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## WHYY TO PRODUCE DOCUMENTARY HONORING 50<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF LGBTQ CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT

PHILADELPHIA, June 18, 2015 — A new WHYY production documenting the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer movement is scheduled to broadcast on WHYY-TV in 2016 and become available nationwide via community screenings and on public television stations across the country.

Produced by WHYY in collaboration with Independence Visitor Center Corporation (IVCC) and Equality Forum, the program will engage audiences in the story of the LGBTQ civil rights movement, its history and progress through present day. By connecting the struggles faced today by many LGBTQ Americans to a movement that began 50 years ago, the program will promote compassion, understanding, healing, and justice. Major support for this project has been provided by The Pew Center for Arts & Heritage.

WHYY, Inc. Independence Mall West 625 Orange Street <http://whyy.org>

The LGBTQ civil rights movement began when activists from New York, Washington, D.C., and Philadelphia protested for equality each Fourth of July from 1965 to 1969 in front of Independence Hall and the Liberty Bell. It was the first time that activists from more than one city openly identified as gay and called for equality. Called “Annual Reminders”, these protests laid the groundwork for the 1969 Stonewall riots. Given the historic role Philadelphia’s Independence Hall and the Liberty Bell played in the LGBTQ civil rights movement, the project will commemorate Philadelphia’s role in the movement and include footage from the 50th Anniversary Celebration of the LGBT Civil Rights Movement on July 2-5, 2015 in Philadelphia.

The one-hour program will highlight the diversity of LGBTQ lives, featuring stories that represent a wide range of social class, race, age, and LGBTQ expression. In five chapters: growing up, the professional landscape, marriage, travel, and growing old, the program will explore large social issues with a small brush, ultimately painting a portrait of LGBTQ life today and the debt that is owed to the trailblazing efforts of the gay pioneers. Interviews with founders of the LGBTQ movement will voice insights, memories, and anecdotes alongside archival photographs and footage. The project aims to tell a story that spans a range of LGBTQ life experiences.

The original program, *Gay Pioneers*, produced by WHYY and PBS award-winning documentary filmmaker Glenn Holsten in 2004, will broadcast Friday, July 3 at 7:30 p.m. and Friday, July 10 at 10:30 p.m. on WHYY-TV.

“As a long-time admirer of WHYY, I am pleased to produce and direct this film,” said director Ilana Trachtman. “I look forward to creating a program that will honor the contributions of the original gay pioneers of 1965, and, through cinema verité stories, will provocatively capture the present moment in LGBTQ lives.”

“We are grateful for the generous support from The Pew Center for Arts & Heritage, which enables us to create a program that contributes understanding of the journey of the LGBTQ civil rights movement,” said WHYY executive producer Trudi Brown.

“WHYY is exceedingly proud to produce such a profoundly important program that promotes tolerance, understanding and justice,” said WHYY president and CEO Bill Marrazzo. “This project is a consummate example of how our content strengthens our mission of advancing civic life through storytelling, education and civic dialogue.”

“The IVCC is proud and honored to be collaborating with WHYY and Equality Forum on this most important documentary,” added James Cuorato, Independence Visitor Center Corporation president and CEO. “The film will be a worthy sequel to the original ‘Gay Pioneers’ and demonstrate the progress that has been made as a result of the courage and perseverance of the original protesters.”

WHYY’s Trudi Brown is executive producer. Emmy award-winning documentary director and producer Ilana Trachtman will direct the production. The project, made possible by generous support from The Pew Center for Arts & Heritage, is a collaboration with WHYY, Independence Visitor Center Corporation (IVCC) and Equality Forum.

WHYY is the region's leading public media organization and PBS/NPR member station. WHYY has extensive experience producing documentary films in collaboration with arts and culture organizations for regional and national distribution. Examples include *The Barnes Collection*, produced in collaboration with The Barnes Foundation, and *Pennsylvania Ballet at 50*, produced in collaboration with the Pennsylvania Ballet, both of which aired on PBS stations nationally. To learn more, visit [WHYY.org](http://WHYY.org).

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