

# Timeline of Lynn's LGBTQ+ History


**The Light House & Fran's Place**

The Light House Cafe was one of the oldest gay bars in Massachusetts. The bar first opened in 1927 on Lynn Harbor at 778 Washington St. It was owned by Hugh and Mary Collins.

The venue was popular among women due to its proximity to the waterfront. It was a beloved space among the LGBTQ+ community as one of the only gay venues on the North Shore.

The Light House also had its fair share of hardships, with several closures from disruptive patrons to external harassment and criminal acts.

After being in operation for 89 years in the same location, The Light House succumbed to a demolition in 2016. The Collins family reopened the bar in 1918 in Fran's Place and welcomed the LGBTQ+ community for nearly 40 years before closing in 2016.



**Beating of gays surfaces in Lynn**

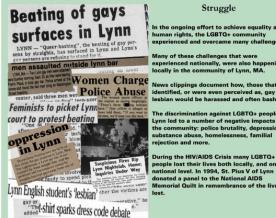
On the ongoing effort to achieve equality and human rights, the LGBTQ+ community experienced and overcame many challenges. Many of these challenges that were experienced nationally, were also happening locally in the community of Lynn, MA.

There were clipping documents here, those that identified, or were perceived as, gay or lesbian would be harassed and often beaten.

The discrimination against LGBTQ+ people in Lynn led to a number of negative impacts on the community: police brutality, harassment, substance abuse, homelessness, familial rejection and more.

During the HIV/AIDS Crisis many LGBTQ+ people lost their lives both locally and on a national level. In 1984, St. Paul V of Lynn donated a quilt to the National AIDS Memorial Quilt in remembrance of the lives lost.

**Struggle**



**Achievements**

While Lynn's LGBTQ+ community has endured its fair share of adversity, it is important that we also recognize the achievements in our community as well.

Such as in 1993 when a group of Lynn students voted to prohibit discrimination based on sexual identity in Lynn Public Schools, or in 2004 when the City of Lynn began issuing Marriage License Applications, to the first Pride Flag Burning in 2010.

There were also many groups who contributed to Lynn's LGBTQ+ history, such as members of the North Shore Gay & Lesbian Alliance, who sent a delegation to the March on Washington for LGBTQ+ Rights in 1979.

The group Be You, who hosted Lynn's first Youth Pride in 2018 to raise awareness about homeless LGBTQ+ Youth.

Queer Lynn Scene, formed in 2020 by Ana Tinsjoro, led the creation of United Lynn Pride.



<b>1860 - Women play a crucial role in Lynn Shoemakers Strike</b>	<b>1937 - The Light House Cafe opens on Lynn Harbor</b>	<b>1976 - Mr. Dominic's advertises as Lynn's Newest "Gay" Spot</b>	<b>1976 - Susan Shepherd and Marcia Hams of the Committee on Women, IUE Local 201 advocate for equal pay</b>	<b>1991 - Jack Noseworthy lands TV role on CBS series Teach</b>	<b>1998 - Thousands view AIDS Quilt at Lynn Vocational and Technical High</b>	<b>2000 - Lynn English High School's first Gay Straight Alliance</b>	<b>2004 - Same Sex Marriage Licenses now issued at Lynn City Hall</b>	<b>2013 - Alex Newell appears on television starring in Glee</b>	<b>2020 - Jazzul Escada appears on Season 1 of the HBO Series Legacy</b>	<b>2020 - Rashida Ellis competes in the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games</b>	<b>2022 - United Lynn Pride is founded to support Lynn's LGBTQ+ community</b>
<b>1973 - Robert Dow President of the Homophile Union of Boston, advocates for gay rights</b>	<b>1976 - Fran's Place opens at the location of The Light House Cafe</b>	<b>1985 - Lynn Woman lashed uncensored by man suspecting she was a lesbian</b>	<b>1993 - Student City Councilors Vote to prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation</b>	<b>1999 - 47 Central Opens</b>	<b>2000 - Margot Abels advocates for sexual health education for LGBTQ+ Youth</b>	<b>2010 - Lynn hosts its first Pride flag raising</b>	<b>2016 - Be You an LGBTQ+ youth group hosts the 1st Lynn Youth Pride Event</b>	<b>2020 - Ana Tinsjoro creates the "Out &amp; Proud" project and Queer Lynn Scene</b>	<b>2021 - Constantino A. "Coco" Alinsag is elected Lynn's first openly gay city councilor</b>		

**Nightlife**

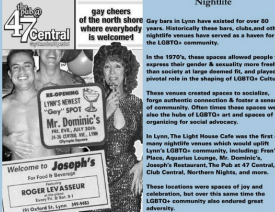
Gay bars in Lynn have existed for over 80 years. Historically these bars, clubs and other nightlife venues have acted as a base for the LGBTQ+ community.

In the 1970's, these spaces allowed people to express their gender & sexuality more freely than society at large allowed it, and allowed a portal into the shaping of LGBTQ+ Culture.

These venues created spaces to socialize, forge authentic connections & foster a sense of community. Often these spaces were also the hubs of LGBTQ+ art and spaces of organizing for social advocacy.

In Lynn, The Light House Cafe was the first of many nightlife venues which would uplift Lynn's LGBTQ+ community, including Fran's Place, Aquarian Lounge, Mr. Dominic's, Joseph's Restaurant, The Pub at 47 Central, Club Central, Northern Nights, and more.

These locations were spaces of joy and celebration, but over time some from the LGBTQ+ community also endured great adversity.



**People**

Lynn has had a number of notable LGBTQ+ residents who have gone on to make waves both nationally and locally in the arts, sports, activism & politics.

**Robert Dow - Local Gay Rights Pioneer**  
**Jack Noseworthy - American Actor**  
**Margot Abels - Massachusetts Sexual Health Advocate & Northeastern Professor**  
**Alex Newell - Tony Award winning Actor/Singer**  
**Rashida Ellis - World Champion Bowler**  
**Jazzul Escada - Ballroom Legend & Performer**  
**Coen Allsopp - Lynn's 1st openly gay City Councilor**

These are just a few of the amazing LGBTQ+ people from Lynn that bring Pride to their hometowns.

Please also take a moment to think about & appreciate the community members doing important work in Lynn today.



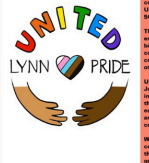
**United Lynn Pride**


In the Fall of 2022, after facilitating the June Pride celebration in Lynn informally as a community group, the decision was made and United Lynn Pride formally incorporated as a 501(c)(3) Non-Profit.

The mission of United Lynn Pride is to unite, engage and empower the LGBTQ+ community in the City of Lynn, MA through community events, education, outreach and other forms of support.

United Lynn Pride continues to facilitate the June Pride celebration in the City of Lynn, and in the north advancing its mission in facilitating the "Through A Rainbow Lens" Project to educate the community about the great untold and underrecognized history of Lynn's LGBTQ+ community.

We hope to acknowledge the work of the community that existed before us and build on this foundation. We hope that you learn and grow from the project, and that you'll continue to support United Lynn Pride in the future.



 **Learn More**