Other Stories to share the history of the Derbyshire



Project team and HLF committee view the exhibition

Today, Derbyshire LGBT+ has announced its exciting new project, Other Stories, to explore the history of the LGBT community in Derbyshire, coinciding with 50 years since the 1967 Sexual Offences Act.

The 1967 Sexual Offences Act partially decriminalised homosexual acts between men over 21 and was a milestone in the battle for gay rights, paving the way for many further changes in the law and in public attitudes over the years since.

Thanks to National Lottery players, Derbyshire LGBT+ will run two years of activities and events across Derbyshire and beyond. The project will bring to light a host of stories, ranging from Derbyshire resident and Victorian gay-rights pioneer Edward Carpenter, to stories of runaway teenagers who escaped life in Peak District villages more than 100 years ago by “masquerading as a boy”.

To bring more of these stories to light the project will train at least 20 volunteers in archive and oral history research and will produce exhibitions, events and displays to attract at least 500 people to take part.

[quote=Greg Pickup, project lead]"This funding shows that our history is as important as anyone’s and it really will put our heritage on the map."[/quote]

Commenting on the award, Greg Pickup, project lead] said: “We were overjoyed to hear the news that our project had received the support of HLF. Our community has a wealth of amazing stories to tell that have been hidden for far too long. Our community’s heritage is in newspaper reports, in archives and in people’s attics but it is also people’s memories. One of the most exciting things about this funding is that it will allow us to record memories from members of our community who remember what it was like to be criminalised simply for being gay. It will also allow us to record stories from other parts of our community, such as trans people, for whom legal changes still have a long way to go. The project could not have happened without this funding and we are so grateful; it shows that our history is as important as anyone’s and it really will put our heritage on the map”.

Jonathan Platt, Head of HLF East Midlands, said: “HLF is proud to support the UK’s heritage in all of its diversity. The funding will allow this local charity to tell stories that are not just important for the LGBT community but for all of us. They tell us about how far we have all come in terms of equal rights and attitudes on an important anniversary. We look forward to hearing some of the stories that the project uncovers and are delighted that National Lottery player’s money is able to make this project happen.”

The project is currently seeking volunteers to get involved. Anyone interested in finding our more about this and about the project can visit the project’s blog.