
Historical Preservation Committee Report

Report Date: 20 September 2022 (for EC meeting of 24 September 2022)

Committee Appointed by: Executive Committee

Chair: Joe Dehn

Secretary: Kat McElroy

Other Members: Graham Brown, Patrick Nicholson, Reinita Susman

Executive Overview

The mission of the Historical Preservation Committee is to preserve, organize, and make available material relating to the history of the Libertarian Party in California.

Information about HPC projects is recorded and made available to members and the general public via our article (page) on LPedia:

https://lpedia.org/wiki/Libertarian_Party_of_California_Historical_Preservation_Committee

Members

With the appointment of Graham Brown by the state Executive Committee at its meeting of 13 August 2022, this committee now has its full complement of five members.

Meetings

The HPC has been meeting monthly, via Zoom, since April. We have held three meetings since our last report:

- ◆ 17 July 2022
- ◆ 21 August 2022
- ◆ 18 September 2022

Minutes of these meetings are posted to our LPedia page (link above) when approved.

We are planning to hold our next meeting on 23 October.

Biographical Research Projects

We have two members who have begun conducting interviews as a way to gather information about people who have been involved in the party. So far they have conducted such interviews of two people, and they are working to select another past activist to interview next. The general plan is to do these approximately once a month, with the primary product being a lightly-edited transcript (posted to LPedia) and the secondary products being information added to the articles about that person and the committees, campaigns, or other projects with which he or she was involved. In some cases this might extend to the creation of entirely new articles, about organizations or projects for which we had no information previously.

We have identified both general categories of people (e.g., past candidates, county chairs) and specific individuals who might be good candidates to be interviewed. These, along with a list of the people interviewed so far, with links to the transcripts of those interviews, are posted in the "Interviews" section of our LPedia page.¹

If anybody has suggestions, please let us know – along with how to reach the person (e-mail and/or phone) if you have that information.

Collecting and Uploading Local Newsletters

We were able to make a bit of progress on this since our last report. We have identified places where copies of a significant number of issues were posted on a local organization's web site, and which are either still accessible directly from such a site or indirectly through the Wayback Machine, for newsletters published by two regional/county organizations: San Mateo County and East Bay (Alameda and Contra Costa Counties). For "San Mateo Libertarian" there were copies of almost 80 issues posted online in one form or another; these have now been copied into LPedia², and this appears to represent more than 60% of the issues that were published (all except the first five years). For the East Bay newsletter, "Libertarian Lifeline", we have copies of 45 issues uploaded³, but from the way they are numbered it looks like there were probably more than 300 issues of this title published over the years.

We also received copies of single issues from people who had heard we are working on this project (one for East Bay, and one for the San Gabriel Valley of Los Angeles County). These by themselves don't add much to our collection, but the fact that people are starting to think about helping us with this seems like progress.

This is going to have to be a long-term, continuing effort, and the more people who know we are interested the faster we are likely to be able to make progress. Somewhat concerning in this regard is that so far, except for that one issue from Los Angeles, all of the progress we have been making has been related to counties in the northern part of the state – even though we know that

1 https://lpedia.org/wiki/Libertarian_Party_of_California_Historical_Preservation_Committee#Interviews

2 https://lpedia.org/wiki/San_Mateo_Libertarian

3 https://lpedia.org/wiki/Libertarian_Lifeline

there were many newsletters being published over the span of decades in the southern part of the state, including multiple titles just within Los Angeles. Any help anybody can provide in spreading the word that we are looking for these newsletters would be welcome!

We are also looking at ways to regularly collect and preserve the newsletters that a few local organizations are continuing to generate. We have started by attempting to identify all the local organizations which are producing something that might be considered a "newsletter". As far as we know, all of these are now being distributed electronically, via e-mail, which should make the "collect" part relatively easy, because we can "subscribe" to them. But they differ significantly in format, in particular in the way they divide their content between the e-mail messages themselves and references to material stored elsewhere (e.g., on a county web site), so each one will require separate consideration of the best way to "preserve" them.

Gathering Information from Newsletter Archives

Each member of the committee has now volunteered to participate in a systematic review of some set of newsletters for which we have a significant run of issues. In each case, the goal will be to gather information that can be incorporated into other articles to provide a more complete record of those topics. We are especially looking to fill in a lot of missing information about people like candidates for local office and county officers, but we expect to find a lot of other kinds of information as well, that can be organized in various ways; for more information refer to the checklist⁴ mentioned in our previous report.

As part of this process we are experimenting with ways to catalog/index the content of each issue, to make it easier to go back and find things we might want to review in more depth in the future; we will also be adding links back to the newsletter issues in some cases where information added to another article is something for which we have only that newsletter as a source.

⁴ https://lpedia.org/wiki/Libertarian_Party_of_California_Historical_Preservation_Committee#Newsletters_as_an_Information_Source