# Stonewall National Monument's Visitor Center Commemorates LGBTQ+ History



On June 28, 2024, a significant part of LGBTQ+ history was honoured as the long-vacant storefront at 51 Christopher St., a former part of the Stonewall Inn, reopened as the Stonewall National Monument’s visitor center. This opening coincides with the anniversary of the 1969 Stonewall Rebellion, a pivotal event in the LGBTQ+ rights movement in the U.S.

The Stonewall Inn, which originally spanned two buildings at 51 and 53 Christopher St. in New York’s Greenwich Village, was the site of a police raid on June 28, 1969, triggering an uprising that altered LGBTQ+ activism. After the rebellion, 51 Christopher St. underwent multiple transformations, including stints as a bagel shop, gay bar, clothing store, and nail salon, before finally becoming vacant.

The new visitor center, funded by $3.2 million in donations and managed by the National Park Service and LGBTQ+ advocacy group Pride Live, aims to provide a comprehensive narration of the Stonewall story, featuring artifacts like a 1967 jukebox and photographs of protests. Founded by Diana Rodriguez and supported by people like Mark Segal, the center honors the legacy of the original Stonewall Inn.

The current Stonewall Inn at 53 Christopher St., which reopened as a gay bar in the 1990s, remains a historical and cultural hub. Co-owners Kurt Kelly and Stacy Lentz also coordinate the Stonewall Inn Gives Back Initiative, underlining their commitment to ongoing LGBTQ+ advocacy.

Mark Segal, a longtime LGBTQ+ activist, reminisced about the first Stonewall anniversary and the ensuing years of activism. Reflecting on the rebellion, Segal emphasized the importance of being visible and proud, a sentiment that continues to resonate in the community today.