



alga NEWSLETTER

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Newsletter No 24, April 2008
ISSN 1037-3756

Archives 30 update

2008 is well under way, and as autumn sets in, we're gearing up for an onslaught of activities, volunteer recruitment and fundraising to help achieve the goals we've set for our 30th birthday. A number of large donations have already been received, including an anonymous donation of \$10,000, which we're extraordinarily grateful for. We've begun liaising with fundraising organisations and have attracted some exciting new volunteers. Membership is also up on last year putting us in a great position to meet our Archives30 goals. We're also continuing to talk with the State Library about options there. Regardless, the same issues remain – we need space for our growing collection, space to work on the collection, resources to engage with the changing world of technologies – digitisation and so on. So we're coming back to our roots and base of support, we're asking you, our members, to get promoting. Talk to your friends about the Archives, arrange a talk with a community group, pass the hat at the pub. From little things, big things grow... and all that jazz. We're only 30 once and 2008 is about setting up the Archives so we're ready for the next 30 years.

Homo Histories 8

The Archives' highly successful Australian Homosexual Histories Conference Series has generated some pioneering and innovative work on the histories of GLBTIQ identity and culture in Australia. The series brings together members of the GLBTIQ community, as well as professional scholars, researchers and students within the broad field of sexuality and gender studies.

The convenors of the eighth Homosexual Histories Conference are now extending a call for abstracts. We are especially interested papers with an historical perspective, although, sociological, discursive, legal and cultural approaches are also welcome. We welcome papers from academics, independent scholars and community-based historians and researchers.

Abstracts for conference papers should be approximately 100 words. If accepted, presentations must adhere to a strict twenty minutes time-length.

Abstracts, along with questions or queries should be addressed to the convenors.

Graham Willett, email: gwillett@unimelb.edu.au or
Yorick Smaal, email: yorick_smaal@hotmail.com

Coming events

Open days

Further open days for 2008 are scheduled for July and September this year. Stay tuned for more details.

Midwinter lecture series

After the success of his lecture last year, Graham Willett is coordinating a series of winter lectures on queer history. The first one is due to kick-off on June 26 at the University of Melbourne Graduate Centre. More details to come.

Homo Histories 8

Sat-Sun, 12-13 July at Melbourne University. Abstract deadline is 15 May 2008.

Birthday dinner

Our 30th Birthday Bash is coming up very quickly. To coincide with the birthdate of the archives, we're planning a big party. Pop it into your diaries now. We'll update you with details as they come.

Friday 22nd August

Fitzroy Town Hall

Food, drinks, dancing, entertainment and special guests!

Midsumma and Chill-Out roundup

We've certainly been busy over the past few months. Our stall at the Midsumma Carnival was a hit with the rain-soaked punters. We made lots of new contacts, hocked a bunch of books, and got some nice donations to boot. Then it was off to Carlton to visit the physical spaces of our queer past. As popular as ever, we had to schedule a second History walk due to popular demand. Pride March saw us combine forces with the Rainbow Network to take our incredible collection of banners and placards to the streets of St Kilda. Rounding off a hectic Midsumma schedule was the Queer History Quiz Spectacular. The event sold out and hopefully we all learnt a little bit more. It was great to see a creative and interactive way of presenting our history, with a little bit of friendly competition thrown in for good measure. Our summer festival carryings-on ended at the Chill-Out festival in Daylesford over the Labour Day weekend. It was a great chance to meet and network with people that we wouldn't normally have contact with.



The archives team in action at Midsumma Carnival

Mannie De Saxe
Peter Di Sciascio
Beatrice Faust
Keith Stodden
Richard Stone

Jeff Slingsby
John Storey
Alison Thorne
Graham Willett
Dale Withers

Just a reminder that we have not forgotten those who agreed to have their donations of \$50 or more allocated to the binding of particular periodicals or book purchases. This year's binding and book purchases will be finalised in the coming few months, acknowledgement slips pasted into bound volumes or books, and replicas of the slips sent to donors. The response to the specific purpose donation plan has again been extremely generous – thanks to all.

HELP!

In recent times the Archives has been offered an increasing amount of material on video and film. We would love to be able to preserve it all but transferring it to a digital format which will survive into the future is costly and time-consuming. If anybody out there has, or knows someone who has digitisation equipment, we'd really like to hear from you.

QUEER HISTORY-MAKING – WITH A LITTLE HELP FROM OUR FRIENDS

I recently took a batch of periodicals to Ian Marks who binds ALGA's periodicals, and he told me a story I found really interesting. Ian is a queer-friendly straight man, well known in the music publishing scene as a music historian and has published his own music magazines for years.

Ian told me about an Adelaide rock band from the 1960s called In-Sect. In-Sect was a five member group and the keyboard player was openly gay and apparently he really camped it up on stage. The band attracted a small but loyal camp following in Adelaide pubs. Unfortunately four members of the band are now dead (including the gay guy), but the remaining member is the lead singer. Ian Marks was told this story by this guy, and Ian suggested that he should talk to someone on tape and the guy agreed. And that's where we come in. Ian says this guy has a good memory and would have lots of interesting stories to tell – would we like to do it?

Pre-Gay Lib queer history is always exciting to find – so little documented at the time - and plans are afoot to do this interview in the not-too-distant future. We're hopeful that by next newsletter we can report that the interview is in the can.

Graham Carbery

Thesis Prize

For several years, the Archives has given out an annual prize to the best university honours thesis that engages with queer themes. We've had a bit of a backlog, so we decided to hit three years in one. Winners receive a cheque for \$250 and the adulation of queer history geeks everywhere. A big thankyou to all the students who made submissions. After considering the high quality of submissions, congratulations go to our winners:

2005 - Kate Davison, *'Pinks Under the Bed? Homosexuality, Communism and Nationalist Sentiment in Cold War Australia'*

2006 – Sue Kentlyn, *'Who's the Man and Who's the Woman?: Gender and Domestic Labour in Same Sex Households'*

2007 – Simon Matthews, *'The adventures of Captain Moonlight and his companions; a performed construction of an alternate bushranging masculinity' (includes DVD performance of script)*

Thanks to Donors for '08

11th National Conference of Lesbians and Homosexual Men (Sydney 1986)	Robert Gibbs
Anon (x5)	Ian Gould
Kevin A	HIBA Pty Ltd
KWA	Dr David Hilliard
Dr Barbara Baird	Leigh Keen
Colin Baskerville	KL
Laurie Bebbington	KO'L
Colin Billing	Out Video
Tallace B	Pippa
Terese B	Phyllis Papps
David Bradford and Michael Williams	Mark P
Peter Collingwood	Ken Philpott
David Conolly	Ian Purcell
Christopher Cutler	K Rathbone
Ken Davis	Dr Mac Ronan

Volunteer Profile

Who: Esther

When did you start volunteering?

I think I started volunteering around 8 years ago. I'd just returned from a visit to New York where I'd seen the Lesbian Herstory Archives so I wanted to find out what we had in Melbourne.

What work do you do for the Archives?

Well I'm now on the Committee so I do all sorts of stuff from applying for grants, to staffing the stall at Midsumma and Chill Out and everything in between.

My main archival project has been to try and get the photo collection properly housed and preserved. It's basically putting the photos in acid-free albums and keeping a simple database of any information we have about them. It's satisfying to see the progress from when I first came in and the photos were all kept in boxes. Now we have a shelf full of binders which are easy to access and keep the photos from deteriorating.

Favourite photos?

There are many, but recently the Tommy McDermott collection is one I like to show visitors. Seeing the gay guys dressed up in drag in the 50s, and in public is quite amazing. There are even photos of Tommy in drag with his mum! I don't think I would have believed that this scene existed in conservative Melbourne if I hadn't seen it in these albums and having the stories to accompany the photos really brings it to life.

What's the best bit about volunteering?

I love that I get to work with people I wouldn't normally meet - older folk and lots of nerdy history types. Also I'm always really inspired by the histories I come across - radical things people have organised in the past, or just bits of people's lives from the days when being gay or lesbian was like living a secret life. I also really love sharing what we have with people - most people have no idea what a queer life was like before the 70s (or 90s for the younger ones) and they're always really excited to see the photos and posters and scrapbooks.



Copyright: C Moore Hardy, from her collection donated last year.

Interested in volunteering?

We are always looking for new volunteers and with a range of tasks that need doing we can find a project that suits you. We have volunteers who work from home, volunteers who come in regularly and many who just help out with the occasional event. You don't need any special experience, we'll match a task to your skills and area of interest. To find out more contact our Volunteers Co-ordinator, Daniel via email - dr.daniel.marshall@gmail.com or phone 0418897504



Esther doing it for the team at Midsumma

