



Office of the City Council | City of Cambridge
795 Massachusetts Ave | Cambridge, MA 02139

E. Denise Simmons, City Councilor

News Release

For Immediate Release:
July 8, 2021

Contact: Neal Alpert
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Launch of Cambridge Pride History Stroll in Harvard Square

CAMBRIDGE – On July 13th, the Office of Cambridge City Councilor E. Denise Simmons, the Cambridge Museum of History and Culture, and the Harvard Square Business Association will be launching the Cambridge Pride History Stroll, a five-part art installation on Harvard Square business storefronts that invites Cambridge residents and visitors to stroll around the Square and learn about the city’s rich LGBTQ+ History. This installation – which is also produced in partnership with the City’s LGBTQ+ Commission and with the History Project – represents the inaugural event of the forthcoming Cambridge Museum of History and Culture, and it is part of a planned series of events across the city to raise awareness of the museum’s existence and its mission.

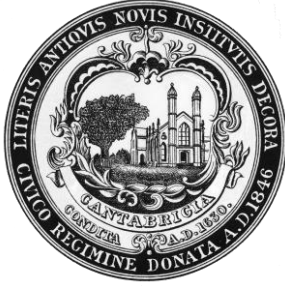
Folks will also be invited to view the exhibition online at the Cambridge Museum’s brand new website, which is www.cambridgehistorymuseum.com.

“A decade ago, when I first introduced [the policy order](#) calling for Cambridge to establish a museum collecting and curating our rich history, I had no idea how much work would be ahead of us. I just knew that this was something a world-class, incredibly storied community like ours needs if we’re going to be better at sharing our story,” says Councilor Simmons, who has twice served as Mayor of Cambridge and is currently serving her 20th year on the City Council. She adds that “the committee helping to establish this new museum has made tremendous strides these past couple of years, there has been so much enthusiasm among us about our mission, and we felt it was time to start letting the public learn more about who we are, what we’re doing, and what kinds of exhibits folks can expect to see in the museum once it opens. The idea of creating a ‘history stroll,’ which takes some of the elements of this history and cultural museum and places them in prominent parts of the city, grew out of our enthusiasm to share our work with the community.”

In early 2021, as Cambridge was cautiously beginning to emerge from the worst of the Covid-19 crisis, Councilor Simmons and her museum committee partners started plotting the idea of tying their first “history stroll” to Pride Month, and they reached out to the Harvard Square Business Association to inquire about finding businesses that would be willing to install the proposed banners. HSBA Executive Director Denise Jillson immediately embraced the idea.

Jillson said, “We are honored to be a partner in this important project and look forward to welcoming people from across our community and around the globe as they stroll the streets of Harvard Square learning about our past, experiencing our present, and looking toward the future with renewed hope.”

While the group’s enthusiasm propelled them forward, their initial hopes of launching this exhibit during June’s Pride Month were hampered by the difficulty in finding as many viable historical images and information that pre-dated the late 1960s as was first hoped, “...which actually speaks to the importance of our doing this work. We’ve had to do a significant amount of researching, unearthing, and presenting the LGBTQ+ history that we *know* is out there, and this just goes to show the need for exhibits just like this one,” explains Councilor Simmons. She further stated that “Pride should never just be set aside for just one month out of the year – rather, Cambridge should be Celebrating Pride 365!”



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The exhibit will formally launch with a small reception on July 13th sponsored by the newly-opened Bonde Fine Wine Shop and the Black Donkey Project, located at 54 Church Street, Harvard Square.

Jillson noted, “The exhibit will be on display throughout the summer at 1430 Massachusetts Avenue, 8 Church Street, 50 Church Street, 54 Church Street, 33 Brattle Street and 25 Brattle Street and may move around the Square, if necessary. We thank Gazit Horizons, Trinity Property Management, Bonde and Asana Partners for the use of their space.”

Follow Councilor Simmons on social media [@E_DeniseSimmons](#) and the Harvard Square Business Association [@HarvardSquare](#)