

RU12? Queer Archives Project

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Just what is the RU12? Project? Why does it exist? How does it function as part of the GLBT community in Vermont? These questions were posed to Margaret (Meg) Tamulonis, Chair of the Vermont Queer Archive Committee at RU12?

"The establishment of the Vermont Queer Archives at the RU12? Community Center has created an important and growing historical resource for the study of the lives of LGBTIQA Vermonters. A small collection of ephemera and reproductions has begun to grow into a larger compendium of artifacts, publications, photographs and diverse items documenting the lives of Vermonters of the past and present. By making the existence of the Archives known throughout the state of Vermont, and by inviting the public to participate in the development and exhibition of the Archives, the Archives will be able to grow as an important source of knowledge about the history and lives of LGBTIQA people in Vermont."

"There is very little knowledge of LGBTIQA history in North America, and especially in the State of Vermont, even as the lives of LGBTIQA (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersexed, Questioning individuals and their Allies) Vermonters have become a topic of heated discussion. By collecting documents and items

associated with the lives of LGBTIQA Vermonters, by presenting exhibitions on their history, and by acting as a resource for information, the Queer Archives will help to fill this gap. We will be presenting an exhibition in Burlington this spring and hope to be able to present smaller installations throughout the state over the next few years."

"The Archives does not necessarily have to form a vast collection in order to be successful. I see our primary role over the next few years as one that helps LGBTIQA Vermonters learn about and realize their own histories and stories are an important part of Vermont and national history. We can do this by sharing information and stories with each other, whether they are anecdotes or exhibitions or workshops on how to preserve your own scrapbooks or photographs, etc."

"The main strength of the Archives at this point is the Committee members themselves and the people who have loaned to us or given to us. Our members have many different skills, whether from working with historical collections to developing collections databases to developing websites for sharing information."

Without realizing it, the LGBTIQA community in Vermont has become a stepping-stone in history, a chapter in a book that all of America is watching and reading. What happens here in our own state could very well shape the future of tomorrow. Learn from our rich and vibrant history or risk repeating its mistakes.

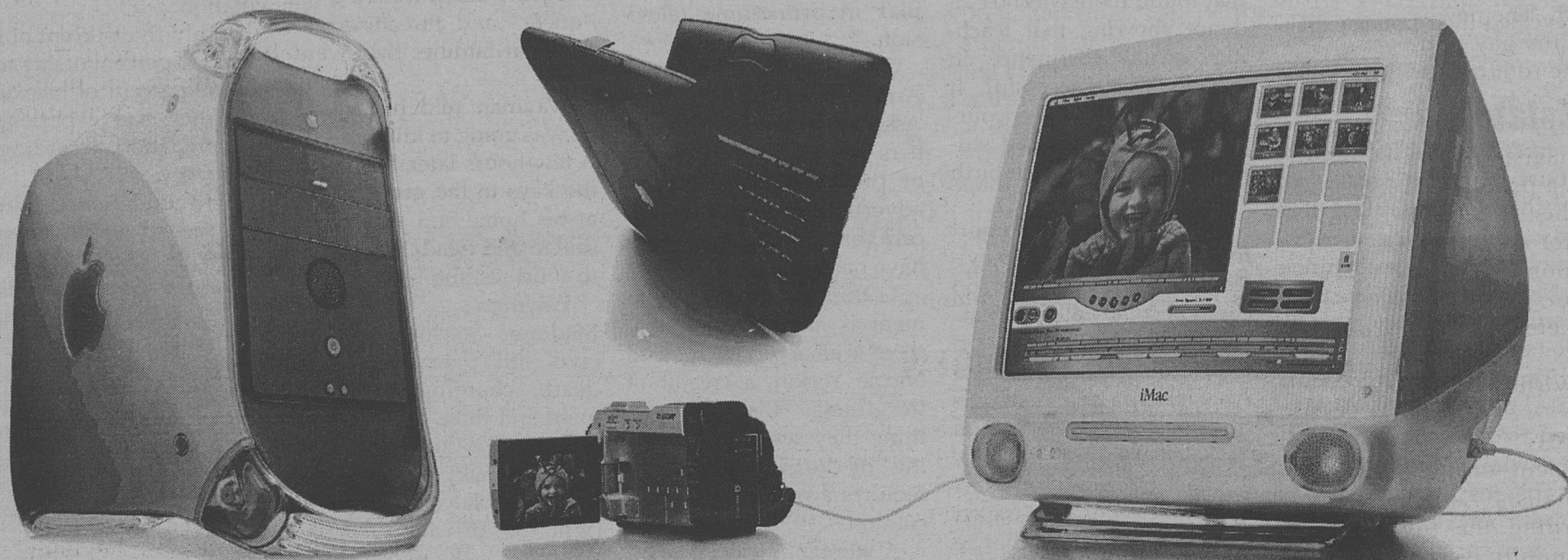
Ranslem's view

YOU'RE LESBOS AND YOU WANT A BIRTH CERTIFICATE FOR YOUR "SON," HUH? AS THE LOCAL MISSISSIPPI AUTHORITY, I SAY, "NO!" MY WAY OR THE HIGHWAY, GIRLIES. SO, HOW 'BOUT SOME GAS FIRST?



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