

# Idaho LGBTQ Oral History Project

**Albert Stansell**



**BOISE STATE UNIVERSITY**

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This Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer (LGBTQ) Oral History Project began as a key component of a cross-listed Boise State University course, Intro to LGBTQ Studies (GEN 380, HIS 381, SOC 497). Dr. Riley Caldwell-O’Keefe taught the course and designed the project as an interactive learning tool to help students understand LGBTQ history, with special emphasis on Idaho history, and the impacts of this history on local individuals. In addition to this history and context, students learned interviewing techniques throughout the semester. We discussed ethical considerations and obtained Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval for the project. Throughout the process, we worked with Boise State Special Collections and Archives librarians, Alan Virta and Cheryl Oestreicher. The culmination and digital release of the collection would have been impossible without them. We are thrilled and honored to offer these first-person insights which help provide a more well-rounded and comprehensive story of Idaho history.

**Name:** Albert “Al” Fletcher Stansell III

**Biography:** Albert “Al” Fletcher Stansell grew up in Atlanta, Georgia. Al identifies as a gay, middle-class, Caucasian, male and at age 72 he happily resides in Boise, Idaho. After serving as an air traffic controller in Atlanta, Al shares his coming out process during a controversial time period when he could have easily lost his job for publicly claiming his gay orientation. During this interview, Albert also opens up about his 30-year relationship with his partner Dick, his 12-year marriage to a woman, the relationship he has with his two children including what it was like raising his son with Dick and finally he reflects on the journey that him and Dick embarked on when they decided to become the sole owners and operators of the now well-known Balcony bar located in downtown Boise.

**Keywords:** The Balcony, AIDS, aging, military, gay pride, relationships, conservative, gay marriage, David & David

**Interview date:** 12/1/2011

**Interviewer:** Danielle Peterson

**Interview duration:** 1:11:45

**City:** Boise

## Time Notation:

0:00:00	Date
0:00:13	Name
0:00:28	Race/ethnicity
0:01:15	Economic status
0:02:06	Sexuality
0:02:46	Opinion on marriage
0:03:24	First aware of sexual identity
0:04:04	Coming out story
0:05:26	Divorce
0:06:30	Types of coming out

0:06:59	Gay bars (Atlanta)
0:07:17	Coming out's effect on family/experience
0:11:11	Comparison of Dick and Al's upbringing
0:11:38	How and when Dick and Al met
0:12:00	Beginning of Dick and Al's relationship
0:14:36	Decision/reason to move to Boise
0:15:40	First mention of Balcony
0:16:09	Buying the bar
0:16:48	Initial running of bar
0:17:49	Expansion of Balcony
0:18:45	How the Balcony came to be today
0:19:29	To be labeled and eclectic Club or gay bar?
0:22:12	The running of the Balcony vs. Oklahoma bar
0:22:40	Hardships involved with opening the Balcony
0:23:49	Al's definition of gay bars
0:25:06	Adversities towards Dick and Al, or the Balcony
0:30:00	Business in Boise vs. other areas
0:30:39	Boise's gay community when Dick and Al first arrived
0:33:09	Shift of gay community today
0:34:08	Experience of coming out before internet
0:36:46	Participation in Gay Pride Rally (including donations)
0:40:00	Driving push to sell the Balcony
0:43:03	Advice for the younger gay generation
0:46:49	Generational problems
0:51:06	Gay sister
0:51:46	Al's parents' take on having two gay children/family ties
0:54:52	Dick's family
1:01:23	Should you come out to your parent? family? or acquaintances?
1:04:13	Do you still frequent the Balcony?
1:07:52	Anything to add or that I missed?
1:08:52	Do you know anyone else who could be interviewed?
1:11:12	Thank you and closing