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May 2025 Spotlight

SLFA Herstory Project 16 Years Old, and THREE Years on the Web

May 2025 marks our third anniversary as a website, and sixteen years as a project. **Merril Mushroom** sparked the beginning of this collaboration in a spring workshop at Womonwrites, pointing out that so much organizing has been done in the South, and no one is preserving our stories. She has nurtured our project with her ideas, her writing, and encouragement. Our focus is on recording each other's stories while we are still alive and communicating.



A Lifelong Feminist Butch

The
Adventures of Merrill
Mushroom

Merril, above, at Womonwrites in 2011. She is wearing her beloved mushroom shirt and holding the shell that was passed around opening and closing circles at Womonwrites. She lost both the mushroom shirt and the shell in the subsequent massive house fire. Read all about in her interview.

This month, we feature Merrill's life story in her own words: from lesbian awakening in Miami Beach in the 1950s, through political harassment at the University of Florida, to a decade in New York City in the '60s, then a cross-country search for land, working construction, and finally settling in rural, middle Tennessee, where she has written and stirred up "good trouble" since the 1970s. Along the way, she has championed marginalized groups through volunteer work, taught special education, and adopted five children.

[Spotlight on Merrill Mushroom](#)

You are invited to participate:
Who inspired you to lesbian feminism?
Send us the name of your most significant Shero
with a brief reason why she inspires you.

Both she and you can remain anonymous if you want (just say so) since we will PUBLISH these here on our SLFAHP website.

Send submissions today to: slfainspired@gmail.com. Here's an example:

Rose Norman got her inspiration from Nancy Finley. "At the time, Nancy Finley was the chair of the Sociology Department at my university. She said, 'Let's see who might be interested in starting a women's studies program.'

"She made feminism seductive, and she opened my eyes to structural causes of oppression. She walks the talk in all aspects of her life."

**The Southern Lesbian Feminist Activist
Herstory Project**

We collect, archive, and celebrate oral and written stories of unsung, Southern, lesbian-feminist activists during the second half of the twentieth century. We are proud of our contributions to lesbian culture, strengthened by our collective voices.

Many of us recognized that the lesbian-feminist voices of Southern lesbians had been omitted or marginalized in mainstream literature of the LGBTQ movement as well as from feminist history. We are the antidote to this omission. We worked with Duke University to set up archives, did interviews all over the south, and eventually collaborated with Julie Enszer to publish 6 issues of Sinister Wisdom, full of all our stories. Now we maintain our website and update it monthly, as you hear about through this newsletter. We are still gathering more Southern lesbian stories, interviewing, writing, editing, tracking, and networking.

We are always ready to welcome new collaborators! If you would like to join the SLFAHP group, email us at SLFAHerstoryProject@gmail.com.

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