



Guide to the Dennis McBride oral history interviews

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Summary Information

Repository:	University of Nevada, Las Vegas. University Libraries. Special Collections and Archives.
Creator:	McBride, Dennis
Contributor:	Boyer Early Las Vegas Oral History Project
Title:	Dennis McBride oral history interviews
ID:	OH-03888
Date:	2023 March 21
Date:	2023 April 17
Date:	2023 April 25
Date:	2023 May 01
Physical Description:	5 Digital Files (0.677 GB) MP3
Language of the Material:	English
Abstract:	Oral history interviews with Dennis McBride conducted by Claytee D. White and Stefani Evans on various dates in March, April, and May 2023 for the Boyer Early Las Vegas Oral History Project. McBride goes into detail in this 4-session interview and covers a wide variety of topics, including: the history of Boulder City, working at various cultural institutions in Las Vegas, the evolution of the LGBTQ+ community in Las Vegas, researching his own history and publishing a book, and local advocacy groups. Digital audio available; no transcript available.

Preferred Citation

Dennis McBride oral history interviews, 2023 March-May. OH-03888. [Cite format consulted: Audio recording or Transcript.] Oral History Research Center, Special Collections and Archives, University Libraries, University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Las Vegas, Nevada.

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Scope and Contents Note

Oral history interviews with Dennis McBride conducted by Claytee D. White and Stefani Evans on various dates in March, April, and May 2023 for the Boyer Early Las Vegas Oral History Project.

In the first interview, McBride recalls his childhood in Boulder City, Nevada including a family murder, his father's abusive behaviour, and his parents' divorce. He also recalls coming out as gay to his mother, his work at the Bureau of Reclamation, his UNLV Bachelor's and Master's degrees in English, his passion for archival research, his books on the history of Boulder City and Hoover Dam, and working in UNLV Special Collections during the Robert Maxson-Jerry Tarkanian feud.

In the second interview, McBride discusses a wide variety of topics, including working to found the Boulder City/Hoover Dam Museum; conducting oral histories of dam workers; the Question 2 referendum in 2000 and 2002; being hired at Nevada State Museum as Curator III in 2007; groundbreaking for new building on Springs Preserve campus; becoming Museum Director after Millman retired; institutional collaborations; the COVID-19 shutdown in March 2020; and his retirement.

In the third interview, McBride goes into detail about the gay community's early days in Las Vegas, Nevada and the many challenges. He describes bookstores, clubs and bars, lounges, and local community members. He recalls the AIDS epidemic in the 1980s, the early days of community events and Pride, and political campaigns that affected the LGBTQ+ community.

In the fourth and final session of the interview, McBride describes the legal and functional relationship between the Nevada State Museum Las Vegas as a one of several museums operated by the Nevada Division of Museums and History, and the Springs Preserve operated by the Las Vegas Valley Water District (LVVWD). He discusses compiling and eventually self-publishing his book, *Out of the Neon Closet: Queer Community in the Silver State*. He concludes discussing gay-rights marches and local LGBTQ+ advocacy groups including Metropolitan Community Church, The Gay and Lesbian Community Center of Southern Nevada (now The Center), and Aid for AIDS Nevada (AFAN).

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Administrative Information

Access Note

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Acquisition Note

These interviews were conducted and transcribed by the Oral History Research Center (OHRC) which is part of the UNLV University Libraries Special Collections and Archives Division.

Processing Note

Interview materials were processed by UNLV Libraries Special Collections and Archives in 2024. Sarah Jones wrote the initial collection description. Access copies were created for born-digital audio files. The audio has been minimally reviewed and all readily available information has been included in the description.

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Names and Subjects

- Oral histories (document genres)
- Gay community
- Boulder City (Nev.)
- Archivists
- Las Vegas (Nev.) -- History
- Las Vegas (Nev.) -- Social life and customs
- Aid for AIDS of Nevada
- The LGBTQ Center of Southern Nevada
- Nevada State Museum