

'Gay Pioneer' dies at 75

Gay activist Barbara Gittings last weekend passed away in Delaware, United States.

by [Chris Pycroft - Equal Rights/News Editor](#) on 2007-02-20

She was dubbed the 'Gay Pioneer'; American gay activist Barbara Gittings passed away on Saturday. Her death was announced by Kay Tobin Lahusen, Gittings' partner of 46 years.



Gittings began her work as an activist almost 50 years ago, after establishing Daughters of Bilitis, the first lesbian organization in New York in 1958, before editing the group's magazine from 1963 to 1966; a time which according to Gittings had only 200 lesbians that were out of the closet in the United States.

1965 saw her participate in her first protest for civil rights in Washington, in which she regularly participated in throughout her years as an activist.

Last October, Gittings was selected as a leader for GLBT history month due to her lifetime dedication to activism.

Executive Director of the Equality Forum, Malcolm Lazin, said "Barbara Gittings is the mother of the GLBT civil rights movement. She is our Rosa Parks. Barbara helped organize the first gay and lesbian civil rights demonstrations in the face of a tsunami of homophobia. Her courage helped launch the GLBT civil rights movement."

Barbara Gittings was 75 years of age when she died.

Our thoughts go out to Barbara's family and friends, and we thank Barbara for her continual dedication to gay activism; it is thanks to women such as Barbara that so much progress has been made towards the push for equal rights.

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