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Transcribed by: Ayana Arrington

[00:00:00:00]

AYANA ARRINGTON:

This is Ayana Arrington here with Barb Goedde. We're at the University City Library. So Barb, if you want to—can you spell your first and last name and also say that you agreed to do this interview.

BARBARA GOEDDE:

My name is Barbara Goedde. B-A-R-B-A-R-A G-O-E-D-D-E. And I agree.

[00:00:34:00]

AYANA ARRINGTON:

Okay, so do you want to start off giving like a brief overview of your experience or relation with the LGBTQ community?

BARBARA GOEDDE:

I was active in the community after I came out, in 1974. I had been at Washington U.'s art school prior to that, and wanted to go to graduate school but was not able to. I started working at the bookstore at Washington University, and that's when I came out. I met some lesbians there, and kind of started on my journey, as a lesbian and also as a lesbian feminist socialist, so to speak. At first I just came out through the Washington University community that was a group of students that I met with regularly, and some friends there, and some professors there, and we would set up events for gay people. And eventually, through working at the bookstore, I met some of the women that were organizing in St. Louis, and mostly they were living in South St. Louis. And so, I got involved with them, they were putting out publications, and they had a women's car repair collective, and they put out a publication called Moonstorm and they also—there were three big houses, that housed lesbians on the south side of St. Louis and I lived in one of those houses and I would say my connections with them lasted about five years. And that's when I first got active in the lesbian feminist community.

[00:03:04:00]

AYANA ARRINGTON:

So you say your connections with them lasted about five years; what happened after that?

BARBARA GOEDDE:

Well, they were—after that, I kind of moved away from them. I think I found the living situations to be very hard, after a while. There was a lot of non-monogamy, and for me

there was just a lot of heartbreak. So, I moved on with a partner to an apartment in Lafayette Square, and I became involved in the Women's Sports Connection. And I played soccer with them, and I played softball with them, and I also eventually coached teams, both softball and soccer for them. I still remain involved with the Women's Eye Bookstore, and also worked on a calendar called *_Iris_*, which was another lesbian feminist calendar that we tried to put out around 1982. And after that, I went into therapy for a while with a lesbian feminist therapist, and I did that, for a long time, in gay groups. And then, I became involved with the women organizing to go to the Gay Games. And that was like, 1984, 1985. I met Totty Dunham, who was a well-known softball player and coach in St. Louis, and she was putting together teams to go to the Gay Games. So with those teams, I also played and coached, and over an eight-year period we did go to two Gay Games; we went to Vancouver and New York City, [00:05:00:00] and won a gold medal in New York City. After that we started women's hockey teams, and I did that for a while, and, since about 2000, 2001, I didn't do too much in a way politically, but I did work—I've always worked at daycare centers, sort of as an extension of my feminist philosophy, and put a lot of work into relating to parents and children, and was out at both daycare centers that I worked at. And, that was, an up-and-down experience to be out at work, among—especially taking care of small children.

In 2010, I was asked to coach women's over fifty softball, and I did that for about four years, but then unfortunately I got sick. And since that time, 2014, I've been kind of struggling with my health, but that's kind of my overview, of things I've done in the lesbian community.

[00:06:31:00]

AYANA ARRINGTON:

You mentioned your feminist philosophy; how would you describe that?

BARBARA GOEDDE:

I think early on, especially from my family history, I grew up in a family, a very German, you know like, second or third generation German family, and there was one boy in my family and five girls. And my father was the person who had the German ancestry and ran the house. And he kind of ran it like a ship captain. He was very strict, and I would say abusive, and when we got older, he basically refused to let his daughters do anything but go to secretarial school. And my sister, who was a year older than me, went against his will and got a loan to go to DePaul School of Nursing, and I got a scholarship to Washington University. But he still argued with us about women and their place in the world, and still tried to restrict our movements so I came out of that, not very happy. And later in my life, after my father passed unexpectedly, my father—my brother inherited most of the Goedde money, and did not see fit to share it with his sisters. So, I think that I've always had this philosophy that women—and with my father too, I always argued that I was equal, to my brother, and should've been. And I think that's the basis of where I became a feminist. My mother was badly treated by my father; wasn't allowed to drive,

wasn't allowed to have a job, didn't leave the home, had shock treatments when I was in college, against her will. So, I really think that that's where my interest came from.

My philosophy once I joined this group of women, was one of—the group I was with, the Moonstorm group, were more interested in using socialism as a way to make the world, at least monetarily, more equal for men and women. So that only men's jobs didn't pay well, that there was an overall equal distribution of wealth, so that how wealthy you were didn't make a difference in whether you were heard or not in this country. And I think that that was really a big push in this group, to make all minority groups heard and understood and responded to. So I think that that was the overriding thought there. Initially when I first came out a lot of women's groups were separatist, and by that I mean there were no men [00:10:00:00] in the meetings. There were straight women in the meetings, but we didn't usually allow men in our women's spaces. There was a term, of women's-only spaces. Some of the bars, and—most of the bars, and most of the meetings, that I went to, were women-only. So that was also a philosophy that women needed to regroup, and kind of feel their own power with each other before they could make any inroads into a real patriarchal system.

So that was pretty much what it was. The Moonstorm collective talked about a lot of issues, and I think as we went through, and we kind of grew as a collective, our focus became less on women-only spaces and more on inequality in general, in society. And we saw the problems of African Americans, and immigrants, and Native Americans, and people of Jewish faith, and all kinds of people that were kind of—even, you know we even aligned ourselves with gay men, and with men's groups that were willing to understand and accept our philosophies. So, we became much less separatist and much more into organizing in the general population. Although I think most of us preferred the company of women, once we understood how comforting that was. And as far as I know, in the three houses we had, there were never any men living in them; they were always women-only spaces. Some men did visit, but that was kind of the overriding philosophy, was to get your own shit together and then try to approach the world.

We were also really concerned with getting people to come out, because at that time, the lesbians ahead of us, who were older than us, really were closeted, and preferred to stay that way, because they had built their lives around their lovers, or their jobs, and were not interested in coming out. So we really were trying to reach a large group of women, find lesbians, wherever they were, and try to get the message that coming out was the only thing that was going to save you. Staying in the closet was not a life that was going to be very fulfilling for any of us. And the only power we had as lesbians was to unite in the national movements, and give our resources and our time to making sure that people were coming out. Because no one could know to accept you, if all they were doing was basing their assumptions on stereotypes, and I think until people began to come out in their families, their families didn't even know. That when they were complaining about gay people to your face they were complaining about you. So it was really a striking time to be a gay person who was out in the community, and I really saw it as the only solution. I didn't see staying in and secluded as any place I wanted to be, in my life. It was just not acceptable to me. And then of course if you had that point of view, and then you met

older women, and you met women that were resistant to this, you got a lot of backlash. And that happened a lot in my life, I got a lot of backlash, about being out, when I met a more diversified community of lesbians. And especially on sports teams, I think, there was—the mix was sometimes straight and gay women and I think there was a lot of backlash, not by the straight women, but by the gay women, [00:15:00:00] that they did not want to be outed, and they did not want these straight women on the team to know who they were, and I think there was a lot of that, just in jobs, and places you would go, parties you were at, where people didn't really want to be out. They didn't feel safe. So I think that was a big part of our agenda also.

[00:15:30:00]

AYANA ARRINGTON:

With the groups that you talked about, when you saw that coming out was, was an important thing for the older women to do, how did you approach that?

BARBARA GOEDDE:

You know I didn't know many older women, the ones that—the women that I did, were mostly fine with it. But there were women I did not know, and, you know we had a number of bars, and one was called the Kit Kat Club, and it was a lot of older lesbians, and they were very doubtful that our way of living was going to be successful for them. And I think all you could do was talk to them. And I wasn't a frequent visitor to the Kit Kat Club, 'cause it was a butch-femme club, and almost the minute you walked in, if you talked to somebody you were categorized, and I think that system has come back around but at the time, it's not what we wanted as lesbian feminists. We wanted a more androgynous culture or you could be either or, or your relationship wasn't defined by whether someone was a—the boy partner or the girl partner. We really didn't care, and at least in the circle I was in, there were some women that were really holding on to that, and have always held on to that, but I didn't see it as very useful for the philosophies that we had, I didn't find it very useful. The women we did approach all we did was talk with them, and nobody was saying that they had to come out; they were just threatened that we were. They didn't—no one said to them, Well now it's time for you to be in our pride parades, but they questioned whether this was a wise move for them, or for anyone, at that time. So, that's kind of how it went.

[00:18:10:00]

AYANA ARRINGTON:

Can you describe more of the butch-femme bars, or maybe other bars that were around?

BARBARA GOEDDE:

When I first came out, there was a—where Pi, in the Central West End, that's at the corner of McPherson and Euclid, that area's always been a hub for gay lesbian people as long as I've been out. And, there was a bar there called Potpourri, and that was the men's

bar. And, down in the basement of that building, down a spiral staircase, which I hated, there was a bar down there called the Bottom of the Pot. And that bar, was more the new feminists, it was more the lesbian feminists from Washington U. and St. Louis U., and from colleges. I would say people that were under the age of thirty-five frequented that bar. That bar was—I don't know how long it was around, but eventually, the West End, that whole area became very gentrified, and places where people were living over there and houses that lesbians lived in, they, the owners, could get a lot of money for them. And so, I think, lesbians, feminists in general, moved south, or farther down into the city, to have places to live. But the bar itself—you know I was down there some, I didn't make a habit of going to bars, I was not a [00:20:00:00] big drinker, and so, the bar scene to me was some place I went if a whole group of people was going but I really didn't go there on my own to have a drink or to hang out. The other bar that came after the Bottom of the Pot was called, it was over on, was it maybe Newstead and Tower Grove, somewhere around there. And it was, a woman named Mac McAnn ran that bar. And I remember that bar being there for about eight years.

After a while, I didn't go to bars at all, especially when I got involved in sports. And the only bars I went to were places that the teams were going, and it was usually to restaurant-type places. And I don't know—I heard, that eventually the Middle of the Road was firebombed. But, I was not present at the bar, I only knew that it was. After that a bar opened off Kingshighway called Genesis, and it was run by a gay man, but he welcomed women and men there. And that bar, I remember, it's a Jiffy Lube now, but that bar, I also remember going to, and, the other one I went to a few times was up on Grand and Meramac, much farther south, and it was called More or Less, and that was another Mac McAnn bar, and that bar was also firebombed, eventually.

So, bars and coffeehouses have had a hard time surviving. We also had a coffeehouse early when I came out, around 1975, and it was behind the Sears on Grand and it was called A Woman's Place. And a woman named Laura Ann Moore got together with the Moonstorm people and they rented this space. And I only remember being there a couple times before it was firebombed. We had a lot of opposition to being out. It wasn't this, I mean for us it was liberating, but in terms of the general culture and the people around us, especially in South St. Louis, it was a difficult sell, to say the least. You know, the general public was not ready. I mean I think they put up with gay men, but I don't even think they knew lesbians existed honestly. I think that the general population had no idea that women were lesbians. So, it was a very interesting time.

In terms of where we lived, when I first moved to the South side, I was living with my sister over in DeMun. At that time, that part of Clayton wasn't built up yet. And now, you couldn't afford to live in DeMun. But, at the time, you know we had a five-bedroom place with—it was only 175 dollars a month. I moved from there, and I moved to a house on the South side, one of the houses, and we called it the Cat House, and it was 3863 Botanical. And, I lived there with two other lesbians, and some cats, and, there was another house down the street; it was called Thornapple House, and that was 3910 Botanical. And then, up the street across Grand was another house, and it was 3540 Botanical. And it had also groups of lesbians living in them. So that was kind of the setup

of our houses. And while it was really fun, and you know, we really enjoyed being together, again the neighborhood was very hostile, it was not. I think July House did the best, being on the other side of Grand, around more educated people I think, but in the south side of Grand, where we were, it was—the people were just not accepting of having lesbian women in their neighborhood. They just did not like it. [00:25:00:00] And we heard about it.

Some of the things that happened were, one Halloween they had stuffed an image of a woman made a dummy, and put a knife in the belly, and threw it on our porch. And, other things that happened were—there was a four-family flat across the street, and the young people in that flat used to call out to me, as I was coming home from work, Barb is a fag, Barb is a fag, and then they wrote it on my garage, on our garage. Another thing that happened was, we had a women's car repair collective up the street on Botanical, and one morning my girlfriend and I woke up and the parked car, which was a little, broken-down Volkswagen Beetle, was turned upside down. People had shot through our windows, knocked on our doors late at night, did their best to let us know we weren't welcome there. And I was not unhappy to leave, because of that. I felt a lot safer once I left that neighborhood and that kind of living situation. So, it was difficult. But fun. You know, there were many sides to this, and many challenges, for sure.

This group of women also ran an abused women support project. And so, they had a house, up off of Grand, and then it was an old house, and they were fixing it up, and they got people to help, there were a lot of carpenters and painters in our group of women, and they fixed the house up enough to invite women, who came to get counseling, to live in that house with their children. And there were many people in our collective who spent time up at that house volunteering, and moving women in and out, staffing it because, the location was a secret but if partners of the women found out, they would come, storming the doors and being threatening. So there were always—people needed to be there, around the clock. And so there were some people in our group that did a lot of staffing, and in fact, one of them was my roommate Claire, and at that time I was living at Thornapple House, at 3910 Botanical, and she invited a woman from the shelter to live with us, and this woman brought her three children and her, [laughs] non-gender-specified—well, she was a butch—her butch girlfriend, Gigi, to come to our house. The problem was that Sue Jones, who they invited to live with us, was a pathological liar. And so, she refused to work, she never gave us any money, the children kind of tore the house up, and, we all tried to help. But eventually, someone paid her to move, because no one could manage her. And she was trying to leave us with the children and disappear, by telling us she had cancer. So we just—eventually, a woman who had a little more money than us bribed her to move, and they finally got rid of her. But it was an ordeal, you know, to have that in your living space. It was just—I think I spent most of the nights, as many as I could, with my girlfriend, and not even in my house. So there were ups and downs with this, you know there were different situations. And then when you had people—the houses were interesting because when you had people with various partners, you could have a woman in your house that was sleeping with three different women. And you would hear these arguments they would have [laughs], you know while you

were trying to go to sleep, or while you know. [00:30:00:00] Sometimes it was just—I moved to the third floor, it was like I just couldn't stand it.

It was also a wonderful house in that we had a connection with women in Ava, Missouri, which was a little town, and I think it was southeast of Springfield, Missouri, really close to the Arkansas border I think. But there were women down there who had a farm, called Dragon Wagon farm, and they had come from the East Coast, and actually brought boyfriends, and came to Missouri because it was the time when people were looking to go back to the land. The hippies were going back to the land, and they picked this area in southwestern Missouri. I'm sure they had no idea what the weather was like, or what it was like, and they actually did farming there. But eventually, the women on the farm got rid of the men, and it became a women's-only farm. Those women had a connection to our house, Thornapple House. I didn't go down there to live, but some women from Thornapple House would go down there to live with them for four to six months, just to have that experience. And some of them would come up to live with us, or to stay with us, so there was also this, kind of—what do you call that—a road, back and forth, from Springfield to St. Louis; a connection, with the country, with the St. Louis women, back-and-forth back-and-forth.

Down in Ava, at this farm, they lived very rustically. I think they did eventually have electricity, but, it was very rough it was really, subsistence farming. It was raising goats, killing them, eating goat meat, eating goat cheese, drinking goat milk, farming their own crops, eating whatever they produced. Some women may go into Ava for jobs, but mostly they actually lived off the land, which was, pretty astounding. You know the summers in southwest Missouri are just awful, so farming in that weather, doing livestock in that weather. The winters are brutal. I really think that people from New York maybe didn't have a clear idea of what it was going to be like to live on the land. But it was certainly wonderful to have them come up to St. Louis, and also to have the opportunity to go down there, and to see it, and to see people who are actually doing that. And some of those women are still down there. I know of a couple collectives: one's in Arkansas, and then another—I think there are still some women down by Dragon Wagon farm who are living off the land. So, that's pretty amazing, and pretty much a different view of life, I think, then we have in the city, you know a very—connection to nature, I would say, more Earth Mother Religion, so to speak. Looking for clues from nature as to what their futures would be, or what the world held for them. Always looking to connect in some spiritual way to the earth, and I think that was a real different orientation for me, who had been brought up Roman Catholic, so I think it was kind of eye-opening. And it's been a theme that's run through the lesbian community here for years, and probably still are, women who live that way. I just—you know since I've been sick, and I haven't been in circulation I don't know many women like that. But I do know a few from Facebook, who still live on the land. And it's a really intriguing alternative, to what we try to do in the city. Different issues, definitely. So, there was that connection.

[00:35:19:00]

AYANA ARRINGTON:

Did you ever have any interest in going out to the farms and living there?

BARBARA GOEDDE:

I would go to visit, and, I wasn't a person that wasn't used to being outside. I mean I had lived all my life near fields, and was outside a lot, I mean, but I found it very rustic. And sometimes I found it—I would go visit maybe for weekends. There was one time when I went down in the summer, and they gave me a place to sleep in one of the rooms, but there were ticks all over me, and I was just so uncomfortable. I couldn't get comfortable. And then other times, I would go see some friends in Springfield, and we may drive to the farm and then go back to Springfield where they lived. And that was easier for me, 'cause I didn't have to stay on the land. And another time I went down, in the winter, and I heard they had a frozen pond so I took some ice skates. These women, I don't think had had a visitor in a while, and they were just thrilled. And we all went ice skating on the pond, and it was kind of hilarious. I think that was my favorite time down there; there weren't a lot of bugs or critters. There was actually one woman that was living in a teepee, a real teepee, and she had a wood burning stove in the middle, that went out the top, and she would stay out there all winter. I mean she would come back to the main house, to eat meals and things, but she would sleep outside in this teepee. So, I think it was more rustic than what I wanted to be, I mean I could never get used to it, but I was glad it was there. I thought it was a good experience for everyone to go down there, and kind of see what collective farming looked like.

I remember one time I went down, and there was a woman there I met, and a couple weeks, maybe a year later, and I liked this woman—we heard she was wandering, and that she had sort of lost her mind. And the women in the collective down there didn't know what to do for her, and it was almost like an early onset Alzheimer's except she was too young, I mean, she was only in her forties. And they didn't even have contacts for this woman and finally, after a lot of work, they found a relative on the East Coast, and they had to get the relatives to come get her. So I think that, you know it could be a good experience down there, or it could be hard, just really hard. So anyway, it was interesting.

Our house was not rust—I mean our house was you know electricity, running water, it was not real rundown, you know, we tried to keep it up. We always had people living there; it didn't cost much to live there. Thornapple House, I maybe had to pay fifty to sixty dollars a month in rent, and maybe another fifty or sixty in utilities. It was easy to work part-time, and still do the work I was doing, the political work I was doing. I worked part-time at Washington U. Bookstore, and then I worked at Cardinal Glennon Hospital on weekends, and then I worked at Jewish Hospital. So I was always able to make ends meet there, which was one advantage of living there. With an art degree I didn't have a lot of prospects for work. I tried to get teaching jobs, but at that time there was just a plethora of teaching, people coming out of school with K through twelve certification, which is what I had. I never got a job, so I just chose to live like this for a while.

[00:40:16:00]

AYANA ARRINGTON:

You had mentioned that sometimes when there were arguments going on in the collective, you would try to stay at your girlfriend's as much as possible? Was she also in—?

BARBARA GOEDDE:

Yeah she was at Dragon Wagon, actually. She had come up from the farm, and she had started working at the women's car repair collective. She was from New Jersey, and she had an amazing mechanical mind. I mean, she used to say to me, Barb, if men can do it, if men can do this work, it isn't that hard. Women can certainly do it because mechanics is not that hard. And, you know she would take engines apart and rebuild them.

We had a, I guess three or four year relationship but she always had other partners. I don't ever remember her just being my girlfriend. I think we always had—she always had other partners. I would sleep with some people here and there, who would invite me to, but I didn't really consider anybody but her as my partner, and really loved her.

We took trips together. We took a trip up to—she lived not far from us, and that was your question, did she live nearby or was she part of this, but she lived in an apartment down by Jefferson Avenue, in a really rough area; I can't even believe we lived down there, but we did. So she lived there, and eventually, she started to work for IBM. They didn't have any women working for them. They didn't know any—our collective was the first group of women to get into Rankin Institute, which is on the North side, and it's an institute for technology and mechanics. And Laura Ann Moore, and I think Sue Hutters were the first two women, some of the first women to go through Rankin. They weren't allowed. The charter of Rankin Institute said they couldn't come. So they were some of the first women to go through there. I don't remember where Nancy got educated—Nancy Lee, that was my girlfriend—but I don't remember where she got her training. But definitely, these women were—they amaze me. They could fix anything on your car. But when IBM found them, you know they heard that IBM was looking for women mechanics, so they went and applied, and they were making good money, repairing typewriters at the time because computers really weren't—they weren't in existence yet. Nancy Lee eventually retired from IBM and went to work at the city schools, as a science teacher, and that's where she retired from now. And I think, you know, in our tenure as partners, we had a lot of disagreements about her other partners, and about the time she spent with me, and the time she spent with them. It was, I think it was always difficult, you know, it wasn't that easy to. I was glad when I got a monogamous partner; that didn't work out after three years, but eventually I did get a monogamous partner and I was a lot happier in that situation than I was being non-monogamous I think. I can understand non-monogamy as a philosophy, and I did accept it, but I think personally it was too much for me. So that broke us up, I would say, that issue.

[00:45:23:00]

AYANA ARRINGTON:

You mentioned some trips that you took together?

BARBARA GOEDDE:

We did. We took this one amazing trip to, [laughs] we were ostensibly going to see her parents in South Orange, New Jersey, and we put together, we went out together and bought an old Chevy Nova, which was—no it was a Chevy Two, and it was, this was 1986, and this car was probably ten years old. And Nancy Lee tore the air conditioning system out of it, and redid the water pump, and worked on the engine, and we put her pregnant dog in the backseat, and we took off for New Jersey. Nancy Lee never got up earlier than ten in the morning, so we didn't make much time on our trip, and we did a lot of camping. And when we got to New Jersey, to her father's home, the dog had twelve puppies in her father's basement. Well the plan had always been to go into New York City and visit an old friend of hers named Vicky, and then, to go to Montreal. So we did. And we took these twelve puppies. And we crossed the Canadian border. Now I think it was probably illegal to bring those puppies across the border, but we had them in this big box in the back of the car, and when the border patrol looked in our backseat, the mother stuck her head out—she was a German Shepard—and they backed away and said Okay, go through. But when we were in Montreal and we were staying with some people, the dog got into—we took her up, there was a mountain in Montreal I remember, and the dog got away and attacked a skunk, and actually was covered in skunk smell. We couldn't have it in the house, and it was cold there, so we had to build a box outside and give the dog a tomato juice bath, and keep the puppies outside. So it was just this crazy, crazy trip. I think it lasted over six weeks. It was just the nuttiest thing. But anyway, that's kind of a funny story. And when we got back home, in her apartment she had all these little, chubby little dogs running around, and she advertised in a newspaper and people came and got them. And I think she gave away all but one or two of them, which other lesbians took, but gosh that was crazy. That was really crazy.

But I like Nancy Lee. I just saw her, for the first time in a number of years. I went to meet with some other lesbians that I knew back in that time period, and was trying to convince them to contribute to projects like this, and kind of giving your history, as an older lesbian, of things you did. And Nancy Lee was there, and had retired from teaching, and was thinking of moving to Washington State, to be with the Moonstorm collective. That's eventually where the Moonstorm collective moved. Almost all those women moved to Washington, to Seattle. So that's where she was thinking of going. So that was interesting, to see her.

[00:49:40:00]

AYANA ARRINGTON:

So when you moved out of the collective, you had moved in with Nancy Lee?

BARBARA GOEDDE:

No, I had broken up with Nancy Lee prior to moving out of Thornapple house. I had dated a few people, but eventually, I started playing softball, and I met a woman who was a teacher, a high school teacher. And I moved in with her, in Lafayette Square, and I probably lived there for three years with her. And through sports teams, she eventually—now that's where it got rough for me, was sports teams. Because I was playing on a, not a gay team but a sort of select soccer team. And it was gay and straight women, and the gay women on that team were very closeted, and didn't talk about being gay at all. And would even bring their partners to every event, but no one questioned who these partners were, or why they were there. It was not talked about. And so here comes this out lesbian, on this team, and it was very threatening to the lesbians on the team. So that was unusual for me, to be actually befriended by straight women, who were wondering what the hell was going on anyway, why certain women on the team were always with another woman when they traveled. Eventually I had to leave that team, and I left that partner, that partner left me. She became partners with one of the closeted women on that team, and that was kind of the end of us, as I knew it.

I lived for a while, very far south, down by the river, on Demenil Place where my sister was, and I had a few—that was when I had a lot of partners. I was just dating all the time. I was really lonely. I think in that time period I must have slept with six different women. None of it was very satisfying to me; it was just the hardest time. And I eventually met Totty Dunham, the coach of the women, the teams that were going to the Gay Games. And I found a home there; I found a group of women that I could hang around, and just be around. And not necessarily be partners with but just be around, and hang out. And after a while then I met a partner that I stayed with for a while, and we were monogamous. But those women's sports teams were very important to me. They were a way to meet gay women and to hang around with gay women without being in the bars. You saw them once or twice a week, and you were invited to their parties, and you know, it was just an easier way to connect with people. So that's why I stayed with them so long, I think, you know eight years with a group of women like that was really supportive, considering that I didn't have a full time partner. I think it was really a good answer to that.

[00:53:42:00]

AYANA ARRINGTON:

So despite the sports teams sort of having a lot of closeted women or straight women—

BARBARA GOEDDE:

That was only one team, 'til I got to the gay teams.

AYANA ARRINGTON:

Oh okay. So you found a community of lesbians there that you—

BARABARA GOEDDE:

Yeah because the—Totty Dunham, who was the coach, was looking to take a gay team to the Gay Games. She would take straight women but she didn't really want them. So finally I was kind of out of that that I'd been with three to four years in those soccer teams, I was kind of out of that tough situation where I was the only out lesbian on these teams. I found a group of gay women that didn't have any issues with me at all, and were happy to have a good teammate. Totty eventually made me a coach with her, and then the last Gay Games we trained from 1990 to 1994, that team, [00:55:00:00] I pretty much ran for Totty, 'cause Totty had heart disease. So the last three to four years, I pretty much took over that team and ran it.

AYANA ARRINGTON:

Were there other sorts of spaces for lesbians who didn't want to go to the bars?

BARBARA GOEDDE:

I think the community by that time was opening up a lot. I think by 1986, 1987 there were all kinds of places for gay women to go, and it wasn't as hard, you know it wasn't like you were the first. There were bars in the Central West End that women frequented; there were parties at people's homes. You knew a lot more people. I mean the community once people started coming out, it just was like wildfire. The community just grew exponentially. I can't remember any offhand, but I mentioned this publication *_Iris_* that I worked on. There were also bookstores. I think the Women's Eye bookstore, which started around, I'm going to say maybe 1977, maybe 1978. But that bookstore, by itself, even though it barely made ends meet, it was in the DeMun area where I used to live, and it was just a small space but they really did a lot of outreach, and a lot of meetings, and a lot of, you know, people getting together there and talking about books. And then Left Bank Books was also instrumental in getting gay literature to people, and also just being tolerant, more tolerant.

NAME UNKNOWN:

Excuse me, library is closing.

BARBARA GOEDDE:

Okay. Wow, didn't know that.

AYANA ARRINGTON:

So yeah, I guess we have to wrap up. Thank you for participating in this. [end of interview]

names and proper nouns:

Ava, Missouri
Botanical Avenue
Bottom of the Pot
Cardinal Glennon Hospital
Cat House
Central West End
Claire
Clayton
Demenil Place
DeMun
DePaul School of Nursing
Dragon Wagon
Euclid Avenue
Gay Games
Genesis
Gigi
Grand Boulevard
Iris
Jefferson Avenue
Jewish Hospital
July House
Kingshighway Boulevard
Kit Kat Club
Lafayette Square
Laura Ann Moore
Left Bank Books
Mac McAnn
McPherson Avenue
Meramac Avenue
Middle of the Road
Moonstorm collective, _Moonstorm_
More or Less
Nancy Lee
Newstead Avenue
Pi Pizzeria
Potpourri
Rankin Institute
St. Louis University
Sue Hutters
Sue Jones
Thornapple House
Totty Dunham
Tower Grove
University City Library
Vicky

Washington University
A Woman's Place
Women's Eye Bookstore
Women's Sports Connection