

Gay and Lesbian Memory in Action (GALA): Inventory

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Summary

Dates: 1970 – 1995 (?)

Bulk dates: 1989-1992

Size: 5 archival boxes

Processed: Linda Chernis –August 2015

Location: Document Warehouse

Special formats: Photographs

Restrictions: none

Historical background

The Dungeon Club was one of Johannesburg's longest running gay clubs, located in the Three Castles Building on the corner of Marshall and Goud Streets in the CBD (207 Marshall Street). The building, home to Johannesburg's first cigarette factory, dates back to 1898.

The Dungeon, owned by Ronnie Oelofsen, opened in 1970 and ran until about 1995. The club hosted a variety of annual pageants, including Mr. Gay Legs, Miss Gay Sluts and Mr. Gay South Africa.

The Dungeon Club collection gives a fascinating glimpse into white, gay culture of the 1970s and 1980s in Johannesburg. The clientele was largely white and Afrikaans, with a large lesbian/female presence making it different to other clubs at the time. The Dungeon operated without a liquor licence and patrons would bring their own alcohol and keep it behind the bar.

The collection includes a large selection of photographs (largely of the many pageants hosted by the club) as well as correspondence to/from Ronnie Oelofsen, flyers, invitations, menus and programs for the various events hosted at the club, as well as promotional material for other gay clubs operating in Johannesburg at the time, and a selection of theatre programs, a passion of Ronnie Oelofsen's.

Series description:

A. Photographs

B. Press Clippings

C. Promotional material/events

D. Documents and ephemera NOT directly related The Dungeon Club

E. Correspondence

Container List:

A. Photographs (2 boxes)

A.1 Undated:

- Elsabe Zietsman with presenter Andre Schwartz (x 16) (*Rapport* envelope)
- various (x 14)
- Ronnie Oelofsen Birthday party. Undated. (X 14)
- Strip show. Undated (x 13)
- Various (x 8)
- Various (34)
- Chrissy Kane in performance at the Dungeon (x 31) (Foto First envelope)
- Old age party Dec. Desiree Simpson, councillor. "If you don't give us a drink now..." (x 33) (see also photos A5, and B press clippings)
- Danielle Pascal publicity photos. (x 7)
- The Krebbs Show (x 23)
- Neil (?) Mackay's 40th bday party (x 18)
- Rio Carnival
- Show at Dungeon
- Mr Togs (x 17)
- Dungeon bday – no date (brown envelope)
- Rio undated (brown envelope)

A.2 1990s

No date:

- Misc. c. early 1990s (brown envelope)
- Drag contest, no date. (only photos showing black participants)

1992:

- various (including Mr. Gay Legs) (x 12)
- Carnival to Rio completion (1992?). Includes 'District 6: The Musical' cast. (x 23)
- Miss Gay SA (x 15)
- Mr Gay SA (formal, sports, swimwear). Always a Cabaret. (x23)
- Miss Gay Scants (x 23)
- Various (Foto First packet)
- Miss Gay Legs (x 34)
- Miss Gay Sluts (x 26)
- Miss Gay Transvaal (x 23)

1991:

- Carnival to Rio competition (x 35)
- Miss Gay Universe(x 36)
- Mr Gay Scants. The Baroness. (x 40)
- Same Marais & Maria Foster perform at The Dungeon. (X 25)
- Miss Gay Slut. (x 27)
- Miss Gay South Africa (x 35)
- Various. Choreographer (?) Mackay. Terry Fortune (x21)
- Miss Gay Dungeon (x 36)
- Mr. Gay South Africa (Foto First packet) (x25)
- Rio carnival party – costumes (x 21)
- Miss Gay Spring. Includes strippers . (x 36)

- General photos – includes Tina Turner, Little Annie, 21st Birthday drag, anniversary party (x 37)
- Miss Gay Slut (x 27)
- ? Show (x 34)
- Mr Gay South Africa (x 61)

1990:

- Mr. Gay South Africa (x 10)
- Miss Gay Universe (x 28)
- Mr. Gay Scants (x 29)
- Drag competition (Gay legs 1990 or Miss SA) (x 12)
- Rio carnival party, including photos of Abigail Kubeka, Sophia Fister and Diane Chandler in concert (x 46)
- Dungeon Birthday [arty (x 34)
- New Year's Eve party (x 25)
- Diane (?) Chandler and patrons at The Dungeon (x 21)

A. 3 1980s

No date

- Misc. c. late 1980s (brown envelope)
- Misc. c. mid 1980s (brown envelope)
- 1986? (brown envelope)

1989:

- Miss Gay Hillbrow (x 45)
- Mr Gay Scants (x 33)
- Pik Botha Birthday banquet (45). The owner of the Dungeon had National Party connections. In the late 1980s the NP attempted to win the Hillbrow ward by courting the 'gay vote'. Owner Ronnie Oelofse donated funds towards an NP fundraiser. As a consequence, the owner of the Dungeon was invited to various NP events – including Botha's birthday as seen in these photos (not held at Dungeon!). (see also A5).

1988:

- Competition at The Dungeon. Cabaret Artistes: Terry Fortune and Sophia Foster. (x10)

A.4 1970s

- Various. C. 1970s. (Konica envelope)
- Dungeon under construction (brown envelope)
- Misc. 1970s (brown envelope)

A.5 Large print photos

File 1: Large, black and white photos. Mostly publicity shots, shots of performers (looks to go back as far as the 1960s. Photos are uncaptioned and undated (some possibly of Danielle Pascal)

File 2: Large, black and white photos. Includes: photo of Pik Botha's birthday 1989 (with Roelf Meyer and Ronnie Oelofse; pensioners party, midriff photo from *The Star* (see press clippings); Miss Dungeon 1984; some photos that look like Mara Louw; signed colour photo: "Dear Ron, thanks for the best fuck in town, let's do it again. Love, Devine."

File 2: 11 x A4 colour print outs of a National Party event (c. 1989)

B. Press Clippings (1 file)

- Weekend Planner – What’s On New Years Eve – Dungeon listed (*Saturday Star* 30 December 1989)
- ‘Gays Choose Miss Dungeon’ (damaged) – Miss Dungeon 1984 (January)
- Dungeon pensioners show
- *The Star* 31 October 1969 (damaged) – photo of Ronnie Oelofsen at the theatre wearing an outfit that exposes his midriff. Caption is damaged – can’t read it all. (see photos A5)
- Colour photos with the following press caption stuck in the back: “Carnival capers. But these beauties are boys. Neil Holland and Di won tickets to Rio at Johannesburg’s Dungeon Club at its Rio Carnival evening. The gay club now has a TV date...” 4 March 1989 (presumably from *The Star*).
- ‘Plan to help Granny Lee’ – 15/08/1989
- ‘Confusing but fun!’- 23 June 1985 (15th Birthday)

C. Promotional material/events (C1-C3 = 3 files & 1 x box C.4)

*Looks to be mostly from 1989.

C.1 Flyers (1 file)

- May; Sept/Oct; Oct/Nov events (year unknown, probably 1989)
- June /July 1989 events
- Easter parade (year unknown)
- 18th Anniversary 26 June 1988
- Joburg Follies 1989 (poster)
- Events March-April 1989
- Male Model of the Year 1989 (TOGS and Body Positive)

C.2 Menus, Programs & Invitations (1 file)

- Various menus
- 19th Anniversary invitation (1989)
- Chrissie Caine (program and menu) – 20 August 1989
- Andrew Lloyd Webber & Friends – 23 July 1989
- 17th Birthday invitation (1987)
- 15th Anniversary invitation (1985)
- 18th anniversary invitation (1988)

C.3 Misc. Dungeon event documents (1 file)

- 19th Anniversary blank name cards for table
- Hand-written bar menu – 19th Anniversary
- Memorial service for Tyron Pulvenis and Granny Lee (Leonard) – August 1989
- Funeral service for Leonard Michael Du Plooy (Granny Lee) document and service program
- Blank Dungeon letterhead
- Honouring night 3 Dec. 1989 – meeting notes
- Sunday 20 August line-up – handwritten notes
- Closing for Jewish holiday sign
- Card with event notes
- Various handwritten notes

- Contestant entry forms
- Important numbers (looks like it was once stuck on the office wall)
- Application for membership

Other: 1 x carbon copy book – Competition winners names, signatures and addresses – March 1987

C.4 Pageants (1 box)

Box of documents from the 1988 and 1989 pageants held at The Dungeon – includes judges forms/scores, prizes, contestant entry forms (possibly these should be confidential), order of events etc.

D. Documents and ephemera NOT directly related The Dungeon Club (4 files)

D1. Invitations and flyers to clubs and events not held at Dungeons (2 files)

Parties and clubs (1 file)

- Dorothy's Slipper Palace (Thunderdome) –opening night, 28 June 1989 (x 3); ticket and membership card
- Invitation to 'leather & lace' party at The THunderdome (To Ronnie, from Ingrid)
- Hadfields (The Wanderers) – flyer
- 40th birthday invitation –Marilyn Baur 14.12.1991
- Pride 1990
- Q's Supper Club – flyer (162 Market Street)
- Flyer – Club Cesars – first heat of Miss Gay SA – 1991
- Flyer – Club Cesars – Toyboy of the Year – 2 November 1991
- Flyer – RAGE (gay club) "Les Bitches" 14 March 1992
- Technikon Witwatersrand – 1989 Miss Technikon (program and small LP)
- Club Swing (ex Rita's) gay club opening 27 November 1991 (on fax paper – faded)
- Vlakwater invitation 14 December 1991 (Afrikaans)
- Herb Klein enterprises – April, November 1990
- Pik Botha Birthday banquet (see also photos 1989) Sun & Towers Hotel – menu/program
- Hillbrow Rotary Club Achiever of the Year awards 1990 – program/menu
- SA Police Ball 1989
- Blondes (Cape Town club)
- Gabels Club Midrand – flyer
- GAT party flyer
- DMA flyer
- Idols nightclub flyer
- MAN International (Mleville) flyer
- Masquerade party invitation
- Halloween party invitation 1989 (CT)
- Hilton's restaurant – menu
- Club Exquisite – Miss Exquisite 1988

Theatre Programs and flyers (1 file)

- Program – Fairyland – Market Theatre
- Danielle Pascal – letter and press clippings (1989) and program
- We'll Meet Again press kit (starring Diane Chandler)
- Whodunnit? Directed by Robert Whitehead. Dec. 1989
- Taboo or not Taboo

- Ain't Misbehavin'
- Joburg Follies
- Nataniel – Weird People (signed program)
- Playboys (comedy) – directed by Deon Opperman
- Open a New Window (Aidslink and Artists against Aids)
- Incognito – Baxter Theatre
- Jerry's Girls
- District Six the Musical
- The Power of Piaf
- The Colours of Love (advertisement for Garbo's in the program)

D2 Miscellaneous Documents – not directly related to The Dungeon Club (mostly relating to other gay organisations) (2 files)

File 1:

- TOGS newsletters March; Honourary TOGS membership for R Oelofsen
- The Gay Community Centre and Advice Bureau – 28 March 1989
- GAB Counselling service flyer
- Prize awarded to 'Art & Frame' by The Dungeon (1989)
- YACHAD notice to members June 1988 (torn)
- 1992 calendar from Abraham Kriel Kinderhuis
- Looks to be a bound book of poetry with an ink drawing on the cover
- Amsterdam Homo Gids
- Outreach Rand Cookbook
- JHB maps
- Survey/questionnaire
- Etc.

File 2: Body Positive

- General info on Body Positive as well as correspondence and forms regarding World Aids Day (1989) event

E. Correspondence (2 files)

E.1 Cards (1 file/envelope)

- Dungeon 1st Birthday cards x 2 (2.6.1971) – “wear your seatbelt...” from Kenneth & “Candlelight is romantic...” From: Alwyn, Mike, Brian and Angelique (both cards are broken)
- Various Christmas cards addressed to Ronnie/The Dungeon Club
- Various thank you cards addressed to Ronnie/The Dungeon Club
- Various postcards addressed to Ronnie/The Dungeon Club

E.2 Thank you letters (1 file)

- Various thank you letters to Ronnie/The Dungeon Club (from individuals and organisations e.g. TOGS, Elsabe Zietsman, Abraham Kriel Kinderhuis, Bible Bank. UNerground Evangelism).

E. 3 Apology and Complaint letters (1 file)