

# **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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