



OutStories Bristol - Recording the lives of
lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans
people in Bristol.

Annual Report 2014

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OutStories Bristol aims to

- a) Capture the stories of LGBT individuals, living or associated with Bristol and its surrounds
- b) Capture the stories in written, audio, video or other media
- c) Gather publications and artefacts of the various campaign, commercial, social and support LGBT groups, meeting places and venues, that have come and gone over the years, through existing sources and research
- d) Manage the information gathered
- e) Seek to archive the material in relevant public institutions
- f) Seek to have material displayed by relevant public institutions
- g) Promote the use of the material telling the LGBT story in any form

[OSB Constitution, Section 3]

Membership of the Association

“Membership is open to individuals sixteen years of age and over or organisations that are approved by the trustees. Membership is not transferable to anyone else. The trustees must keep a register of names and addresses of the members.”

[OSB Constitution, Section 8]

Membership at 30th September 2014 was

51	Registered members (45 in 2013)
256	People on the e-mailing list (234)
252	Members of the facebook group (200)
216	Followers on Twitter (n/a)

Trustee and officer roles

“The association and its property shall be managed and administered by a committee comprising the officers and other members elected in accordance with this constitution. The officers and other members of the committee shall be the trustees of the association and in this constitution are together called 'the trustees'. The association shall have the following officers: two co-chairs of different gender; secretary; treasurer; web administrator. A trustee must be an individual member of the association. No one may be appointed a trustee if he or she would be disqualified from acting under the provisions of clause 20. The number of trustees shall be not less than five but – unless otherwise determined by a resolution of the charity in general meeting – shall not be subject to any maximum. A trustee may not appoint anyone to act on his or her behalf at meetings of the trustees.”

[Constitution, Section 17]

Trustees in the period since 16th November 2013 were:

	<i>First elected or co-opted</i>	
Andy Foyle	10/10/11	Co-chair 10/10/11
Andy Hole	09/10/12	Osbox Admin 20/08/13
Charlie Beaton	10/10/11	Secretary 10/10/11
Cheryl Morgan	10/10/11	Co-chair
Chris Leigh	10/10/11	Web Admin 10/10/11; Osbox Admin 20/08/13
Donald Branch	18/06/12	Treasurer 18/06/12
Kim Renfrew	30/08/12	
Gemma Tiley	Supporter	
Robert Howes	Supporter	

A volunteer who participates in the business of the trustees but does not wish to become a trustee is styled, “supporter”. The supporter has no voting rights and takes no responsibility for the affairs of OutStories Bristol.

Activities in the Period November 2013 to October 2014

1. Trustees

Trustees met on 26th November, 21st January, 18th March, 20th May, 22nd July and 16th September 2014.

2. Collections Policy

One of the main remits of OutStories Bristol is to collect documentary material for preservation in the Bristol Record Office for future researchers and students.

The major achievement in 2014 was the deposit by Gay West of a nearly complete collection of newsletters and minutes of the group's business since its inception. For eighty-two years from the date of creation of each document, access to the papers will be restricted requiring consent by Gay West. This is to protect the people named in the minutes of the meetings and other documents.

3. Oral History Team

The Oral History Team reconvened in January with a view to running a rolling programme of interviews to add to the collection held by M Shed. Unfortunately, the process did not gain momentum, probably because it lacked a clear purpose, and no interviews were conducted. A fresh approach focussing on the production of an LGBT history map of Bristol is under preparation, including securing funding for the printing. Oral history interviews will be used to illustrate the map. Grateful thanks are due to the five remaining volunteers – Andy Foyle, Charlie Beaton, Janet Fitzgerald, Kim Renfrew and Rosie Buckland – and to Chris Webb who has recently left Bristol.

4. Osbox

Osbox is OutStories' remote 'cloud' storage for digital files, set up to enhance access and security. Grateful thanks are due to Chris Leigh and Andy Hole for their perseverance with the project and patience with trustees who are slow to adopt the new storage system. Osbox is now fully operational holding over 100GB of data – audio recordings, digital photos, scanned documents and our administrative records.

5. Website and social media

Our website "outstoriesbristol.org.uk" is the principal point of contact to the group. It details our aims, activities, events and news, and also provides brief articles on significant LGBT people and places associated with Bristol and the surrounding area. Website 'hits' reflect group activity with up to 800 in a typical month.

The website is maintained by Chris Leigh (editor and web administrator). It is hoped that the 'place' project (see below) will provide new content about Bristol's rich LGBT history.

Our Facebook page "www.facebook.com/outStoriesbristol" provides a more informal forum for news and discussion and currently has over 250 members. Many thanks to our regular contributors and to Andy Foyle, editor and most prolific post writer

Thanks also to Kim Renfrew who looks after our Twitter presence
www.twitter.com/OutStoriesBris.

6. Events

OSB-organised events at LGBT History Month February 2014

- “From the Closet to the Silver Screen” – talk by author Jill Gardener at M Shed about the making of the film Killing of Sister George, premiered on stage at Bristol Old Vic fifty years ago this year, and the Gateways Club which featured in the film to the Silver Screen”
- “To the bat bed, Robin” – Cheryl Morgan on LGBT super heroes
- “What’s the Time, Mr Wolfenden?” – re-enactment of a 1960’s gay bar
- Polari Mission – talk on the history of the secret gay language, best known from BBC Radio’s “Round the Horne” characters Julian and Sandy at “Roll for the Soul” – event postponed to May due to flooding in February
- Mystery History Tour of LGBT associated sites in Central Bristol by Andy Foyle
- Walking tour by Robert Howes, “LGBT associated sites in central Bath”

With special thanks to Kim Renfrew, who led arrangements for the events, and Mike Burgess, LGBT Bristol for arranging the history month publicity.

Pride Bristol, 12th July 2014

OutStories Bristol had a stall in the community tent at Pride Bristol on Castle Park displaying one panel of Revealing Stories, where a large number of questions were answered and new contacts made. Thanks to the gallant group of volunteers who made it possible.

Celebrating Age Festival, 27th September 2014

As in the previous three years, OutStories Bristol had a stall at the Celebrating Age Festival, which was held M Shed this year. The stall was unstaffed, comprising the introductory panel the Revealing Stories, leaflets inviting contributions to oral history and the flyer for the Symonds birthday event on 5th October. Although there was no interaction with visitors, as experience in previous years suggested that it would not be good use of volunteer time, trustees felt it was a positive venue to publicise our activities. No other LGBT organisation was present at the event.

Happy 174th Birthday, John Addington Symonds! 5th October 2014

At the time of writing, OutStories Bristol is collaborating with the University of Bristol’s Institute of Greece, Rome and the Classical Tradition to celebrate the legacy of one of Victorian Britain’s greatest scholar-writers, John Addington Symonds, on the anniversary of his birth in 1840. The University asked us to act as co-sponsor for this event, which we hope marks the start of an ongoing relationship. Thanks are due to Andy Foyle, Gemma Tiley and Shane Butler for their contributions.

7. Revealing Stories

OutStories Bristol’s major outward activity in 2012-13 was the Revealing Stories exhibition, covering local LGBT history from roughly the 1930s to the present. It was first on display at M Shed for six weeks from 2nd February 2013. A grant of £20,300 was awarded by the Heritage Lottery Fund. As we delivered under budget, the HLF generously allowed us to redirect the underspend of £2,470 to fund some marketing material for the group and the costs of events marking LGBT History Month 2014. The project was formally completed in September 2014. Since touring the main libraries in Bath, Yate and Weston-super-Mare, Revealing Stories exhibition has been to Southmead Hospital, University of the West of England Li-

brary and Bristol Record Office. The touring exhibition remains ours for the future and is scheduled to go to the University of Bristol and the Bristol Royal Infirmary.

8. Heritage Lottery Fund

The Heritage Lottery Fund was supportive from the first of the concept of an LGBT History exhibition in Bristol. Similar projects were funded previously in Plymouth and Cardiff. Pre-application discussions were guided and pre-approval gained for the concepts and rough shape of the formal bid for Revealing Stories, which took nine months to produce. The bid was successful at the first pass. Progress reports as required have kept the HLF informed throughout the project.

The HLF was able to showcase our project via two representatives present during Maria Miller's visit in February 2013 as an example of LGBT inclusivity and community development supported by HLF funds. The HLF Regional Director expressed his support and appreciation for the work that had been done. It is particularly unusual for such a community project to be delivered under budget, for which we would like to recognise the hard work and unpaid hours by so many volunteers that have made it possible.

The HLF is now encouraging us to seek further funding on the understanding that a future project should be designed to build on the achievements made so far. Any such bid would be made easier by our existing experience and the relationship which now exists between us and the HLF.

9. The "Place" Project

The success of 'Revealing Stories' resulted in encouragement from the Heritage Lottery Fund to bid for further funding for a new long-term project. Centred on the concept of 'place', the project will seek to draw teams of people together to research and record histories of the diverse individuals and communities that make up Bristol's LGBT life, both historic and present.

Places of significance might include where people meet (now or in the past), the shifting map of the LGBT scene, sites of memory or life events significant to one individual or small groups, and places relevant to public and political oppression, acceptance, dissent and diversity. We aim to fill the known gaps in the Revealing Stories project, for example: over-70s, bisexual, black/ethnic and religious minority communities. The project will include providing permanent storage of digital material (text, images, audio, video, etc) and making it publically available on the internet in digital map format. At the time of writing we are discussing possible collaboration on website projects with Bristol City Council and the University of Bristol.

10. Charitable Status

The 2013 annual general meeting adopted a proposal from the trustees to replace the current constitution with one acceptable to the Charity Commission so that OutStories Bristol may become a Charitable Incorporated Organisation. At the time of writing we are awaiting a decision by the Charity Commission. The constitutional change will take effect from the date of acceptance by the Charity Commission, and current trustees would become the first trustees under the new constitution.

11. Thank you

And, for their invaluable contribution that made it all happen, thank you to members, trustees and supporters.