

LIFEGUARD TOWER AT GINGER ROGERS BEACH

This section of Will Rogers State Beach has been a notable site of LGBTQ+ expression and organizing as early as the 1940s. During and after World War II, queer people migrated to Los Angeles to take advantage of new social opportunities and created a community in Santa Monica Canyon. As the LGBTQ+ community became more politically conscious in the later twentieth century, Ginger Rogers Beach became an important site for organizing around social issues, such as youth support, police discrimination, racism, and AIDS. In recent years, this area demarcated by lifeguard towers 17 and 18 has been known as “Ginger Rogers Beach” – a campy reference to the glamorous gay icon of Hollywood’s Golden Age. For Pride Month 2023, LA County Supervisor Lindsey P. Horvath and the ONE Archives Foundation formally commemorated the joyful LGBTQ+ history of this beach.

