

Inventory of the Ambush Records

(#1998-30)

***Note:** This document is a preliminary inventory, not a completed finding aid. The collection is surveyed but not processed, and its organization and composition are subject to change. This inventory is intended to help researchers better understand the general scope and content of the collection.*

Repository: Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender Historical Society

Collection Title: Ambush records

Collection Number: 1998-30

Physical Description: 20.5 linear feet (16 cartons, 1 manuscript box)

Creator: Kerry Bowman and staff of the Ambush

Date (inclusive): 1974-1991

Language of Material: English

Abstract: The Ambush was a gay bar and art gallery, located in the South of Market neighborhood, that catered to a leather, bear, biker, and western crowd. The collection contains administrative records, financial documents, receipts, artwork, ephemera, tapes of music played at the Ambush, the personal papers of co-owner Kerry Bowman (including correspondence and drafts of an erotic novel), slides of the Ambush and events such as motorcycle runs, and related materials.

Preferred Citation:

[Identification of item], The Ambush records (1998-30), The Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender Historical Society.

Conditions Governing Access:

Collection is open for research. Personnel materials in cartons 3, 8, 9, and 10 may be restricted; please contact the GLBT Historical Society archives for details.

Publication Rights:

For the status of the rights to this material, please contact the GLBT Historical Society archives.

Acquisition Information:

For this material's acquisition information, please contact the GLBT Historical Society archives.

Processing Information:

Inventory created by Isaac Fellman in 2020, based on a preliminary survey completed by Marjorie Bryer in 2011.

This inventory uses terminology for LGBTQ people that was in current use at the time of its creation. Descriptive language for queer identities evolves quickly and some of these terms may now be dated or even offensive. Finding aids are themselves historical documents; they reflect the moment in which they were written and often reflect the terms that subjects used for themselves. Please contact the GLBT Historical Society Archivist with questions or comments.

Biographical/Organizational History Note: The Ambush was a gay bar and art gallery, located in the South of Market neighborhood, that catered to a leather, bear, biker, and western crowd. With artwork by Chuck Arnett, it was known as a cruising ground, with sex in the bathrooms and a specially built "meat rack" where men could look for partners.

Scope and Content: The collection contains administrative records, financial documents, receipts, artwork, ephemera, tapes of music played at the Ambush, the personal papers of co-owner Kerry Bowman (including correspondence and drafts of an erotic novel), slides of the Ambush and events such as motorcycle runs, and related materials.

Indexing Terms:

Nightlife

Leather

Container Listing

Carton 1:

Ambush: Bills and invoices from vendors, circa 1984-1985

Carton 2:

Ambush: Accounts, January 1979-April 1980.

Carton 3:

Ambush (bar and deli): Receipts, 1975-1977; personnel information, circa 1983-1985.

Carton 4:

Ambush: hand-drawn, black and white psychedelic poster for an exhibit.

Accounts payable, 1983-1984

Carton 5:

Ambush: accounts, 1981-1982, including payroll, receipts.

Carton 6:

Ambush: personnel records; Ambush, Inc. administrative records, including ledgers, court documents regarding bankruptcy, 1985-1987; check registers; taxes, circa 1980-1986

Ambush materials related to the queer community, including Black and White Men Together reports on discrimination in bars, donations to charities, information about AIDS, ephemera from Gay Games II, circa 1983-1986.

Kerry Bowman, incoming correspondence (appears to be personal and business), circa 1983.

Loose papers include more Gay Games ephemera, Febe's ad, news clippings, 1986.

Erotic fiction by Bowman, including astrological charts for the cast, notes, and annotated scenarios, circa 1991

Carton 7:

Ambush—rules, employee policies, interoffice memoranda, inventories, 1981-1985

Catalogs and playlists of Ambush music tapes

Ambush – accounts payable and income, October 1982-April, 1983

Carton 8:

Rolodex

Employee files

Ambush rules, 1985

Ambush general ledger, 1977, and other financial records, 1980

Carton 9:

Kerry Bowman—drafts, notes, typescript materials for erotic manuscript

Ambush—recipes

Bank statements, invoices – have Bowman's name on them but may be for Ambush

Ambush, Inc. financial statements (balance sheets), 1975-1983

Ambush, Inc. payroll and business taxes, Employment Development Dept. materials, state worker's compensation insurance, rental license, loan documents, circa 1975-1983

Ambush—materials regarding Department of Alcoholic Beverages Control, 1977

Ambush – Articles of Incorporation, 1974-1977; corporate minutes and board materials, circa 1979-1985

Ambush – Income taxes and various insurances

Stock certificates and agreements

Carton 10:

Kerry Bowman, manuscript—he has labeled all the folders either with book numbers (e.g. Book 81) or days of the week, circa 1991

Ambush artists' files and art show agreements, circa 1982-1984

Ambush Infostar files (business management system), includes vendor forms, payroll forms, circa 1986

Ambush insurance; memos; bar schedules; donations; personnel records; loan materials; circa 1982-1986

Carton 11:

Ambush—checks and bank deposits

Carton 12:

Ambush—checks and bank deposits

Carton 13:

Ambush—art exhibits, by artist, including materials used for advertisements and flyers for other events, including mock-ups of flyers, circa 1978-1982

Ambush—photo contact sheets; notes about Mr. Marcus; printouts/clippings of early gay art and graphics.

Ambush – typescript for play, *The Circle of the Serpent*, by J.J. Jordan, with correspondence from New City Theater, 1985;

Ambush—checks and bank deposits

Cartons 14-16:

25 reel-to-reel tapes of music produced for the Ambush. Each carton has the tape numbers written on the outside and a list of songs on each tape, and each tape appears to have the song list written inside.

Box 1: Slides

Ambush Interior

Ambush Neighborhood

Ambush Baseball Team

Canary Island Diner

Parade(s), Date(s) Unknown

Motorcycle Runs, 1968-1976

Motorcycle Runs, Dates Unknown

Miscellaneous

