

Contact us!

We would like to hear about your collection and/or records, even if you are not thinking about donating it to an archive.



Hall-Carpenter Archives
the national archives of
LGBT activism

Library
London School of
Economics and Political
Science
10 Portugal Street
London WC2A 2HD
020 7955 7223
document@lse.ac.uk

LSE

Library

British Library of Political
and Economic Science



**Lesbian and Gay
Newsmedia Archive**
the LGBT press cuttings
collection

Middlesex University
Cat Hill
Barnet
Herts EN4 8HT
020 8411 4933
r.e.thompson@mdx.ac.uk



LGBT history - Do-It-Yourself!

How to care for and preserve your own contribution to our past...

Do you have a personal collection of LGBT related material – correspondence, journals, photos, flyers, articles or other papers?

Are you involved in an LGBT organisation and would like to know more about preservation of your records?



Your personal collection or organisation's records may be of important historical and archival value.

This is a very brief guide to caring for this kind of material and ensuring its preservation for future generations.

- Keep your records in a secure, clean, dry, stable environment and away from natural or artificial light. Extremes of temperature and humidity are especially damaging to all materials and light accelerates the deterioration process.
- Store your records in acid-free folders and boxes to help slow down the processes of deterioration.
- Keep paper items unfolded and remove things that may rust like staples or paper-clips.
- Keep your records off the floor and check that your roof is sound and that there is no risk of damage from leaky overhead pipes!
- Try to keep your records in their original order. This is an important rule of archiving, because original order tells us a lot about the way an individual or organisation worked.
- Of course, not all documents have archival value. That docket for claiming travel expenses will have little historical importance! Think about whether the document provides valuable information about the activities and/or function of a person or organisation.
- Remember – not all archival documents are paper-based. Archives also comprise emails, databases and other information in digital form. Try to back up your emails and other digital records regularly on CDs or DVDs and label them clearly with the creator and dates. Audio, video and film recordings may also have archival value.
- When backing up emails, save them in a non-proprietary format – eg “.txt” – rather than your email client's default format. This will ensure they stand a greater chance of being accessible in 50 or 100 years time.
- Save images as high quality JPEGs, TIFFs or PDFs, and remember to keep a record of what they depict and when they were made. You could do this in a document or spreadsheet and store it on the same disk as the image files.
- You may want to think about donating your collection to a local record office or an archive which specialises in holding LGBT related material. This kind of repository will ensure the long-term preservation of your collection and may also enable access by researchers, if you choose. Find the location of your local record office from your local authority or public library.