

In conversation: Jan Pimblett and Veronica McKenzie on archives and collecting stories of LGBT+ people's lives

02/09/2019

Jan Pimblett, recently retired from the London Metropolitan Archives, and Veronica McKenzie, from the Haringey Vanguard BAME LGBT+ project, sat down for a kitchen table chat.

The pair discussed the importance of involving a diverse range of people in their work and how crucial it is to document ordinary people's lives. They also reflected on the progress made by the LGBT+ community over the past 50 years, as well as the challenges they still face.

It was an insightful and wide-ranging discussion which we present below in five video chapters. Or you can watch the full [30-minute conversation on YouTube](#).

On outreach, engagement and diversity

"Over the last 20 years the cohort of people coming in (to the archives) has altered and changed. We've got more younger people, more people from diverse communities coming through" - Jan

On saving history and partnership working

"I made an application, which failed, because I didn't have the right partnerships. So I approached Jan and said 'is there something we can do?'" - Veronica

On their highlights from the LGBT+ archives

"For a lot of people, seeing these materials reaffirms their existence, and opens up a wonderful rabbit hole that they can go down" - Veronica

On the Stonewall uprising and what's happened since

"Some people imagine that Stonewall happened; stuff changed. And that didn't happen. What you're looking at is 50 years of slow, slow, slow campaigning" - Jan

On the importance of conferences and networking events

"To have people there from Russia, Somalia (was so important)... these people are facing really tough times every day" - Jan

Got an idea for a project?

If you've been inspired by Jan and Veronica's insights and experiences, we'd love to hear your plans for an LGBT+ or other heritage archive project. Get in touch with [your nearest office](#), or explore our [funding section](#).

The London Metropolitan Archive's annual [History and Archives Conference](#) takes place on 7 December 2019. This year it is seeking new perspectives and dynamic responses in exploring BAME LGBT+ history.



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