In Memory of José Julio Sarria: Community Icon, Colorful Trailblazer of GLBT Activism

José Julio Sarria, a trailblazer for GLBT dignity, died at his home in Los Ranchos de Albuquerque, N.M., on Aug. 19, 2013; he was 90 years old. A celebrated drag entertainer in San Francisco starting in the 1950s, Sarria became the first known openly gay person anywhere in the world to run for elected office when he campaigned for the San Francisco Board of Supervisors in 1961. He went on to found the International Imperial Court System in 1965.

"We have lost one of our grandest, most daring and most high-spirited pioneers," said Historical Society Executive Director Paul Boneberg. "José was an iconic leader who guided our community for more than six decades with skill as an organizer, with talent and wit as an entertainer, and with a clear vision of equality. Wherever GLBT people fight for justice or undertake community service, they are emulating José."

Sarria donated his extensive archives, along with costumes, artwork and memorabilia, to the GLBT Historical Society, where archivist Juliet Demeter is currently processing the collection for use by researchers.

The Imperial Council of San Francisco is planning a grand public funeral for Sarria at Grace Cathedral in San Francisco on September 6 at 11 a.m., followed by a procession and interment at Woodlawn Cemetery in Colma. The Historical Society archives will be closed that day to enable staff and...
Making Music, Making Social Change: New Exhibition Spotlights SF Gay Men's Chorus

Founded in 1978 as the world's first gay choral group, the San Francisco Gay Men's Chorus has performed across the United States, its rousing songs accompanying the GLBT community through the past 35 years. The little-known history of this musical institution is the subject of a new exhibition opening September 14 at The GLBT History Museum.

"The San Francisco Gay Men's Chorus: Celebrating 35 Years of Activism Through Song" will foreground the musical advocacy of the group. Drawing on comprehensive archives that the chorus donated to the GLBT Historical Society, the exhibition will feature posters, artifacts, photographs, video and sound to portray the contributions of the chorus at key moments in contemporary GLBT history.

"The chorus isn't just about making music," notes lead curator Tom Burtch, a longtime member of the group. "Our performances have always been about making social change, too. Our singing has supported our community in its calls for equality, its hours of grief, its expressions of love and its times of celebration. The exhibition doesn't just tell the story of the chorus; it also highlights the remarkable history of the movement for GLBT equality."

An opening reception for the exhibition will be held Thursday, September 19, 7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m. The exhibit runs through Jan. 15, 2014.

Ensuring Our Stories Will Be Remembered: Volunteers Play Vital Role at Historical Society

The GLBT Historical Society has thrived for nearly three decades thanks in large part to its exceptional volunteers. Some have been active with the institution for years -- a sure sign of how meaningful volunteering has been for them. With the growth of the museum and archives, the society is offering rewarding new opportunities -- particularly for those with specialized skills needed for high-level working groups.

"Professionals who volunteer pro bono expertise and services are one of the keys to our success," notes Executive Director Paul Boneberg. "As with all our great volunteers, their involvement helps ensure that our community's stories of struggle and triumph will be honored today and remembered long into the future."

The society is currently recruiting for working groups to help guide development, communications, technology, archives, events and exhibitions. Individuals who would like to volunteer can indicate their interest and availability by sending an e-mail to info@glbthistory.org.
Program Features Women of Color on Screen

Film Showing
Sistah Sinema Presents Tracks & Genderfreak
Wednesday, September 11
7:00 - 9:00 p.m.

Sistah Sinema is a monthly event showcasing cinema by and about queer women of color in cities around the United States. The group's first San Francisco event, taking place at The GLBT History Museum, will feature two short films about queer youth: director Deanna William's Tracks (2010), the story of a shy runaway who falls for a flirtatious high-school basketball player with an overbearing, church-loving grandmother, and director Rebecca Louisell's Genderfreak (2012), with Rachel accepting Sammy into her band to play for a school dance, where Rachel defends her friends against homophobic insults from the audience. A panel discussion will follow the showing. Admission: $5.00 in advance (purchase here); $10.00 at the door; free at the door for GLBT Historical Society members.

EXHIBITIONS & PROGRAMS
The GLBT History Museum
Location: 4127 18th St., San Francisco, CA 94114
Phone: 415-621-1107
Website: www.glbthistorymuseum.org

Admission: $5.00 general; $3.00 with California student ID. Free for members. Free for all visitors on the first Wednesday of each month (courtesy of the Bob Ross Foundation).

Hours
Mondays - Saturdays: 11:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m.
Sundays: Noon - 5:00 p.m.

Archives & Reading Room
GLBT Historical Society
Location: 657 Mission St., Suite 300, San Francisco, CA 94105
Phone: 415-777-5455, ext. 3#
Website: www.glbthistory.org

Research Hours
Weekdays: By Appointment & Subject to Availability
Members: Wednesdays - Fridays: 11:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Nonmembers: Fridays: 11:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Saturdays: No Appointment Needed
Open to members and nonmembers 1:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. the first and third Saturday of the month; no appointment needed. Hours subject to change; before visiting, check the GLBT Historical Society.

ON THE WEB
For in-depth information on the GLBT Historical Society and The GLBT History Museum, visit our website.

Facebook
For updates on the museum and archives, like us on Facebook.
(Be sure to select "Get Notifications.")

Wikipedia
For an overview of the goals and history of the museum and archives, see our entry on Wikipedia.

YouTube
For an array of videos from our archives and programs, see our YouTube channel.