



This LGBT History Month, 'Unlocking Our Sound Heritage' presents a room of curated archive audio and immersive projections.

Manchester's LGBTQ+ community took to both the streets and the dancefloor in response to the AIDS crisis and the introduction of Section 28.

The event explores these vital spaces of defiance by pairing key BBC Radio Manchester news stories with Manchester's favourite disco tracks.

CN: HOMOPHOBIA, POLICE HARRASSMENT,
80'S PRESS COVERAGE OF AIDS & HIV,
SECTION 28, CHILD CUSTODY, SUICIDE.

CURATORS' NOTE:

These audio recordings are a small sample of BBC Radio Manchester's collection held at Central Library. In this collection approx. 30 news stories relate to LGBT lives in the Greater Manchester region between 1980-88.

As with plenty of other historical documents of the time - male, white, cis voices dominate. The majority of the playlist features LGBT interviewees, as important local figures who paved the way to fight back against discrimination. Chief Constable James Anderton's voice features, as many will have heard of his notorious comments against gay people 'swirling in a human cesspit' but few may have heard directly from the source. His unjustifiable opinions are included to provide context to the anti-gay forces of authority that LGBTQ+ people faced.

I am aware of the irony in hosting this event in a library which under the shadow of Section 28 (enactment of bill Clause 28) legislation would have been forced to comply with the law to 'not intentionally promote homosexuality.' I lived under this damaging shadow myself for the entirety of my school career. On 22/02/88 the largest UK demonstration was held here in Manchester to attempt to stop Clause 28, showing the strength of feeling against hostile opposing forces. This spirit of defiance when facing institutional prejudice lives on.

By Siân Williams

MUSIC PLAYLIST

1. Pointers Sisters - Automatic
2. Alexander O'Neil - Criticize
3. Adeva - Respect
4. Marcel King - Reach For Love
5. Imagination - Just an Illusion
6. 52nd Street - Cool As Ice
(Restructured by John "Jellybean" Benitez)
7. Prince - I Wanna Be Your Lover
8. Patrice Rushen - Haven't You Heard
9. Evelyn "Champagne" King - Love Come Down
10. Jocelyn Brown - Somebody Else's Guy
11. The Communards - Why?

These songs have been chosen to act as a contrast to the recordings, offering solidarity and positivity through music between 1979 - 1989. With a focus on queer disco and house anthems, they remain firm favourites in LGBTQ+ friendly Mancunian clubs today.

Curated by Kirsty Jukes

ARCHIVE PLAYLIST

1. (RMAN-9634) 16/05/84

Paul Fairweather from Manchester's Gay Information Centre calls for Manchester Police to stop the practice of using plainclothes police as 'agent provocateurs.'

2. (RMAN-1268) 16/03/86

Chief Constable for Greater Manchester Police, James Anderton makes his infamous speech referring to 'homosexuals, drug users and prostitutes' as 'swirling around in a human cesspit of their own making.' The next day after these remarks BBC Radio Manchester's Peter Harrison interviewed him.

3. (RMAN-17169) 19/01/87

Rosemary Harthill interviewed Anderton at the Police HQ in Stretford for the Radio 4 Sunday Show and closely scrutinises his belief that it was God telling him to say these words.

4. (RMAN-6078) 25/11/80

John Shiers from the Manchester Labour Campaign for Gay Rights talks to Diana Goodman about the huge increase in arrests for gross indecency in the Stockport area.

5. (RMAN-433) 06/05/81

John Shiers (as previous) is interviewed this time by Tony Dolan. Trafford Councillor S. G. Brownhill is poised to become Mayor and has been forced to apologise for saying that 'homosexuals should be shot in the head.' Shiers explains why this apology is not enough.



THE THOMPSON'S ARMS 1975

6. (RMAN -9331) 15/03/84

Dr. Mukti Bhattacharyya publicises a meeting to be held that evening at The Thompson's Arms about the threat of a new disease called AIDS. (Interviewer unknown).

7. (RMAN-16117) 25/09/86

Manchester City Council issued a 32-page policy to challenge homophobic and racist assumptions about the AIDS virus as they feel that the government is not doing enough. Penny Bould talked to John Clegg (Vice Chair of the Equal Opportunities Committee) following the enforced detention of a patient at Monsall Hospital.

8. (RMAN-14994) 14/03/85

Tony Whitehead, Chairman of the Terrence Higgins Trust talks to Joe Palet about breaking down AIDS myths and gives some stark examples of their damaging effects.

9. (RMAN-13929) 19/09/85

Mike Spencer interviews three gay men at the Gay Centre on Bloom Street about their hope for changes in the general public's response. In this clip we hear from two of the men named Ian & Terry (surnames unknown).

10. (RMAN-8434) 12/01/84

Caroline (surname unknown) is interviewed as the author of a leaflet that aims to support women who are having the custody of their children removed because of court attitudes towards their sexuality.

11. (RMAN-5874) 06/07/82

Two spokespeople from the Gay Information centre, Andy Sharpe & Paul Fairweather are interviewed at the BBC Radio Manchester Studio after the City Council banned the Council for Voluntary Service from having a marquee at the Manchester Show.

12. (RMAN -17536) 20/02/88

David Allison follows the largest protest ever in Manchester against Clause 28. This was a bill which sadly became enacted as Section 28 of the Local Government Act. The bill sought to prevent council run schools, libraries, theatres etc. from any representation of homosexuality. Interviewees include Peter Tatchell, Jimmy Somerville, Tom Robinson and the march organiser Chris Payne.



Rembrandt Hotel 1970

THE UOSH PROJECT:

Thousands of cassettes, open reels, CDs and MiniDiscs are sitting in archives, museums, libraries and in people's homes all over the UK. All kinds of unique live music, radio and conversation are recorded on these tapes and discs. We've already lost many of the people captured on them. And the British Library estimates that we have fifteen years to preserve the sounds themselves.

Unique sounds held on physical formats risk being lost as the carriers degrade over time and the equipment to play them is no longer produced. If we don't transfer the tapes from analogue to digital now we may never get the chance again.

The national project '**Unlocking Our Sound Heritage**' is supported by The National Lottery Heritage Fund and aims to save thousands of sounds which are at risk of being lost forever.

Archives+ is the hub partner for the North West region, which covers Cheshire, Cumbria, Greater Manchester, Lancashire and Merseyside. We'll be digitising 15,000 recordings on 5,000 cassettes, reels and optical discs held all over the region here at Manchester Central Library.

Unlocking Our Sound Heritage is supported by The National Lottery Heritage Fund.

<https://NorthWestSoundHeritage.org/>

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