

LGBTQ Project and premiere

An update on one of the projects supported by the Friends

Over the last seven years The National Archives Education and Outreach Department have run an annual young peoples' project. Each year a different theme is picked and in 2022 the diverse historical theme of LGBTQ history was focused upon. This tied in with the 50th anniversary of the first Pride March in London in 1972, and followed just after the Pride month of June.

Participants were selected following a callout to schools and colleges asking for young people to apply to attend. The project included a one week workshop which took place onsite at Kew in the July/August 2022 summer holidays. Each applicant was first asked to produce 150 words on why they would like to take part in the project before a final fifteen students were chosen. The young people's attendance on this project goes on to become part of their education. As well as promoting The National Archives it also shows how creative you can be with the records using the many fascinating stories and themes contained within the vast collections.

Working with the Film Maker Nigel Kellaway, the students were asked to engage with the documents through filmmaking. Consultation was also given by the TNA Principal Records Specialist Vicky Iglkowski-Broad as she has an extensive knowledge of the records which was essential to the success of the project.

The young people had to consider such things as how people described their gender identity, where people would meet to socialise, communication, and defiance and resistance in the face of criminalisation. The LGBTQ records at the Archives tend to be more male dominated due to the nature of the law pre-1967. Female lesbian relationships were never criminalised in the same way that homosexuality was with men, therefore there was a need to consider how people communicated, how their



Line-up in photograph left to right:- Steven Gould (FTNA Trustee), Hannah Carter (TNA Onsite Education Manager), Emily Morris (TNA Family and Young People's Programme Officer), Rachel Hillman (TNA Education Department Deputy), Brian Smith (FTNA Trustee), Clare Horrie (TNA Education Website Manager)

actions were monitored by the state, and what changed after the 1967 Sexual Offences Act.

Not all aspects of the project subject were overly serious though. The students were also allowed to reflect on progress and positivity with more 'light hearted' records such as Freddie Mercury's naturalisation certificate and Elton John's deed poll to change his name.

On Wednesday 15 February the young people's final work was premiered at an evening showcase event held in the Event Space at TNA. Two of the FTNA Trustees Brian Smith and Steven Gould, accepted an invitation to attend and meet some of the students, and to watch the finished film. Brian expressed his thanks to The National Archives members of staff and in particular for the work undertaken by the students themselves.

The Friends are proud to

have been able to provide essential and much needed funding towards this project. It was an opportunity for the charity to be involved with and supportive of the TNA, with their creative and topical programmes, and importantly in their work of opening up the nations documents to the younger audience.

The link to see the finished films is:
<https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/education/students/archive-experiences/2022-lgbtq-history-in-the-archives/>



Film making in progress