

Rainbow Jews

Celebrating Jewish LGBT History and Heritage in the UK

“ There is a story which
should not be lost. ”

– Reni, 90 years old

In the course of a single lifetime, LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender) Jewish identity has been transformed, from something not even named to something celebrated.

Fifty years ago, being Jewish and LGBT meant that you were invisible and unwanted. Over time, wider social changes as well as shifts in the thinking of progressive Jewish communities have enabled people to embrace their Jewish LGBT identity.

In this exhibition, our interviewees tell us how it feels in their own words. Their stories of love and loss, struggles and victories, form the core of this ground breaking Rainbow Jews oral history archive. Among them are the pioneers: the first rabbis to come out and speak on behalf of the Jewish LGBT community; the men, women and transgender Jews who struggled against prejudice and rejection; and the founders of the first LGBT-friendly synagogue.

Yet there are also many whose voices we cannot hear today: those LGBT Jews who never lived to see a world in which their diverse identities are accepted and embraced. This exhibition is also dedicated to them.



liberal judaism

rainbow jews

Rainbow Jews is a pioneering oral history project recording and showcasing the lives of Jewish LGBT people in the UK, from the 1950s to today.

Rainbow Jews is supported by the National Lottery through the Heritage Lottery Fund, and hosted by Liberal Judaism.

“I hope that our stories encourage people in Britain to celebrate being Jewish and LGBT – both, as well as each.”

– Karen Newman
and Susan Crane