 World's Fair. Conscious of how the city would be viewed, Mayor Robert Wagner led a clean-up effort that resulted in the closure of almost all of the city's gay and lesbian bars.<sup>26</sup> After the World's Fair, many new gay bars opened on Washington Square West, Eighth Street to Greenwich Avenue, and west on Christopher Street.<sup>27</sup> A study conducted in the late 1960s found 26 bars, 12 nightclubs/restaurants, four hotels, and two private clubs that catered to members of the LGBT community within Greenwich Village.<sup>28</sup>

One of these establishments was undoubtedly the Stonewall Inn at 53 Christopher Street, which was converted to a gay bar in March of 1967. The Stonewall was located in a prime location within easy access of eight subway lines and where Christopher, Seventh Avenue South, West 4<sup>th</sup>, Sheridan Square, and Grove Street all converge. It was also within the stretch of Christopher Street, between Greenwich and Seventh Avenues, which had evolved into the street's main gay commercial area and only a couple of blocks from "The Corner," an intersection at Greenwich Avenue and Christopher Street, which was Greenwich Village's most

popular gay meeting place.<sup>29</sup>

### The Stonewall Inn Restaurant

The buildings at 51-53 Christopher Street that housed the Stonewall Inn in 1969 were originally two separate, two-story stable buildings.<sup>30</sup> No. 51 was erected by A. Voorhis in 1843; No. 53 was built in 1846 for Mark Spencer, who owned a large mansion nearby. In 1898, No. 51 was raised to three stories. In 1914, No. 53 was converted to a bakery, which was leased to French baker Baptiste Ycre, who occupied the second-floor apartment with his family.<sup>31</sup> In 1930, Henry J. Harper, who owned both No. 51 and No. 53 commissioned architect William Bayard Willis to remove the top story from the former livery stable at No. 51 and remodel the building's interior to create a new ground story store and second floor apartment. The ground story of No. 51 was joined to bakery at 53 Christopher and the buildings were given a unified brick-and-stucco Arts and Crafts façade. From 1930 to early 1933, the Ycre bakery continued to occupy the commercial space in both buildings and at various times members of the Ycre family resided in the upstairs apartments. After a vacancy of about a year, late in 1934, the Stonewall Inn moved to the commercial space at 51-53 Christopher Street.<sup>32</sup>

The Stonewall Inn, sometimes known as Bonnie's Stonewall Inn, presumably in honor of its proprietor Vincent Bonavia, opened for business at 91 Seventh Avenue South in 1930. Purportedly a tearoom, a restaurant serving light meals and non-alcoholic beverages, it was in fact a speakeasy, which was raided by prohibition agents in December 1930, along with several other Village nightspots.<sup>33</sup>

With the repeal of Prohibition in December 1933, restaurants and bars serving alcohol were able to have a much more visible presence. Therefore, in altering 51-53 Christopher Street for the Stonewall Inn in 1934, architect Harry Yarish added a columned surround to the storefront entrance at 53 Christopher Street (only the column plinths survive) and installed a large vertical neon sign reading "Bonnie's Stonewall Inn" at 51 Christopher Street (later altered and taken down in 1989).<sup>34</sup> Advertisements and articles about the newly opened Stonewall Inn on Christopher Street boasted of the "European atmosphere in its cocktail lounge and Salon Continental," and the bar decorated to resemble a hunting lodge.<sup>35</sup> The restaurant soon became a popular venue for weddings, banquets, and other social and civic events. These included the May 1935 dinner of the Greenwich Village Association at which Parks Commissioner Robert Moses spoke about proposed changes to Washington Square Park.<sup>36</sup> In 1961 Geraldine Page was the guest of honor at a reunion of the cast members of the Circle-in-the-Square's 1952 production of "Summer and Smoke."<sup>37</sup>

In March of 1965, the executors and the trustees of the Harper Estate sold a parcel consisting of the buildings at 51, 53, 55, 59, and 61 Christopher Street to real estate investor Joel Weiser.<sup>38</sup> The Stonewall Inn restaurant closed in early 1966 and some alterations were made to the façade of 51-53 Christopher Street, including repairs to the second-story stucco and removal of restaurant signs from above the storefront windows.<sup>39</sup>

### "It Was a Mafia Joint-The Windows Were Painted Black"<sup>40</sup>

Later in 1966, four men, who had grown up together on Mulberry Street and were affiliated with the Genovese family, invested a total of \$3,500 to open a gay bar at 51-53 Christopher Street. They also made some changes to the exterior of the building, removing the columned entrance surround, installing a pendant light above the entry (no longer extant), and

painting the storefront windows black. The wood storefront doors “were rendered more secure by steel doors inside them and several inside locks intended to slow down the police in a raid.”<sup>41</sup> The windows were also reinforced inside with plywood, which was further reinforced with two-by-fours “to prevent the police from being able to simply to break through the windows and rush inside.”<sup>42</sup> The relatively small window openings, high bulkheads, dark glass, and plywood window liners at the Stonewall were typical features of LBGT bars of the period, meant to protect the patrons’ privacy and prevent passersby from viewing clandestine activities within.<sup>43</sup> The name Stonewall Inn and the large neon sign topped by the word restaurant were retained, though food was no longer served. The club opened for business as a gay bar in mid-March 1967.

To get around the laws prohibiting the sale of alcohol to homosexuals, the proprietors purchased the license from a defunct social club so that they could claim to be operating a private “bottle” club in which members brought their own liquor to the club to be used and stored on the premises. In fact, very watered-down off-brand or stolen whiskey and beer were for sale at exorbitant prices. Since the Stonewall was supposed to be a private club, patrons had to knock and be screened by a doorman who peered at them through the small windows in the club’s main door (replaced). If the customers passed muster, they entered a foyer where they paid an admission charge and signed in, often using a false name. Larger than most clubs of the period, the Stonewall Inn had areas for dancing in both its main rooms. Each room was provided with a separate jukebox offering different types of music to appeal to a range of patrons (mainstream rock in the so-called “front room,” which contained the main bar, at No. 51; soul music in the “back room” at No. 53).<sup>44</sup> The clientele was mainly male and young, a mixture of whites, blacks, and Hispanics, ranging from businessmen to college students to gay street youth, and included some women, both lesbian and straight, and transvestites and transsexuals. As David Carter observes in his book on the Stonewall Rebellion:

The most important point about the clientele at the Stonewall Inn is that all segments of the gay and lesbian community, including a strong representation of the more marginal elements, defined the Stonewall Inn as a special place in the homosexual world of greater New York, giving it a unique status at that time.<sup>45</sup>

Despite its being something of a dive, with black painted walls, dim lighting, a third-rate sound system, no running water in the front room bar, and frequently overflowing toilets, the Stonewall Inn’s size and multiple dance floors made it a popular and enormously profitable gathering place. Most scholars agree that it was allowed to operate because the owners made regular payoffs to the Greenwich Village’s Sixth Police Precinct. But even with payoffs, gay bars were raided about once a month, with stepped up enforcement at election time, when politicians wanted to appear to be tough on crime, or due to neighbors’ complaints. Usually, the Stonewall Inn’s owners were tipped off in advance about a raid and would leave the premises making sure that most of the money and liquor was removed so that they would not be impounded as evidence. The lower level employees, the doorman, bartenders, waiters, etc., and some customers would be arrested. Law professor, William Eskridge recalled:

At the peak, as many as 500 people per year were arrested for the crime against nature, and between 3-and 5,000 people per year arrested for various solicitation or loitering crimes. This is every year in New York City... This produced an

enormous amount of anger within the lesbian and gay community in New York City and in other parts of America. Gay people were not powerful enough politically to prevent the clampdown and so you had a series of escalating skirmishes in 1969. Eventually something was bound to blow.<sup>46</sup>

### The Stonewall Rebellion<sup>47</sup>

Seymour Pine, in a series of interviews with David Carter in 1999 and 2000, indicated that when Pine transferred into Public Morals squad of Manhattan's First Police Division in the spring of 1969 there was an ongoing investigation into possible mob involvement in the trading of stolen securities in Europe. The police suspected that the Mafia might be blackmailing gay employees at stock depositories, forcing them to participate in the scheme and that various gay clubs might be involved. According to Pine, his boss Detective Charles Smythe decided that "if they closed the Village gay clubs down, we'd see what would happen to the bonds that were surfacing."<sup>48</sup> Whether this was the motivating factor, or whether, as many believed at the time, there was an ongoing election year crackdown, or the police were simply implementing a tough new State Liquor Authority ban against private clubs, under Smythe and Pine's leadership five Village LGBT bars were raided in the last three weeks of June 1969, including the Stonewall Inn, on June 24. During the June 24 raid, under Pine's direction, the bar's liquor was seized and employees were arrested. The Stonewall reopened the next day and Smythe and Pine, frustrated with their limited impact, planned a second raid on the Stonewall Inn for late night Friday-early morning Saturday June 27-28 when the bar would be crowded.

#### *Friday Night-Saturday Morning June 27-28, 1969*

This time Smythe and Pine came armed with a warrant authorizing them to search for the illegal sale of alcohol. An agent from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms and an inspector from the Department of Consumer Affairs joined the police contingent consisting of Pine and Smythe, two undercover policewomen, four plain clothes policemen from the Morals squad, and two patrolmen. After waiting some time in Christopher Park, Pine ordered the raid to begin at about 1:20 A.M.

Once inside, the police began to separate the people in the bar into groups. Almost immediately they encountered resistance. Some customers refused to show their identification, those dressed in female attire would not go into the bathrooms with the female officers so they could verify their sex (the presence of just one transvestite was enough to make the place illegal), and the lesbians in the back room began loudly complaining that they were being sexually groped by the male officers who were supposed to be frisking them. A few foot patrol officers and patrol cars arrived from the Sixth Precinct. As Smythe oversaw the seizure of beer and whiskey, the police slowly began checking people for identification. Those that had it and were not transvestites or bar personnel were allowed to leave, but instead of going home people gathered outside, watching and waiting for their friends to emerge. "Cheers went up as favorites emerged from the door, striking a pose."<sup>49</sup> There were shouts of "Gay Power!" Someone began a chorus of "We Shall Overcome." A large crowd began to form.

Finally a paddy wagon arrived and Pine began the process of having the evidence and prisoners loaded into the wagon. First the owners were brought out to jeers from the crowd, then the bar employees, then a group of three transvestites. When a policeman shoved one of the transvestites, she hit him with her purse. The policeman responded by clubbing her. Suddenly the crowd grew angry and began beating the paddy wagon. As the police began escorting a lesbian



out of the bar to a waiting police car, she fought them then managed to slip out of the car and make her way back to the bar. This happened twice more; the last time a policeman picked her up and threw her into the car, as she shouted, "Why don't you guys do something!" According to Leo Laurence, a reporter for the *Berkeley Barb*, "That did it. The crowd rushed the police wagon as someone yelled, 'Let's turn it over.'"<sup>50</sup>

At that point Pine ordered the police cars and paddy wagon to pull out and return once they had dropped their prisoners at the precinct. He was left with a handful of officers to control the angry crowd, process the site, and guard the prisoners still in the bar. Some members of the crowd began throwing coins and other objects at the police outside the bar. One officer was hit in the eye and Pine decided the culprit was folksinger Dave Van Ronk, who had been having dinner at the Lion's Head Inn further down the street and was standing in the crowd watching the action. Pine tackled Van Ronk and began to place him under arrest. As Van Ronk resisted, he was beaten and eventually pulled into the Stonewall. The restive crowd grew even angrier. Pine ordered his men into the bar, taking *Village Voice* reporter Howard Smith with them for his safety.

A trash can was hurled against the Stonewall's west window. Soon some street youths uprooted a parking meter and began using it as a battering ram against the Stonewall's doors. People continued to lob bricks, cobblestones, cans, bottles, trash cans, and anything else they could find against the building, amid cries of "Gay Power!" and "We want freedom." A second floor window broke.

Inside the bar, the Stonewall's doors and plywood window liners began to give way under assault from the parking-meter battering-ram. There was a momentary lull then the crowd began to regroup for a new assault. Someone threw pieces of burning trash into the bar's broken windows. The police found an extinguisher and managed to put out the flames. Police officers began to draw their pistols. Pine went to each officer individually, asking them how they were doing and telling them not to fire until he fired. Meanwhile the police found a hatch in the roof and the smaller of the female officers managed to escape to a nearby firehouse. As a trash can full of burning paper was tossed into the building, setting fire to the cloakroom and someone began spurting lighter fluid through a window, following it with a lit match, Pine got ready to fire. Suddenly, two fire engines and the Sixth Precinct paddy wagon pulled up near the Stonewall. Pine began bringing his prisoners out, again encountering resistance from the crowd. The Tactile Patrol Force [TPF], the city's riot-control force appeared. Wearing helmets with visors, carrying anti-riot shields, and armed with billy clubs and other weapons, the TPF walked in a V formation down Christopher Street, forcing the crowd towards Seventh Avenue South. But instead of dispersing, the rioters took advantage of the Village's street pattern to simply turn a quick corner and reassemble behind the wall of police. A game of cat-and-mouse began, which lasted for about two hours. At several points during the night, a group of gay street youths formed a kickline and started singing "We Are the Stonewall Girls; we wear our hair in curls...." Eventually, about 4:30 in the morning, things petered out.

#### *Saturday Night-Sunday Morning, June 28-29*

By Saturday afternoon the Stonewall's storefront windows were boarded up and painted black. Several pieces of graffiti had been painted or chalked on the wood infill and on the brickwork above the windows including "We Are Open," "Legalize Gay Bars and lick the Problem," "Support Gay Power," and "GAY PROHIBITION CORUPT\$ COP\$ FEED\$ MAFIA."<sup>51</sup>

The Stonewall Inn reopened on Saturday, only serving soft drinks given away free of charge. Although the bar was crowded, a much larger crowd was forming across the street and in Christopher Park. Many of the previous night's protestors returned, joined by their friends, and by members of the LGBT community throughout the region, drawn by radio news coverage of the previous night's events. Tourists, Villagers, Black Panthers, Anti-Vietnam-War protestors and "the idly curious" also joined the crowd. Chants went up demanding "Freedom Now," "Gay Power," "Queen Power," and "Equality for homosexuals," and asserting that "Christopher Street belongs to the queens."<sup>52</sup> *Village Voice* reporter Lucian Truscott reported that "hand-holding, kissing, and posing accented each of the cheers with a homosexual liberation that had appeared only fleetingly on the street before."<sup>53</sup> As the crowd grew larger, reportedly numbering 2,000 by midnight, it spilled into the streets blocking traffic, sometimes deliberately. Police cars appeared and were attacked. Trash cans were set on fire. As the once jovial crowd turned nasty, the TPF were once again called out and arrived by the busload around 2:15. They lined up shoulder to shoulder across Christopher Street in front of the Stonewall then walked sweeping the crowd from Christopher Street as far as Waverly Place. Once again, a group of protesters formed a chorus line and began singing and dancing, facing off the heavily armed police. The police gained control of the streets about 2:30, then faced fresh confrontations as the bars closed at 3:00, so that it was not until 3:30-4:00 that order was fully restored.

#### *Sunday Afternoon-Wednesday Night, June 29-July 2*

By Sunday afternoon, hundreds of gays and lesbians were again gathering in the Christopher Park area. Following a meeting of officials of Mattachine Society New York with the mayor's office and police, Mattachine had agreed to discourage further protests. A new sign appeared in a storefront window of the Stonewall Inn:

WE HOMOSEXUALS PLEAD WITH OUR PEOPLE TO PLEASE HELP  
MAINTAIN PEACEFUL AND QUIET CONDUCT ON THE STREETS OF  
THE VILLAGE-MATTACHINE<sup>54</sup>

With TPF police completely flooding the area, trying desperately to head off any trouble, Sunday was mostly used for "watching and rapping."<sup>55</sup> A little after 1 a.m., Lucian Truscott and Taylor Mead, the avant-garde writer-actor, were standing on Seventh Avenue South when they encountered Allen Ginsberg who, having heard about the "Stonewall battle," wanted to see what was going on and "to show the colors."<sup>56</sup> Realizing that he had never been there, Ginsberg expressed a desire to visit the Stonewall and was accompanied by Truscott. Inside the dimly lit club, with music blaring from a stereo system that replaced the jukeboxes destroyed in the raid, Ginsberg "danced with a whole bunch of kids."<sup>57</sup> Walking home with Truscott to the Lower East Side, Ginsberg contrasted his past experiences with what they had occurred at the Stonewall that evening, saying, "You know, the guys there were so beautiful – they've lost that wounded look that fags all had ten years ago."<sup>58</sup>

Monday and Tuesday nights were quiet, with few people on the streets. Tempers remained on edge and there were a few nasty confrontations between police officers and members of LGBT community.

Late Wednesday night, the *Village Voice* appeared with Smith and Truscott's articles on the Stonewall as the cover stories. Although accurately reported, the frequently condescending tone of the articles and the use of such phrases as "the forces of faggotry" reinforced a long-

standing resentment in the LGBT community about the paper's conservative and often negative attitude about homosexuality. About 10 p.m., a crowd of about 500 chanting youths formed on Christopher Street in front of the *Voice* headquarters near the Stonewall Inn.<sup>59</sup> This time there were many representatives of radical organizations such as the Yippies and Black Panthers and street gangs who were probably there in the hope of a confrontation with the police. Another street battle began in which one police officer and a large number of protestors were injured, and some businesses were looted. Ronnie Di Brenza writing in the *East Village Other* reported that "this all ended within an hour, and peace was restored. But the word is out Christopher Street shall be liberated. The fags have had it with oppression."<sup>60</sup>

### Later History of 51-53 Christopher Street

According to David Carter the Stonewall Inn closed by October 1969 when a for rent sign appeared in the window, done in by the club's notoriety and the lack of a liquor license, which meant that the owners had to continue to operate it as "a juice bar."<sup>61</sup> Evidently there were some plans to reopen a club on the premises because in autumn 1970 plans were filed with the Department of Buildings and the Landmarks Preservation Commission for a restaurant and bar serving only soft drinks that would utilize most of the existing fixtures from the Stonewall Inn but have a larger platform for disco dancers.<sup>62</sup> The architect's letter to the Landmarks Commission indicated that the façade would not be changed except for "new plate glass to replace broken glass and minor repair work to the street door and trim" adding that "one pair of broken doors was replaced some time ago."<sup>63</sup>

By 1975 the 51-61 Christopher Corporation, controlled by Manny Duell, had acquired the buildings and begun leasing the first floor commercial spaces separately, with Bowl & Board occupying No. 53.<sup>64</sup> In August 1975 an application was filed on behalf of the Bagel Place restaurant to widen the store entrance at No. 51 duplicating the entrance at No. 53.<sup>65</sup> This change would have necessitated some reduction in the width of the storefront window. The vertical Stonewall Inn sign, which was very deteriorated, was replaced by an illuminated sign with a bronze-colored duranodic aluminum background and brass lettering.

In 1987, a new gay bar opened at 51 Christopher Street, and paying tribute to the building's historic importance was named Stonewall. By 1988 the illuminated vertical Bagel Land sign was refaced to read "STONEWALL." After the bar closed in October 1989, the sign was removed.<sup>66</sup> Around 1992 a men's clothing store moved to No. 51 and the retractable awning was installed.<sup>67</sup> That building is currently occupied by a nail salon-spa.

Around 1982, the Szechuan Cottage Restaurant began leasing No. 53 and made some changes to the façade without permits from the Landmarks Preservation Commission, which included the replacement of the second story casement windows.<sup>68</sup>

By 1993 the third Stonewall, also a gay bar, opened at No. 53 Christopher.<sup>69</sup> It was renovated in the late 1990s, when it became "a popular multi-floor nightclub."<sup>70</sup> At that point the casement windows were replaced.<sup>71</sup> According to the Wikipedia article on the Stonewall Inn "the club gained popularity for several years, [attracting] a young urban gay clientele until it closed in 2006."<sup>72</sup> In January 2007, new lessees took over, renamed it the Stonewall Inn, and made major renovations to the interior. The building's roof was also replaced at that time.<sup>73</sup> In operation in June 2015, the current Stonewall Inn continues to pay tribute to the building's historic significance.

Today, although there have been some changes to its façade, the buildings at 51-53 Christopher Street remains very recognizable as the Stonewall Inn, the site of the Stonewall Rebellion, the catalytic moment in the modern LGBT movement.

### Gay Power and Gay Pride: The Legacy of the Stonewall Rebellion

The 1969 rebellion began as a protest against police harassment and the Mafia-controlled gay bar scene in New York City, but the true legacy of Stonewall is as inspiration of a nationwide movement to secure LGBT civil rights. Almost overnight, an incredible number of new gay and lesbian organizations were established—by some counts rising from 50-60 groups before the uprising to more than 1,500 a year later and 2,500 within two years.<sup>74</sup> Most of these new organizations embraced New Left values as well as much more public and politically activist methods. These groups have often been called Gay Liberation Movement to distinguish it from the earlier, less activist Homophile Movement of the Mattachine Society and Daughters of Bilitis.<sup>75</sup>

The seeds of the first of these new gay liberation organizations were being sown even as the uprising was still simmering. On July 1 and 2, members of newly-formed Mattachine Action Committee (MAC) passed out fliers announcing a public forum on the topic of “Gay Power.”<sup>76</sup> That meeting—held July 9 at Mattachine’s meeting rooms in Freedom House at 20 West 40<sup>th</sup> Street—attracted nearly 100 participants who enthusiastically voted to stage a protest of police harassment. At a second forum, scheduled a week later on July 16 at Saint John’s Episcopal Church in Greenwich Village, tensions rose between Mattachine leadership—who wanted to “retain the favor of the Establishment”—and the more radicalized constituents who wanted to overthrow the Establishment.<sup>77</sup> The latter ultimately broke away from Mattachine-New York and established their own organization during a series of meetings on July 24 and July 31 at Alternate U at 530 Sixth Avenue. This new group called themselves the Gay Liberation Front (GLF).<sup>78</sup>

Several significant early demonstrations of LGBT political activism took place even as the GLF was taking shape. On July 4, just a day after the conclusion of the uprising, the Mattachine-sponsored fifth Annual Reminder in Philadelphia was effectively taken over by young activists who broke with established decorum, holding hands and displaying signs with slogans such as “Smash Sexual Fascism!”<sup>79</sup> The difference in tenor with previous Reminders was obvious; as one participant noted, “it was clear that things were changing. People who had felt oppressed now felt empowered. They were ready to insist on their rights rather than just ask for them.”<sup>80</sup> On July 14, MAC members joined a picket line in support of inmates at the House of Detention for Women, one of the first times LGBT activists joined other leftist organizations in public protest. And on July 27, to commemorate the one-month anniversary of the start of the uprising, a gay power vigil and march was held in Greenwich Village, which has been called the “city’s first gay-power vigil” and “the first openly gay march not only in New York City but on the East Coast.”<sup>81</sup>

The GLF, which was by design leader-less and as such suffered from a number of organizational problems, was relatively short lived but highly influential, and its members helped found a number of other significant gay liberation groups. Many were focused on subgroups of the LGBT population.<sup>82</sup> The Lavender Menace, later officially organized as Radicalesbians, worked to introduce lesbian concerns into feminist discourse. The Street Transvestite Action Revolutionaries (STAR), founded by Sylvia Rivera and Marsha P. Johnson, helped homeless transgendered street youths. Perhaps the most influential of the organizations created out of GLF was the Gay Activists Alliance (GAA), whose constitution was adopted in December 1969.

Unlike the GLF, which aligned itself with a host of New Left causes, the GAA dedicated itself exclusively to advancing LGBT civil and social rights. It lobbied for the passage of local civil rights laws, the banning of police entrapment and harassment, the creation of fair employment and housing legislation, and the repeal of sodomy and solicitation laws. Its most famous activist tactic was the "zap," a direct, public confrontation with a political figure regarding LGBT rights designed to gain media attention.<sup>83</sup> The GAA's headquarters, known as the Firehouse, at 99 Wooster Street served as an important community center and hosted numerous social events, particularly the Saturday night dance parties and Firehouse Flicks movie series. Later groups included Parents of Gays (later renamed Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays, PFLAG), established in 1973 as a support group by the mother of a Stonewall participant and GLF/GAA member; and the National Gay Task Force (later National Gay and Lesbian Task Force), the first national gay liberation organization, established in New York City on October 15, 1973.

The more vocal form of activism employed by Gay Liberation Movement organizations proved effective in securing a number of legislative victories. In 1974 the American Psychiatric Association removed homosexuality from the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*. In 1980 New York State legalized same-sex sexual activity between consenting adults. This was followed in 1998 with the recognition of domestic partnerships and in 2003 with the Sexual Orientation Non-Discrimination Act (SONDA). In 2009, an executive order was passed banning discrimination based on gender identity in state employment and in 2011 the Marriage Equality Act became law.

If the political activism of the Gay Liberation Movement has been characterized by the demand for "gay power," the memorialization of Stonewall is defined by a corollary call for "gay pride"—a term that is still used today to denote the annual commemoration of the uprising during the annual Pride Parade and Pride Month. The first parade was held June 28, 1970 in honor of the first anniversary of the uprising. The event was initially conceived by Craig Rodwell as a "gay holiday" and was effectively an evolution of the Annual Reminders in Philadelphia.<sup>84</sup> The event was called Christopher Street Liberation Day, a name chosen "to move attention from the Mafia-controlled Stonewall and onto the gay and lesbian struggle for liberation happening in the streets."<sup>85</sup>

The organizers of the New York parade encouraged other gay liberation groups throughout the country to hold their own events on the same day. The first year four or five other cities participated, including Los Angeles, which held the Christopher Street West celebration, as well as San Francisco and Chicago. The following year the events spread to more cities in America, and even internationally, to London and Paris and Stockholm. To commemorate the tenth anniversary of Stonewall in 1979, New York City declared June as Lesbian and Gay Pride and History Month. On the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 1989, the City Council voted to rename the portion of Christopher Street in front of Stonewall as Stonewall Place. The 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary commemoration included a massive march in New York City that attracted an estimated 1 million participants.<sup>86</sup> To mark the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the Stonewall Inn was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1999—the first LGBT landmark so honored—and was designated a National Historic Landmark year later in 2000.

While the struggle to secure LGBT civil rights certainly did not begin at the Stonewall Inn, the legacy of Stonewall as the inspiration for the Gay Liberation Movement and Gay Pride events has been well established. As Martin Duberman writes in his pioneering history of Stonewall:

“Stonewall” has become synonymous over the years with gay resistance to oppression. Today the word resonates with images of insurgency and self-realization and occupies a central place in the iconography of lesbian and gay awareness. The 1969 riots are now generally taken to mark the birth of the modern gay and lesbian political movement—that moment in time when gays and lesbian recognized all at once their mistreatment their solidarity. As such, “Stonewall” has become an empowering symbol of global proportions.<sup>87</sup>

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### *NOTES*

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<sup>11</sup> Three people who sent letters also spoke at the hearing; cosigners were counted separately; people who sent more than one letter or email were only counted once.

<sup>2</sup> Information in this section is based on the following sources: David Carter, *Stonewall: The Riots that Sparked the Gay Revolution*, (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 2004), John Strausbaugh, *The Village: 400 Years of Beats and Bohemians, Radicals and Rogues, a History of Greenwich Village*, (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2013); National Register of Historic Places, Stonewall, New York, New York, 99000562.

<sup>3</sup> Carter, 14.

<sup>4</sup> Strausbaugh, 457.

<sup>5</sup> Carter, 16.

<sup>6</sup> Carter, 1.

<sup>7</sup> Carter, 15; Strausbaugh, 457.

<sup>8</sup> Carter, 14.

<sup>9</sup> Carter, 1.

<sup>10</sup> Carter, 17.

<sup>11</sup> National Register of Historic Places, Stonewall, sec. 8, p. 5.

<sup>12</sup> Carter 17-18; National Register of Historic Places, Stonewall, sec 8, p. 5.

<sup>13</sup> National Register of Historic Places, Stonewall, sec 8, p. 5.

<sup>14</sup> National Register of Historic Places, Stonewall, sec. 8, p. 6.

<sup>15</sup> Information in this section is based on the following sources: National Register of Historic Places, Stonewall; “About the National LGBT 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration,” *50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary July 4, 2015* @ <http://lgbt50.org/about>, accessed June 3, 2015; Sheryl, “Before Stonewall: The ‘Sip In’ at Julius,” *Off the Grid*, Aug. 30, 2012, @ <http://gvshp.org/blog/2012/08/30/before-stonewall-the-sip-in-at-julius>, accessed June 4, 2015.

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- <sup>16</sup> National Register of Historic Places, Stonewall , sec. 8, p. 4.
- <sup>17</sup> National Register of Historic Places, Stonewall, sec 8, p. 5.
- <sup>18</sup> National Register of Historic Places, Stonewall, sec. 8, p. 5.
- <sup>19</sup> “About the National LGBT 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration;” National Register of Historic Places, Stonewall, sec 8, p. 5.
- <sup>20</sup> National Register of Historic Places, Stonewall, sec. 8, p. 5; Sheryl, “Before Stonewall: The ‘Sip In’ at Julius.”
- <sup>21</sup> Portions of this section were adapted from Landmarks Preservation Commission [LPC], *South Village Designation Report* (LP-2546) (New York: City of New York, 2013). Information in this section is based on the following sources: Carter; George Chauncey, "Long-Haired Men and Short-Haired Women," in *Greenwich Village: Culture and Counterculture*, by Rick Beard and Leslie Berlowitz (New Brunswick, NJ: Published for the Museum of the City of New York by Rutgers University), 151-164; Christine Boyer, ed., "Straight Down Christopher Street," in *Greenwich Village: Culture and Counterculture*, 36-53; Ken M. Lustbader, “Landscape of Liberation: Preserving Gay and Lesbian History in Greenwich Village,” (M.S. Thesis, Historic Preservation, Columbia University, 1993).
- <sup>22</sup> Carter, 17.
- <sup>23</sup> Chauncey, 151-152.
- <sup>24</sup> Lustbader, 55.
- <sup>25</sup> Lustbader, 55, 58.
- <sup>26</sup> Lustbader, 59; Carter, 36..
- <sup>27</sup> Lustbader, 59.
- <sup>28</sup> Carter, 17.
- <sup>29</sup> Lustbader, 60-61; Carter, 10-11.
- <sup>30</sup> The early history of 51-53 Christopher Street is based on National Register of Historic Places, Stonewall, sec. 8, p. 6; LPC, *Greenwich Village Historic District Report* (LP-0489) (New York: City of New York, 1969), Area 4, 117.
- <sup>31</sup> New York City Department of Buildings, Alteration Permit 4302-1914, in Manhattan Block 610, Lot 1 folder, New York City Municipal Archives; “William A White & Sons Have Rented...,” *New York Sun*, Feb, 14, 1915, 6; New York State Census, 1915, New York City, Block 6, Election District 6, Assembly District 25, p. 2.; United States Census, 1920, New York City, Enumeration District 724, Assembly District 10, sheet 2A; Listings for 51 and 53 Christopher Street, New York Telephone, *Manhattan Address Directory*, Summer 1930-September 1933.
- <sup>32</sup> “More Announcements of New Year’s Eve Plans Made by City’s Restaurants and Supper Clubs,” *New York Sun*, Dec. 28, 1934, 14.
- <sup>33</sup> “Village Hofbrau and Eight More Resorts Raided,” *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, Dec. 7, 1930, 20A. “Nine Resorts in Village Visited by Dry Raiders,” *New York Herald Tribune*, Dec. 7, 1930, 3; “We Pledge Our Co-operation to the National Recovery Administration,” *New York Herald Tribune*, Aug. 17, 1933, 11; “Where to Enjoy Thanksgiving Dinner,” *New York Herald Tribune*, Nov. 26, 1933, H8; Listings for “Stonewall Inn,” New York Telephone, *Manhattan White Pages*, Winter 1929-Summer 1934. While little is known about the Stonewall during this period, sources suggest that it was among the most notorious of the tearrooms operating in the Village in the early 1930s. See Boyer, 49.
- <sup>34</sup> New York City Department of Buildings, Manhattan, Docket Book, ALT 2268-1934; ES [Electric Sign] 2762-1934.
- <sup>35</sup> “More Announcements;” display ad “Bonnie’s Stonewall Inn,” *New York Sun*, Dec. 29, 1934.
- <sup>36</sup> “Moses Reassures Critics,” *New York Times*, May 21, 1935, 21.

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<sup>37</sup>“Geraldine Page Attends ‘Smoke Benefit Opening,” *Boxoffice*, Nov. 20, 1961, E2.

<sup>38</sup> New York County, Liber Deeds and Conveyances, Liber 5317, 386.

<sup>39</sup> See Fred W. McDarrah’s May 1, 1966 photo of 51-61 Christopher Street in Fred W. McDarrah and Timothy S. McDarrah, *Gay Pride: Photographs from Stonewall to Today* (New York: A Cappella Books, 1994), 2.

<sup>40</sup> Tommy Lanigan-Schmidt, reminiscing about the Stonewall at a panel discussion at The New-York Historical-Society, June 2, 2004, quoted in Lincoln Anderson, “‘I’m Sorry,’ Says Inspector Who Led Stonewall Raid,” *The Villager* 73, no. 7 (June 16-22, 2004).

<sup>41</sup> Carter, 69.

<sup>42</sup> Carter, 69.

<sup>43</sup> Ken Lustbader, in his thesis on the changing appearance of Greenwich Village gay and lesbian bars, notes that aside from their windows, the façades of a LGBT bars in the 1960s were no different from straight bars, except that they were allowed to become a little shabby and rundown to make them uninviting to heterosexuals. In fact when mobsters opened a gay or lesbian bar in a defunct straight bar or restaurant they usually left the facades unchanged (except for obscuring the windows) and often retained the previous establishment’s name. This approach was economical and drew a minimum of attention to the new bar, an important consideration when illegal activities were about to take place. See Lustbader, 54-55, 58, 61.

<sup>44</sup> In 1968, a partition at the rear of No. 51, which had originally separated the front room bar from the former restaurant kitchen, was removed to create a larger space for dancing and tables, and a small dance platform was installed behind the bar for go-go boys. At No. 53 a new partition was installed at the front of the building screening off the hallway and checkroom from the back room. Lustbader (61) argues that use of bouncers to screen customers, the location of service spaces at the front of gay bars where they blocked views into the main rooms “kept control of intruders as well as the police.” See also Lustbader (135) for the architect’s plan for alterations.

<sup>45</sup> Carter, 77.

<sup>46</sup> *Complete Program Transcript, Stonewall Uprising, WGBH American Experience, PBS, 2011* @ <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/features/transcript/stonewall-transcript>, accessed June 10, 2015, 8.

<sup>47</sup> This account of the Stonewall uprising is based on Carter; *Complete Program Transcript, Stonewall Uprising*; Martin Duberman, *Stonewall* (New York: Dutton, 1993); Lucian K. Truscott, IV, “Gay Power Comes to Sheridan Square,” *Village Voice*, July 3, 1969, 1,18; “Howard Smith, “Full Moon Over the Stonewall,” *Village Voice*, July 3, 1969, 1, 25; National Register of Historic Places, Stonewall; “An Analytical Collation of Accounts and Documents Recorded in the Year 1969 Concerning the Stonewall Riots,” editing and commentary by David Carter, @ [www.davidcarterauthor.com](http://www.davidcarterauthor.com), accessed June 11, 2015; “Stonewall Riots,” *Wikipedia* @ [http://en.Wikipedia.org/wiki/Stonewall\\_riots](http://en.Wikipedia.org/wiki/Stonewall_riots), accessed April 30, 2015.

<sup>48</sup> Pine, NYHS panel.

<sup>49</sup> Truscott, 1.

<sup>50</sup> Leo E. Laurence, “Gays Hit N.Y. Cops,” *Berkeley Barb*, July 4-10, 1969, 5, quoted in Carter, 151.

<sup>51</sup> Carter, 183. “Gay Prohibition” graffiti illustrated in McDarrah, *Gay Pride*, 3.

<sup>52</sup> Carter, 183.

<sup>53</sup> Truscott, 18.

<sup>54</sup> Illustrated in McDarrah, *Gay Pride*, 3.

<sup>55</sup> Truscott, 18.

<sup>56</sup> Carter, 198, quoting from two interviews with Ginsberg by Alison Colbert and Allen Young, reprinted in Allen Ginsberg, *Spontaneous Mind: Selected Interviews 1958-1996*, David Carter ed. (New York: Harper Collins, 2001).

<sup>57</sup> Carter, 198 quoting Truscott-Carter Interview, Mar. 17, 1997.



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<sup>58</sup> Truscott, 18.

<sup>59</sup> Lucien Truscott in discussing the events of Wednesday said “They put some people on the street right in front of *The Village Voice* protesting the use of the word fag in my story. And, you know *The Village Voice* at that point started using the word ‘gay’” *Complete Program Transcript, Stonewall Uprising*, 19.

<sup>60</sup> Ronnie Di Brienza, “Stonewall Incident,” *East Village Other*, July 9, 1969, 2.

<sup>61</sup> Carter, 252. See also the George DeSantis photo “Gay Freedom 1970,” from *QQ Magazine* reprinted in Duberman, plates.

<sup>62</sup> Landmarks Preservation Commission [LPC], Preservation Department, “51-53 Christopher Street Geo File,” Docket 70-287 (Dept. of Buildings, Manhattan, ALT 1240-70).

<sup>63</sup> Ervin Palmer to Landmarks Preservation Commission, Dec. 7, 1970, Docket 70-287.

<sup>64</sup> For changes in ownership see New York City Dept. of Finance, *ACRIS*, Manhattan Block 610, Lot 1. For the appearance of the buildings in 1975 see the field notes and photographs associated with LPC “51-53 Christopher Street Geo File,” Docket 75-129.

<sup>65</sup> LPC “51-53 Christopher Street Geo File,” Docket 75-260. In addition, new doors were installed for the store and apartment, the air conditioner vents above the windows were closed and faced with brick, a new horizontal sign was installed over the storefront window.

<sup>66</sup> For the alterations to 51 Christopher Street for the Stonewall bar see LPC, Preservation Dept. Docket 88-1230; Dept. of Buildings, BN 10463-87; LPC Violations, 508-88; McDarrah, 7.

<sup>67</sup> In 1997-98 there were further alterations including the removal of the security gates and installation of a lift and air conditioner on the roof. In 2006 and 2008 there were additional changes to the building’s rooftop mechanicals, all largely screened from view by the tall parapet.

<sup>68</sup> See LPC “51-53 Christopher Street Geo File,” Docket 75-260; Docket 84-0719.

<sup>69</sup> For this bar see Lustbader, 95-97, 13 ; McDarrah, 8; “Stonewall Inn, *Wikipedia*, June 25, 2015 @ [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stonewall\\_Inn](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stonewall_Inn), accessed June 25, 2015.

<sup>70</sup> “Stonewall Inn,” 3.

<sup>71</sup> LPC, Preservation Department, Docket 98-3968.

<sup>72</sup> “Stonewall Inn,” 3.

<sup>73</sup> LPC, Preservation Department, Docket 08-1336; additional interior alterations were made in 2011 see LPC, Preservation Department, Docket 12-2278.

<sup>74</sup> Statistic from Frank Kameny quoted in National Register of Historic Places, Stonewall, sec. 8, p. 15. Morty Manford, a Stonewall participant, was somewhat more conservative, putting the numbers at 20 before the uprising and 600 two years after; National Register of Historic Places, Stonewall, sec. 8, p.17.

<sup>75</sup> Kay Tobin, one of the founders of the Daughters of Bilitis: “Up to 1969, this movement was generally called the homosexual or homophile movement...after the dramatic event in 1969, younger activists began calling it the gay or gay liberation movement.” Quoted in National Register of Historic Places, Stonewall, sec. 8, p. 17.

<sup>76</sup> Credit for organizing the Action Committee is shared by Dick Leitsch and Michael Brown, although Duberman states that “[Dick] Leitsch set up the Mattachine Action Committee and offered Michael Brown the job of heading it” and that “Brown warily accepted,” while Carter claims “Leitsch yielded to Brown’s entreaties and agreed to form an Action Committee.” Duberman, 216; Carter, 210.

<sup>77</sup> Dick Leitsch, quoted in Burke, via Carter, 215.

<sup>78</sup> The name was chosen “in part as a tribute to the National Liberation Front in its war with the South Vietnamese and U.S. governments” and also “in hope that the new political entity would indeed be a ‘front,’ that is, not simply a new organization but a unified alliance with all other gay and lesbian groups.” Carter, 218-219.

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<sup>79</sup> Carter, 217. In earlier years the slogans included “Homosexuals ask for redress of grievances” and “Homosexuals are American citizens also.” National Register of Historic Places, Stonewall, sec. 8, p.5.

<sup>80</sup> Lilli Vincenz, quoted in Kimberly Scott, “Stonewall’s Aftermath Spurred D.C. Success,” *Washington Blade* May 25, 1994, via National Register of Historic Places, Stonewall, sec. 8, p.1 5.

<sup>81</sup> Martha Shelly, quoted in Carter, 217; Carter, 218.

<sup>82</sup> Duberman, 266.

<sup>83</sup> Notable zaps include Mayor Lindsay at the steps of the Metropolitan Museum of Art on April 13, 1970 and again at the taping of a television program on April 19, 1970.

<sup>84</sup> In November 1969, the Eastern Regional Conference of Homophile Organizations voted to move the Annual Reminder from Philadelphia to New York City and to change the date to the last Sunday in June in honor of Stonewall. Carter, 230.

<sup>85</sup> Carter, 230.

<sup>86</sup> National Register of Historic Places, Stonewall, sec. 8, p. 19.

<sup>87</sup> Duberman, xv.

## FINDINGS AND DESIGNATION

On the basis of a careful consideration of the history, the architecture, and the other features of this building, the Landmarks Preservation Commission finds that the Stonewall Inn has a special character and a special historical and aesthetic interest and value as part of the development, heritage, and culture characteristics of New York City.

The Commission further finds that, among its important qualities, the Stonewall Inn, the starting point of the Stonewall Rebellion, is one of the most important sites associated with Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender history in New York City and the nation; that in the late 1960s, when members of the LGBT community continued to meet prejudice on a daily basis and repressive laws made it impossible for a LGBT bar to obtain a liquor license, police raids were routine; that on June 28, 1969, an early morning raid on the Stonewall Inn was met with active resistance forcing the police to retreat into the bar and setting off confrontations and protests, which continued for the next few days until almost midnight Wednesday July 2, 1969, with the Stonewall often at the center of events; that these days of protest engendered a new sense of pride and power within the LGBT community; that the Stonewall uprising was the catalyst for a new more radical phase in the LGBT Liberation Movement; that within a few months, in direct response to Stonewall, several activist organizations were formed in New York City, including the Gay Liberation Front, the Gay Activists Alliance, Radicalesbians, and the Street Transvestites Action Revolutionaries; that soon new organizations were being established across the U.S. and throughout the world to promote LGBT civil rights; that on June 28, 1970, the first anniversary of the Stonewall Rebellion was commemorated as Christopher Street Liberation Day and its main event was a march from Greenwich Village to Central Park; that those celebrations have since grown into the internationally-celebrated LGBT Pride Month, with events held annually throughout the world; that the two buildings that comprised the Stonewall Inn were originally built in the 1840s as stables, and in 1930 were merged at the first story and given a unified façade; that in 1934 the ground story commercial space was taken over by the Stonewall Inn Restaurant, and reopened in 1967 as a gay club retaining the name Stonewall Inn; that Nos. 51 and 53 Christopher Street are within the Greenwich Village Historic District, which was designated on April 29, 1969—just months before the Stonewall uprising; that from the time of the Stonewall Rebellion, the buildings still retain their brick cladding, arched entrances, small storefront windows, associated with LGBT bars of the 1960, and stuccoed upper stories.

Accordingly, pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 74, Section 3020 of the Charter of the City of New York and Chapter 3 of Title 25 of the Administrative Code of the City of New York, the Landmarks Preservation Commission designates as a Landmark the Stonewall Inn, 51-53 Christopher Street, Manhattan, and designated Borough of Manhattan Tax Map Block 610, Lot 1 in part, consisting of the land on which the buildings at 51-53 Christopher Street are situated, as its Landmark Site.

Meenakshi Srinivasin, Chair

Adi Shamir Baron, Frederick Bland, Diana Chapin, Michael Devonshire, Michael Goldblum, John Gustafsson, Kim Vauss, Roberta Washington, Commissioners



**Stonewall Inn**  
51-53 Christopher Street  
*Photo: Christopher D. Brazee, June 2015*





**Stonewall Inn**

51-53 Christopher Street

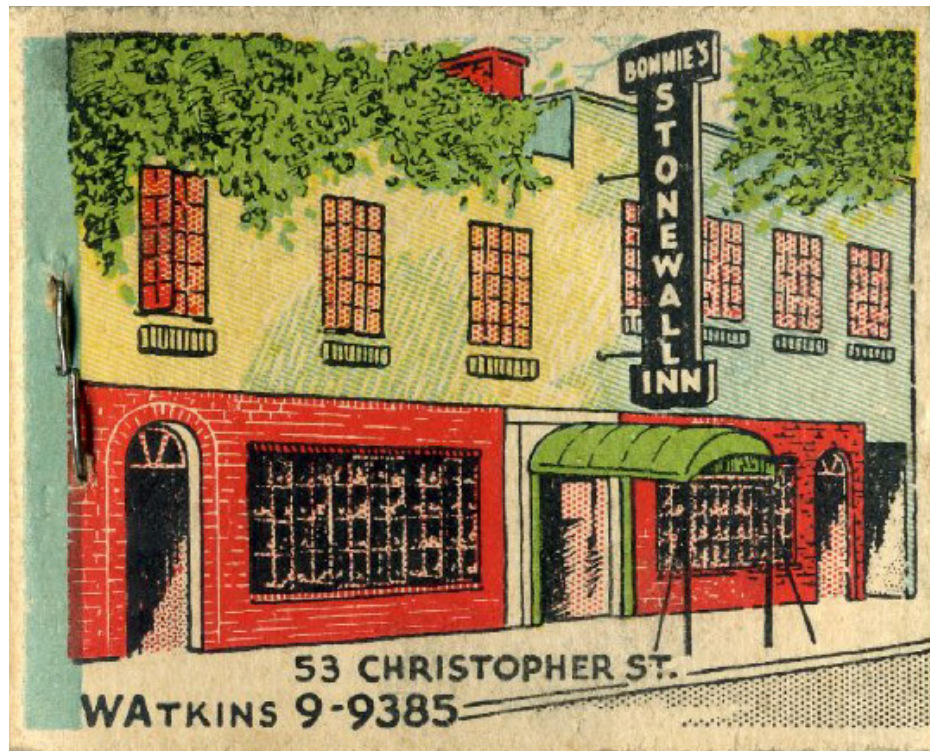
*Photos: Gale Harris, May 2015 (top); Christopher D. Brazee, June 2015 (bottom)*





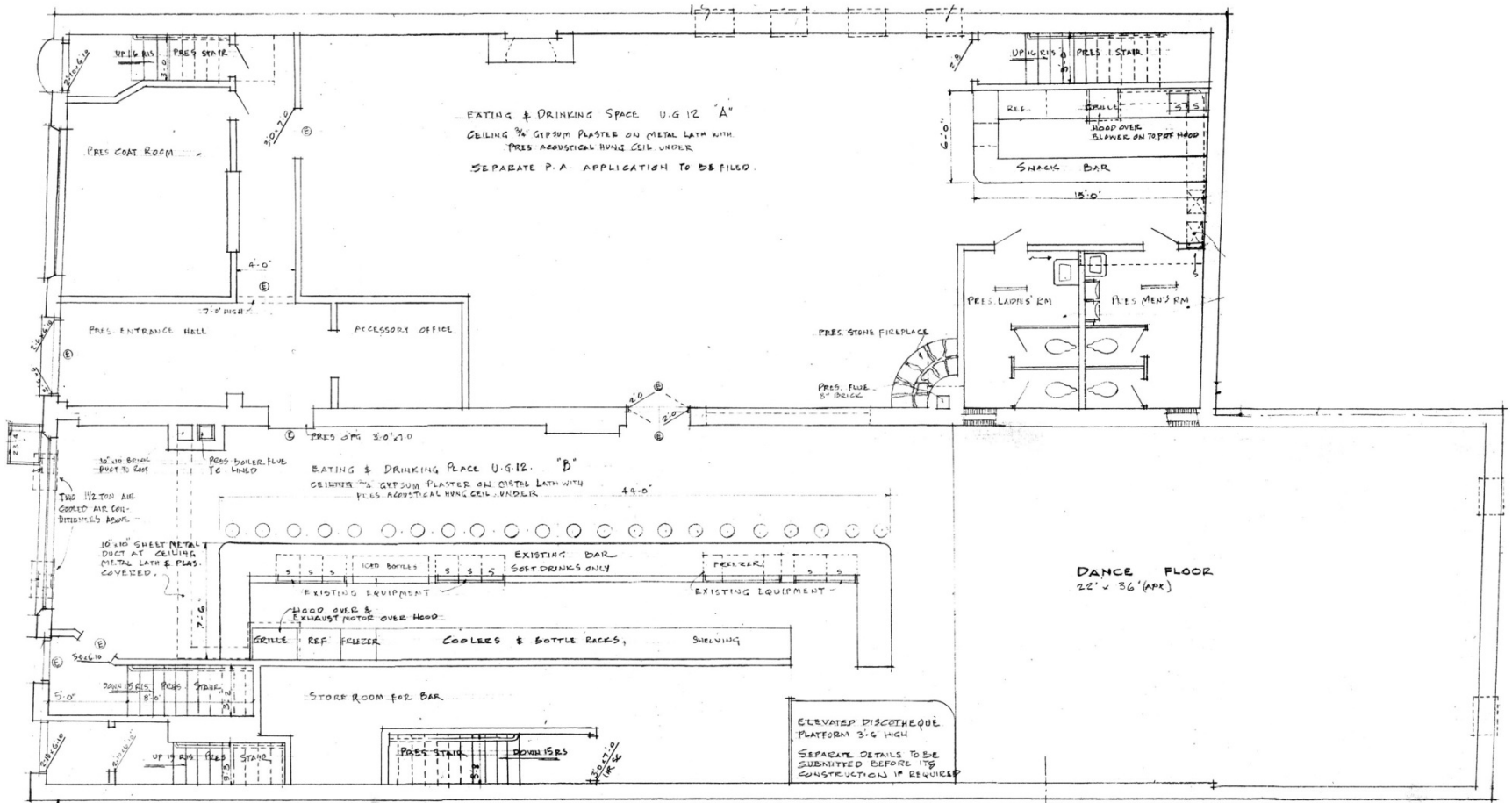
51-53 Christopher Street in 1928

*Photo: Percy Loomis Sperr, courtesy of the Lionel Pincus and Princess Firyal Map Division, The New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundations*



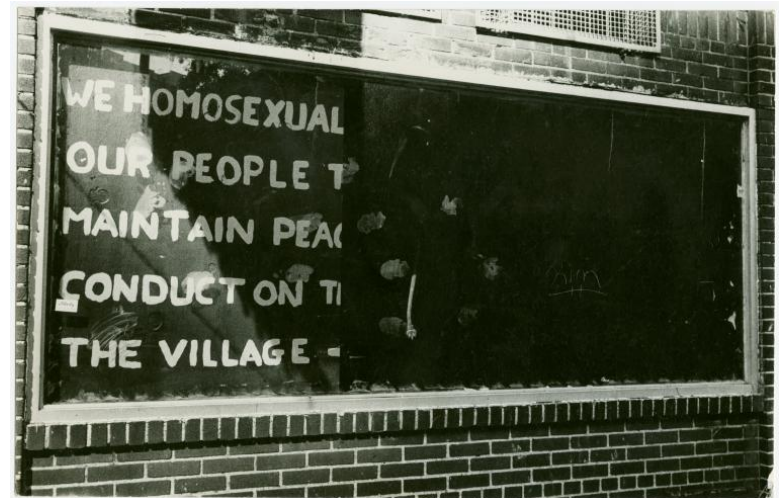
51-53 Christopher Street following conversion to Bonnie's Stonewall Inn, c.1934

*Illustration: Courtesy of Tom Bernadin*



Floor plan of the Stonewall Inn c. 1970  
 LPC Files





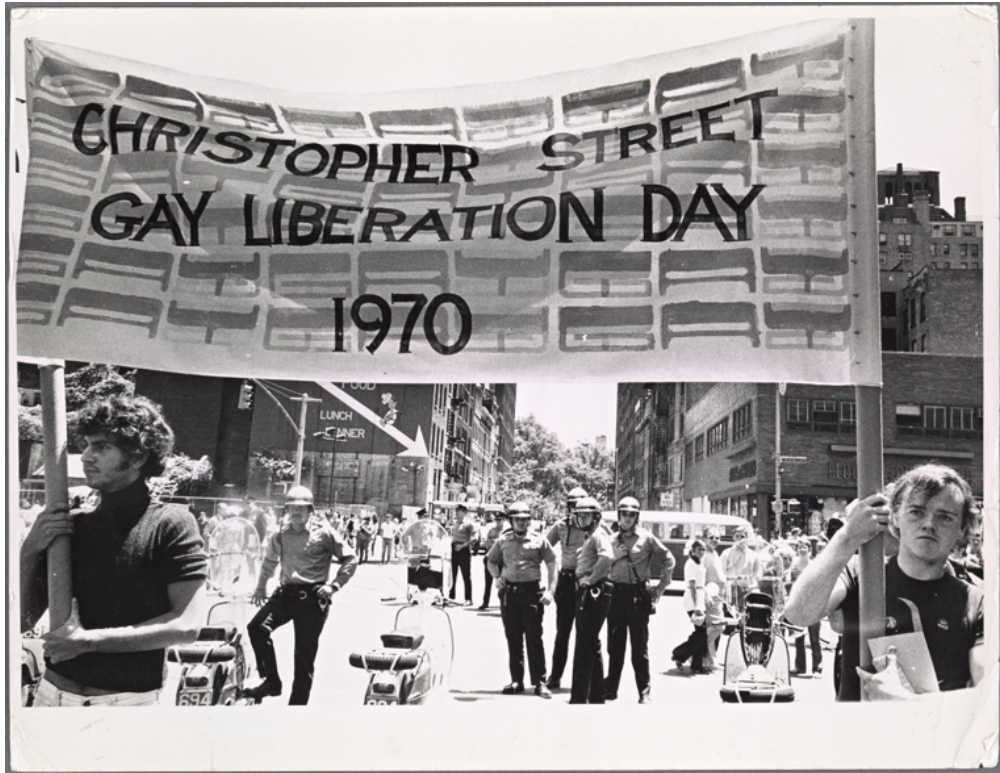
The Stonewall Inn during or just following the June-July 1969 uprising

*Photos: Diana Davies, courtesy of the Lionel Pincus and Princess Firyal Map Division, The New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundations*





Gay Liberation Front marches on Times Square, 1969



Christopher Street Liberation Day, June 28, 1970

*Photos: Diana Davies, courtesy of the Lionel Pincus and Princess Firyal Map Division, The New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundatio*



**Stonewall Inn (LP-2574)**

51 - 53 Christopher Street Landmark Site: Borough of Manhattan, Tax Map Block 610, Lot 1 in part consisting of the land on which the buildings at 51 - 53 Christopher Street are situated.

Calendared: June 2, 2015  
Public Hearing: June 23, 2015  
Designated: June 23, 2015

**Map Legend**

- Stonewall Inn Buildings
- Block 610 Lot 1
- New York City Tax Lots

