



moments in gay new orleans history

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“The Krewe of Yuga”

The Shrove Tuesday celebration now known as Mardi Gras was brought to New Orleans by 18th Century French explorers and celebrated in southern Louisiana as early as 1699. The holiday, which has its roots in Roman Catholicism (and even deeper roots in the pagan Bacchanalia of classical Rome), has always been celebrated in New Orleans but it wasn't until 1838 that the first parade occurred. This consisted of a walking procession of masked figures. Float parades were introduced in 1857. In that year, Mardi Gras in New Orleans was on the verge of extinction. The annual celebration had become a drunken, chaotic, and increasingly violent street party. The revelry and disorder that characterized the day offended puritanical American sensibilities and there was serious discussion of permanently canceling the event. A group of businessmen then suggested that instead of canceling Mardi Gras, a sense of order should be imposed upon the celebration. They proposed a float parade with a theme and masked riders. Thus, the Mistick Krewe of Comus was born, and with it, the custom of float parades on Mardi Gras. The idea of imposing order on a day defined by disorder and misrule violated the essential spirit of Mardi Gras; nevertheless, the float parade was a practical solution that proved very popular. Today, there are numerous float parades throughout the New Orleans area in the weeks leading up to Mardi Gras. Thus, Comus inaugurated the modern incarnation of Mardi Gras.

carnival feature

King Cake Queen XXI Barbara Ella Heralds in Third Decade of Glamour at Coronation 2014

What an incredibly beautiful evening in the French Quarter as “The Borghese Queen,” Barbara Ella, heralded in the third decade of glamour at the 21st King Cake Queen Coronation. Hosted at the Ambush Mansion, King Cake Queen XXI Barbara Ella greeted some 237 invited guests for the society bash of the season on Bourbon Street celebrating **Rome, Royalty & Intrigue**. From Carnival Royalty and celebrities to A-listers and community leaders, it was especially wonderful to have so many loving committed couples (in view of the huge strides made in marriage equality) enjoy socializing with old friends while making new ones. The camaraderie in a party atmosphere leads to more cooperation on those issues and causes which makes the LGBT+ community into the viable, influential one it enjoys today.

This is the only time during the year that the mansion is open for a huge soiree where guests mingle in the first floor **Ambush Mag** offices, the patio, and second floor private quarters of Krewe of Queenateenas' Co-Captain's Rip and Marsha Naquin-Delain featuring Belle Lain's Magnolia Bar, formal Victorian Parlor, dining room, and world famous **Ambush** balcony. On the way to the second floor guests travel up the sweeping spiral staircase showcasing the portraits of the King Cake Queen Royalty Club, many by renowned photographer Larry Graham.

Many first time guests marvel at the **Ambush** art collection, antiques from Marsha's grandmothers estate in Baton Rouge, and hundreds of collectibles featuring objects d'art throughout the home. One of the favorites is the etched French crystal illuminated Erte' on the fireplace, while the two gilded Faberge' eggs in gold, diamonds, rubies and emeralds are another. The mannequin in the parlor displays Marsha's King Cake Queen XV coronation gown and queens collar by Opal Masters with her KCQ crown as “The Fleur de Lis Queen.” And then there's the altar in the parlor laden with religious treasures from the couples travels in Europe, and here in America.

Queen Barbara Ella designed and made her own coronation gown replicating a flowing gown from a Borghese portrait in Rome (photo on page 17). After greeting guests in the receiving line for almost an hour, the city's Human Relations Commission Executive Director Larry Bagneris presented the queen with a Certificate of Recognition stating “I, Mitchell J. Landrieu, Mayor of the City of New Orleans, do recognize Barbara Ella in honor of the King Cake Queen Coronation and your reign as Queen XXI of the royal court. Barbara Ella is the first King Cake Queen to receive a mayoral proclamation.

Next was the King Cake Queen gift exchange where the former queens present a gift to the new queen, and the reigning queen presents a gift to the former queens, which this year was a beautiful cameo bracelet.

The last official function of the evening was when Frankie Fierce's 30th

101 years after the Mistick Krewe of Comus first rolled through the streets of New Orleans, another Krewe would transform Carnival yet again. In 1958, a group of gay men formed the Krewe of Yuga as a spoof of Comus and the other old-line mainstream krewes. The name itself hinted at the satirical nature of the group. KY jelly, the personal lubricant, had been introduced to the marketplace in 1904. Also the name of the krewe is sometimes pronounced “you-gay,” although “you-guh” is the more common pronunciation. Connotations of homosexuality with the word gay date back to the 1940s.

During Yuga's first few years, the krewe met in member's homes. About fifteen men attended the first “ball,” where they enjoyed cocktails, king cake, and elected a Queen. These men were older and well established and gathered simply for the purpose of making fun of their Uptown neighbors in the older, traditional krewes.

By 1962, interest in the Krewe of Yuga had caused its membership to grow and necessitated a larger meeting space. The krewe chose a day school / nursery called The Rambler Room off Veterans Boulevard in Metairie. A week before the Yuga Ball, the newly minted Krewe of Petronius (founded in 1961) had used the same location for its debut Ball.

On Saturday, February 24, the Jefferson Parish police department raided the Yuga Ball and arrested nearly 100 men, most of whom were in drag. About fifteen minutes into the tableau, policemen with bullhorns burst into the room and announced, “No one is to leave this room!” Among those arrested was Carlos Rodriguez, who, a

Birthday Party & Charity Fundraiser sponsor **Ambush Mag's** Rip and Marsha Naquin-Delain joined Frankie Fierce as he presented a check in the amount of \$4,531.85 to Buzzy's Boys and Girls' Steve Tregre, the total proceeds of the event hosted at Oz.

And then the party continued. The queen traveled to the mansion's balcony adorned in brilliant red, purple and gold with Adam and Steve (the mannequins) dressed in black slacks, red shirts, white dinner jackets and red/white Venetian masks.

The culinary delights prepared by the Naquin-Delain's were delish including the “Borghese” gumbo with smoked goose, wild duck, turkey and sausage in the office on the first floor serving the remainder of “Banchetto di Carnevale,” translation for feast of carnival, in the second floor dining room. It included Venison & Veal Ousso Bucco with Italian egg noodles, Meatballs Cacciatore, Eggplant Caponata with cream cheese, Stuffed Artichoke Casserole with crabmeat, Antipasto Salad featuring elk salami, provolone, prosciutto, swiss & bison mortadella with Ditalini, Goat Cheese Pyramid with figs & pancetta, and Cream Cheese King Cake.

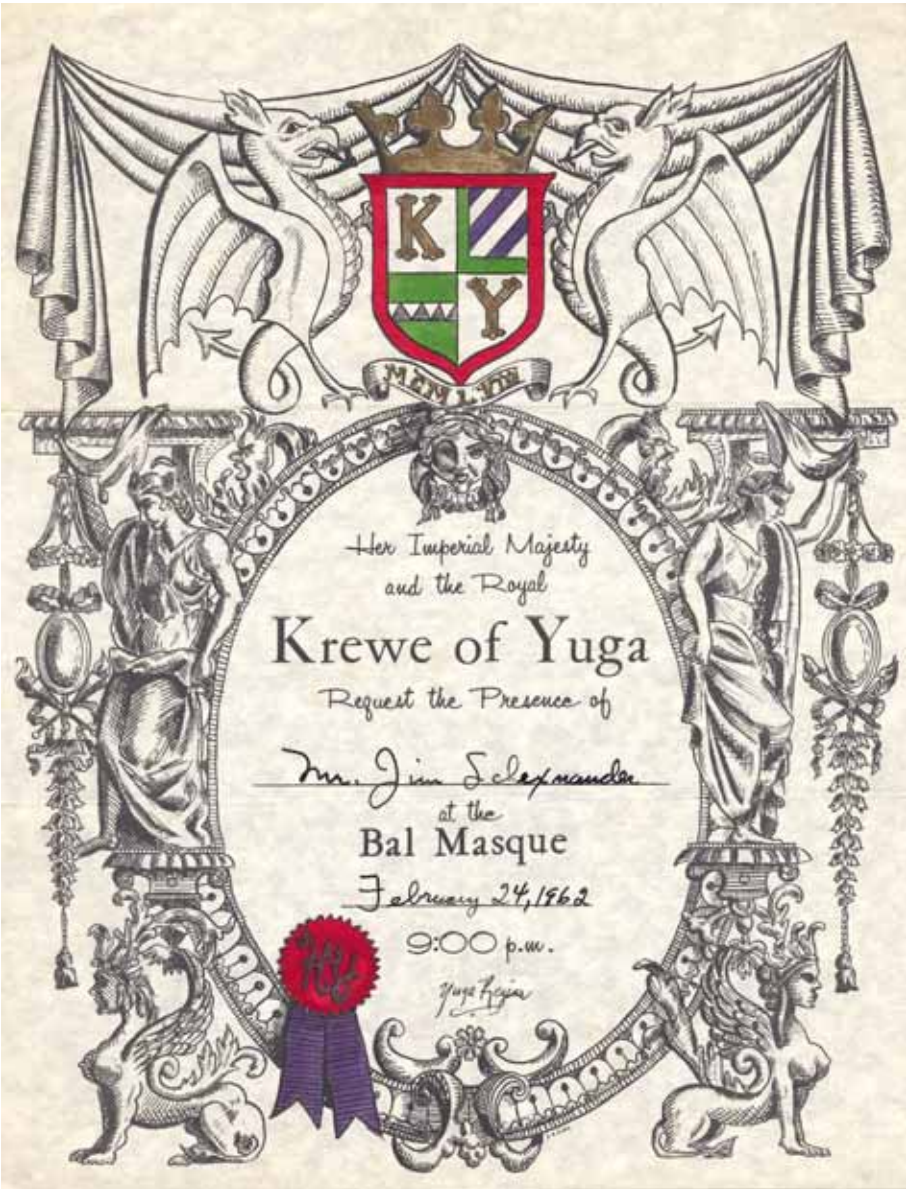
week earlier, had been presented as the first Queen of Petronius in the same hall. Escaping arrest were Bill Wooley and Elmo Avet, two founding members of Petronius who would go on to shape the phenomenal development of gay carnival. When news of the raid reached the French Quarter, Dixie Fasnacht, owner of Dixie's Bar of Music, gave Carl Escovitch, who was sitting in the bar at the time, a wad of cash and told him to go bail out all those who had been arrested at the ball.

The Krewe of Yuga folded after the raid but the idea of gay carnival krewes lived on and continues today. The history of gay carnival is fascinating but poses problems for gay historians. As the ill-fated Yuga Ball demonstrates, being gay was not something people wanted to document in those days. As a result, pictures, journals, diaries, letters, audio or visual recordings and other primary sources are scarce, especially from the early years. About all that remains from the early years of gay carnival are the memories of those still alive along with ball programs and invitations. Of all the gay krewes that have come and gone, Yuga is the most difficult to research because there is so little documentation of it, which makes the invitation pictured (on page 17) such a treasured artifact.

Last year Carnival historian Arthur Hardy donated a box of gay carnival materials to the State Museum. Among the items donated were ball programs and invitations from Amon-Ra, Lords of Leather, Mwindo, Olympus, Perseus, Petronius, Armeinius, Celestial Knights, David, Ishtar, Queenateenas, Satyricon, and Apollo. There was also a poster from 1965 advertising the second annual Bourbon Street Awards. As interesting and important as these items are, Curator of Carnival Collections Wayne Phillips' heart must have soared when he laid eyes on an original invitation to the Krewe of Yuga Ball that was raided.

The invitation was designed by Stewart K. Gahn, who went on to be a costume designer for Bacchus. Gahn had a successful career as a design artist and advertising executive for a number of business concerns, including Pontchartrain Beach, Goldman Printing, Kirschman Furniture Store, Sears and D.H. Holmes. He also served as President of Vieux Carre Patio Planters, on the Board of Vieux Carre Theatre Du Vieux Carre and Property Owners and Resident and Associates of the Vieux Carre. He died in 2009.

The State Museum began collecting gay carnival artifacts in the 1970s and is always looking for more. The State Museum also has an ongoing exhibit at the Presbytere in Jackson Square called “Mardi Gras: It's Carnival Time in Louisiana,” which features two costumes from gay balls of years past—Merlin from the 1984 Petronius Ball and Seahorse from the 1992 Amon-Ra Ball.



(above-see moments in gay new orleans history on page 16)



KCQ XXI Barbara Ella
Coronation Night
Formal Dining Room
Ambush Mansion
(photo by Rip Naquin)
(see page 16)

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the "official" dish ...from 6

Tigers of the University of Missouri. He graduated in December and is currently a highly-touted prospect in the National Football League (NFL) draft. He becomes the first publicly gay athlete in any of the Big 4 sports drafts.

In interviews with **The New York Times** and **ESPN**, the football player stated: "I am an openly, proud gay man."

In December 2013, The Associated Press named him the SEC's Defensive Player of the Year. He was also selected as one of ten unanimous first-team all-Americans. He led the SEC in both sacks and tackles-for-loss and resides in the top 10 nationally in Division I in those categories. He is originally from Hitchcock, Texas. Sports journalist Cyd Zeigler stated to GLAAD: "Every NFL draft expert has Sam being selected in the first to fifth round of this year's NFL draft."

Before his announcement, Michael Sam's publicist Howard Bragman introduced to him to athletes including openly gay former NFL players Dave Kopay and Wade Davis Jr., openly gay NBA player Jason Collins, openly gay former Major League Baseball player Billy Bean, as well as outspoken straight allies and former NFL players Brendan Ayanbadejo and Chris Kluwe. This is the fifth professional athlete that Bragman has taken out of the closet,

along with more than a dozen celebrities.

Outsports.com has also published an exclusive behind-the-scenes look at how his announcement came about.

Sam is the latest high-profile athlete to come out as LGBT with others including the NBA's Jason Collins, the WNBA's Brittney Griner, WWE's Darren Young, UFC's Liz Carmouche, MMA's Fallon Fox and Major League Soccer's Robbie Rogers.

"Michael is first and foremost a talented football player, and his humility and heart will reshape the way that Americans think about LGBT people and the sports world," said Wade Davis, Jr., a gay former NFL player and Executive Director of LGBT sports organization You Can Play. "His story sends a message to LGBT young people, especially young black men, that you are free to show up in the world as your authentic self and others will embrace you. When I came out after playing in the NFL, I felt the support from fans, teammates and the league and I know he will be embraced and continue to inspire."

In an NFL document released in April 2013, the NFL defined its equal employment opportunity policy as: "It is the policy of the National Football League to provide equal employment opportunities to all employees and applicants for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national

origin, age, disability, sexual orientation or other status protected by applicable federal, state or local law."

In the document, NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell also stated: "The NFL has a long history of valuing diversity and inclusion. Discrimination and harassment based on sexual orientation is not consistent with our values and is unacceptable in the National Football League."

The NFL added sexual orientation to its list of protected classes in September 2011.

The NFL has also demonstrated its commitment to inclusion by participating in GLAAD's annual anti-bullying campaign, Spirit Day. For the past two consecutive years, the NFL has 'gone purple' online in a stand against bullying and to show its support for LGBT youth. In December 2013, You Can Play and the NFL announced the 'High Five Initiative' an "effort to create meaningful connections between LGBT youth and leaders within the professional sports community."

C.O.K. Features Hand Sculpted Mask for Mardi Gras

If you still have not decided what you are going to wear for Mardi Gras or to any of the Mardi Gras balls, then you should stop by the Phoenix Bar, 941 Elysian Fields.



They are selling handmade leather masks by local artists from fun to fantasy that would be perfect for any costume. Prices range from \$30 on up to \$100. If you do not see a mask that you like you can also have one custom made to match your costume. Stop by the C.O.K. store located inside of the Phoenix.

Also new at C.O.K. exclusive to Louisiana is Colt Underwear, as well as a large selection of Andrew Christian Underwear. DVDs are as low as \$5. Check out all of the fetish wear and accessories, and other adult novelties.

Store hours Tuesday, Thursday and Sunday 6pm-12midnight. Friday & Sat. 6pm-2am. Open at 1pm the weekend of Mardi Gras.

Lords Host 3 Events Mardi Gras Weekend

Night of the Black Mask: Start your Mardi Gras weekend on Friday, Feb. 28th with the Lords of Leather at their annual "Night of the Black Mask"

[continued on 20]



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Party. This traditionally incognito (black mask strongly encouraged) event kicks off at 9pm at the Phoenix, 941 Elysian Fields Avenue. A \$5 beer bust will be held until midnight on the patio, with black lights complementing white jockstraps and leather; the rest of the evening is as mysterious as you want it to be. So dig out that mask, disguise yourself and celebrate the big weekend with the Lords.

Lords of Leather Bal Masque XXXI: Ball Captain XXXI Gary Vandeventer and the Mystic Krewe of Lords of Leather cordially invite you to join them at their spectacular edition of Bal Masque XXXI - "Tales and Adventures" to be held on Sunday, March 2nd. This Mardi Gras season's final ball takes place at the Frederick J. Sigur Civic Center in Chalmette with doors opening and social hour beginning at 7pm and the tableau starting at 8pm. Emcees for the evening will again be the entertaining duo of Bianca del Rio and Darwin S.

Ball gowns/leather are requested for ladies, black tie/formal or leather attire for men.

Full tables for ten are available for \$500, individual table seats are \$50 and balcony seats are \$15. See www.lordsofleather.com to purchase tickets in advance. Tickets will also be available at the door.

Lundi Gras Party: Get an early start on your Mardi Gras festivities by joining the Lords of Leather on Lundi Gras.

On Monday, March 3rd the Lords will host "A Roman Holiday - a Night with the Gladiators" at the Phoenix, 941 Elysian Fields Avenue. Bring your friends and visitors from out of town for a truly local Mardi Gras experience as only the Lords and the Phoenix can offer.

For just a \$20 wristband, one gets all the domestic beer and well drinks one can drink from 6pm until 9pm in the Eagle upstairs bar. Optional free "coat" check will be available as well for those who are "overdressed."

So come early and "when in Rome, do what the Romans do" and meet some hot men for some Mardi Gras memories.

Girl Scout Cookies @ The Phoenix Feb. 28

Words that you never thought you would hear in the same sentence is Girl Scouts and the Phoenix Bar, 941 Elysian Fields. But for a limited time these two will come together (sort of). Clint Taylor who is the owner of the Phoenix has a daughter who is in the Girl Scouts. She has set herself a goal of selling 500 boxes of Girl Scout Cookies.

Beginning on Friday, Feb. 28th there will be eight varieties of cookies that will be available at the bar, including some of your favorites such as Thin Mints, Trefoils and Do Si Dos. The boxes are \$4 each and will be available

for a limited time only. Stop by the bar and get your cookies or call 504.460.7655 for further details.

New Orleans Bears sets Feb.-March Events

The New Orleans Bear and Bear Trapper Social Club welcomes all to their upcoming events.

On Friday, Feb. 28th, they host Muscle Bear Lube Wrestling at Mag's beginning at 8pm. It is \$5 at the door with a \$5 beer bust. Wrestling winners take home 1st prize \$150, 2nd Prize \$100, and 3rd Prize \$50.

It's Bears, Beads and Bubbles at Lazarus House on Lundi Gras, March 3rd at 2pm. A celebration of all things Gay Mardi Gras, it features a champagne reception with hors d'oeuvres with the theme SlumBear (pajama party).

Their 1st Friday Beer Bust is at the Phoenix on Friday, March 7th @ 9pm with a \$5 beer bust including hot dogs and chips.

The Bears' Appreciation Party is set for the Friendly Bar on Saturday, March 15th at 3pm. St. Anna's Food Bank and Buzzy's Boys & Girls is hosting a party to show their appreciation for the Bears continued support of their organizations.

The 3rd Friday Beer Bust is at Rawhide on Friday, March 21st at 7pm with a \$5 beer bust. Hamburgers and hot dogs will be available for a small fee.

CWB XV @ Oz Benefiting NOSIDA on March 17

The 15th annual Crack Whore Ball (CWB) is set for Monday, March 17th at Oz, 800 Bourbon Street celebrating **Rise of the Leprechauns**, this year's theme. The ball benefits New Orleans Society for Infectious Diseases Awareness (NOSIDA) which actively promotes awareness of the physical, mental, and emotional effects that infectious diseases inflict on communities worldwide.

The annual ball gives service industry personnel and their friends the opportunity to relax and party since most worked through Carnival. The highlight of the evening is when Irish Mike announces the new Crack Whore Queen at the stroke of midnight. Then there's the presentation of the monies raised at the ball to NOSIDA.

The \$40 ticket includes open premium bar from 9pm-1am. Tickets are limited. Get your tickets from a past Crack Whore Queen or at Voodoo Bar, 718 N. Rampart.

Past Crack Whore Queens include 1 unknown, 2 Kabrina Watson, 3 Genevieve, 4 Janice Goodbee, 5 Wade Burnham, 6 Rip and Marsha Naquin-Delain, 7 Aletha Bryant, 8 the late Wendy Byrne, 9 Chris Morton, 10 Frankie Fierce, 11 DL Broadway, 12 Sabrina, 13 Duane Parrish, and 14 Johnny Eubanks.

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