



Summer Greetings from our Interim Director, Meral Agish



In my four years with Queens Memory, I've been part of a team that has adapted to new needs and new ways of connecting, recording, and listening to each other's stories. Now, as Interim Director, I'm excited to build on the great work that Natalie Milbrodt led and look forward to what's to come.

As we head into summer, we're working on the next phase of the Queens Name Explorer and will announce other projects in the coming months. In September, we'll relaunch our monthly workshop series of oral history workshops and volunteer orientations, and in October, we'll co-host Home Movie Day 2024 in Queens. Stay tuned for more details about our fall events!

I welcome your suggestions about ways to bring Queens Memory to your communities and neighborhoods. Please get in touch by sending a message to queensmemory@queenslibrary.org.



Queer at Queens College: An Oral History Project



Nestled in the heart of the world's most ethnically and linguistically diverse urban area, Queens College (QC) has been for decades the site of a thriving community of out lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer peoples and their allied friends. The first evidence of students organizing for sexual freedom and lesbian and gay rights dates back to the early 1970s, and coalitions like the Gender, Love, and Sexuality Alliance (GLASA) and the Center for Ethnic, Racial, and Religious Understanding (CERRU) have a rich history building visibility and community for LGBTQ people in the borough of Queens. Alumni of Queens College have gone on to become public advocates, activists, lawyers, and community organizers across the country, and particularly in the borough of Queens.

This oral history project begins the work of documenting how queer people from a broad range of class and racial backgrounds have found one another again and again throughout OC's history, how they lived and organized while in attendance, and how their experiences at QC shaped the trajectory of their lives. As Lesbian Herstory Archives co-founder and former QC professor Joan Nestle wrote, "We choose the history that we say is ours and by so doing, we write the character of our people in time."

By collecting the stories of LGBTQ and allied students, staff, and alumni, this project aims to illuminate what it has meant, will mean in the future, and means now in this present moment to be queer at Queens College.

Listen to their interviews here.

"Enduring Cultures in a Changing City" is on YouTube



On May 21, 2024, the Municipal Art Society of New York held a discussion on Enduring Culture. The initiative is a multi-year effort to develop an expanded and multivocal historic preservation vision for the city. With New York City in a constant state of change, how can the field of preservation be expanded to be a more multivocal, equitable, accessible, and inclusive framework for supporting diverse layers of history and culture in our city?

Queens Memory Curator, J. Faye Yuan, presented alongside four practitioners from the Black Gotham Experience, I Am Caribbeing, Hip Hop Museum, and Empire State Development, who are creatively building ways to support historical and cultural heritage in the ever-shifting landscape of our city. Catch their presentation on YouTube in case you missed it!

Graphic capture via Zara Fina Stassi, Good for the Bees



Happenings around Queens

June 25 - What Will the Neighbors Say? is thrilled to announce their annual benefit event, "Queering the Archives," at Culture Lab LIC. The event will feature a reading of a verbatim play created with students of CUNY Queens College in the autumn of 2023, when the Neighbors paired with the Gender, Love and Sexuality Alliance (GLASA). Alongside students, faculty and archivists, the Neighbors turned the Alliance's archive of journals into a verbatim documentary theater piece originally presented on campus in November. Tickets are \$20 and include access to an open wine bar at the reception. This benefit will raise money for the CUNY Queens College Special Collections and Archives and the Queens Memory Project. (7pm EST)

July 2 - On first Tuesdays through September, Community Archiving Happy Hour takes place on Zoom. Welcome to a social and resource sharing space organized by a few folk who work on inclusive archiving projects. This get-together is for people who work on behalf of their own communities, or in partnership as community allies. So whether you're "community-based," "community-driven," or just "community-curious," we hope you'll show up to share who you are, what you're working on, and what you're trying to figure out right now. Co-hosted by City University of New York and UMass Boston. (4 - 5pm EST)

Through October 21 - A creative place-keeping project debuts in the Homeroom of MOMA PS1 by Little Manila Queens Bayanihan Arts (LMQBA, est. 2020), a grassroots collective of artists and cultural workers who celebrate the diasporic Filipino communities in Woodside, Queens, and throughout New York. Little Manila Queens: Mabuhay! examines the social impact of migration policies that have deployed Filipino workers outside the Philippines, with a focus on the Woodside Little Manila neighborhood.

