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Busing, Bird, Blizzards and Everything In Between

What are the most newsworthy stories from the last 40 years?

WGBH, WCVB, Cambridge Community Television and Northeast Historic Film asks the public to help select local news stories for digital preservation.

BOSTON, Mass. (February 7, 2013) – Boston’s history is America’s history. Over the last 40 years, the Hub has been home to some of the nation’s biggest news stories. From busing to Bird to the Blizzard of ’78 and everything in between, Boston has lived the stories that continue to inspire authors, poets, playwrights and screenwriters. This month, the residents of Greater Boston can choose which of those stories we want see again.

WGBH Media Library and Archives has teamed up with Boston Public Library, Cambridge Community Television, Northeast Historic Film and WCVB News to create the Boston TV News Digital Library (bostonlocaltv.org). Throughout February, individuals can search the catalog for stories about their towns, their teams, and the topics they are most interested in to vote for the stories they want WGBH to preserve.

“Members of the local community are among the most important voices in our work to preserve Boston’s history. We are excited to see what events, stories and figures our neighbors want to preserve in our digital vault,” said Karen Cariani, director of WGBH’s Media Library and Archives.

The Library includes a treasure of diverse stories that influenced literature, film, television and music. It chronicles important, but often forgotten stories from town hall meetings and community forums unique to New England’s democratic tradition. The digital catalog also includes the heartbreaking and redeeming stories of Boston’s storied sports teams and the players for whom children across New England have been named. These stories, and countless others, are ready to be preserved for today’s Bostonians and tomorrow’s.

In all, WGBH and their partners will preserve 40 hours of content. As many as 800 stories that shaped modern Boston will be made available to anyone with an Internet connection through the Boston TV News Digital Library.

The Library’s collection includes more than 50,000 stories from 40 years of Boston history. It draws from four rich collections of material: Boston Public Library’s WHDH film collection (1960 to mid-1970s); Cambridge Community Television (1988 to 1999); Northeast Historic Film’s WCVB film collection (1970-1979); and WGBH’s archive of the Ten O’Clock News program that ran from 1974 to 1991.

In depth research has already started on some of the stories preserved in the catalog, and Harvard University’s Berkman Center for Internet and Society is working with the project partners to produce a legal rights guide for archivists, detailing issues surrounding access and reuse of the local news materials.
In addition to this project, the WGBH Media Library and Archives provide online access to unique and historically important content produced by WGBH. For more information, visit http://openvault.wgbh.org/.

About WGBH Educational Foundation
WGBH Boston is America’s preeminent public broadcaster and the largest producer of PBS content for TV and the Web, including Masterpiece, Antiques Roadshow, Frontline, Nova, American Experience, Arthur, Curious George, and more than a dozen other prime-time, lifestyle, and children’s series. WGBH’s television channels include WGBH 2, WGBH 44, and the digital channels World and Create. WGBH TV productions focusing on the region’s diverse community include Greater Boston, Basic Black, High School Quiz Show, and Neighborhood Kitchens. WGBH Radio serves listeners across New England with 89.7 WGBH, Boston Public Radio; Classical New England; and WCAI, the Cape and Islands NPR® Station. WGBH also is a major source of programs for public radio (among them, PRI’s The World®), a leader in educational multimedia (including PBS LearningMedia™, providing the nation’s educators with free, curriculum-based digital content to meet the needs of 21st-century learners), and a pioneer in technologies and services that make media accessible to the 36 million Americans who are deaf, hard of hearing, blind, or visually impaired. WGBH has been recognized with hundreds of honors: Emmys, Peabodys, duPont-Columbia Awards…even two Oscars. Find more information at wgbh.org.

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