



Club Glory's unassuming entrance.

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Up Stark Street

Cross 10th. At 314 is Panorama, a one-time popular mixed-crowd dance bar. Financial issues and problem behavior by underage customers eventually brought the place down, and it sits empty, inviting its next reincarnation. On the south side of Stark is a plain, unmarked door at 1014. Once the hottest gay country western bar on the West Coast, this was **C.C. Slaughters**. It was opened in 1981 by John Adams, a well-known bartender from the **Fish Grotto**. His reputation matched that of Tom Cruise in *Cocktail* for theatrical bartending. People came just to watch him mix and shake. Slaughters had a small dance floor, a large fish tank, changing exhibits of work by local gay artists and a narrow stairway up to the multipurpose restrooms. Slaughters sponsored multitudes of fund-raisers and events, especially after the advent of AIDS.

Before Adams bought it, the place was popular as the **Rhondee Lounge**. Earlier, it was the first location of the **Virginia Cafe**, which later moved to Park Avenue.

Cruising Stark Street in the 1980s meant meandering back and forth to many other bars. Across from Slaughters was the **Brig**, with a steamy recessed dance floor surrounded by a mirrored gallery and a bar on one side. To get inside, one traversed a long, dark hallway, next to what is now the **Red Cap Garage**, which at one time was an actual auto repair garage. The Red Cap, the Brig and **Boxxes** are all contiguous, but in the 1980s, the only link was a narrow passage behind the Fish Grotto. The Grotto has been one of Portland's finest fish houses since the 1960s, well known to tourists and locals alike for fresh fare. Behind the Grotto was a popular piano lounge called the **Outrigger** and a bar known as the **Quarterdeck**, which became **Boxxes**.

Crossing Stark from the Red Cap are two more popular spots. On the corner at 1038 is **Scandals**, in the neighborhood since 1985. Previously, it was the **Rainbow Art Gallery**. Remarkable for the time, the owner left the windows unblocked, establishing Portland's first bar with picture windows.

The change in atmosphere inside set a new standard for bars. Connected next door is the **Other Side Lounge**, a quieter alternative to the cacophony of **Scandals**. This space was at one time **Express It**, a coffee and dessert spot with a small art gallery. It was, unfortunately, too quiet and classy, ahead of its time for providing a quiet ambiance. But enjoy these places quickly, as they will relocate at the end of November to a new location up Stark at the former **Three Sisters Tavern**. The space is destined to be a

new European restaurant, and the **Clyde Hotel** (once the **Ben Stark**) will be upgraded to become the **Ace Hotel**.

Walk north on 11th past **Boxxes** and notice the Red Light, a vintage clothing store. This was once **Django's**, a radical music shop. The doorway at 319 was the site of **Somebody's Place** from 1981 until 1985. Noteworthy was its full-length balcony overlooking the bar and an intimate dance floor in the back. **Somebody's** pioneered the concept of the Sunday afternoon movie in a gay bar, showing such classics as *What Ever Happened to Baby Jane?* and *Psycho*. **Somebody's** had moved to this spot from its original 1979 location on Ninth in the former **Focal Point**.

The Heart

Later, 319 became **Roxy's Leopard Lounge**, but it never reached the success of **Somebody's**.

At the southeast corner of Burnside and 11th is a used clothing store, **Buffalo Exchange**. Before it opened five years ago, it was the longtime location of **Helens Pacific Costumers**, where nearly everyone needing outfits for drag could count on finding just what they needed, tasteful or otherwise.

Backtrack south on 11th and notice the entrance to the **Hotel Joyce**, at one time a by-the-hour establishment, conveniently located near four gay bars. Check out the nautical exterior on **Boxxes**, more appropriate for the Fish Grotto, and the former **Outrigger** and **Quarterdeck**. Close by is the entrance to the recently opened **Fez Ballroom**, open for special events.

At 11th and Stark is the **Mark Spencer Hotel**, built as the **Nortonia** about 1907 and also known for a few years as **Bower's Hotel**. Equi lived there with longtime companion Harriet Speckhart from at least 1909 to 1911. It was a premier hotel in its day, in the same class as the **Multnomah** (now Embassy Suites) and **Hotel Oregon** (now part of the Benson). Ahead of its time, it was the only hotel that would allow Louis Armstrong to stay in 1940. Peter Nathan purchased the building in 1977, renovating and redecorating the place, and it is still owned by his family. The hotel caters to all clientele, offering special packages to groups like the Imperial Sovereign Rose Court for Coronation Weekend.

Return to Stark Street, turning right to the Roxy at 1121, one of the few 24-hour eateries downtown. Quiet during daylight hours, it's jammed most weekend nights, with a peak of activity about 3 a.m. Spike-headed guys mix with tie-dye-adorned girls and middle-aged couples at breakfast time, but no sleeping allowed. Located between the various bars on Stark, its offerings of food and nonalcoholic drinks are popular with underage kids and adults alike. The Roxy has been owned for 11 years by Rose Empress XLIII The Lovely Suzanne; customers respect her expectations of proper behavior, friendly advice and percentage tipping. It had been sadly empty and derelict for eight years, before which it was **Roxy Heart's Memorial Diner**. Operated by Lenny Borer, it was the gay restaurant in the triangle, especially popular after hours.

Next door at 1125 is the space operated for nearly 40 years as **Three Sisters Tavern** (fondly known as "Six Tits" to some). Georgia's three daughters kept the place going after inheriting it from their mom. The tavern dated back to when Stark Street was a blue-collar neighborhood, with many single women and men renting rooms in the Kent, Majestic and Fairfield hotels. Never a mecca like **Boxxes**, **Slaughters** or **Silverado**, it did attract a small gay crowd. Boy go-go dancers did not stimulate business, and it was open irregularly in its final years. Since September, activity in the old space has been intense and inspired as workmen eviscerated the Sisters to make way for a totally redesigned **Scandals**. High ceilings, exposed brick walls, curved bars and dance floor and large windows will make the new **Scandals** a destination bar when it opens at the end of November. (See *Just Out's* Dec. 16 issue for a full report.)

Continue your gay hike west on Stark. At the corner, you'll notice the large one-time **Majestic Hotel**, dating from 1910. Known for years as the **Majestic Baths**, the building was redesigned inside as the **Continental Club Baths** in 1987, when it was purchased by Dick Lawson. He had owned the **Workout Baths** from 1967 to 1977 and the first **Continental Baths** under the **Cornelius Hotel** from 1977



The original corner of the Fish Grotto sported neon.



The bartenders of Somebody's Place, with Scandals owner Glen Dugger on the far left.

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