

LGBT History Project: Exhibiting Newcastle's 'hidden' histories in an online format

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1. Aims

- To challenge preconceptions that Newcastle's history is entirely shaped by its industrial heritage.
- To engage public audiences with LGBT individuals who had an impact on Newcastle's cultural landscape.
- To create an awareness of the city's landmarks and spaces which were significant during the LGBT liberation movement.

2. Research Process

Archival Evidence

- We collaborated with the Philip Robinson Library Special Collections department to access material on Ethel Williams—a suffragist, doctor, political campaigner and LGBT woman from Newcastle.

Literary Sources

- We used online newspaper and literary databases to find information on LGBT figures and leisure spaces.
- We used the university's rare books collection to research eighteenth century transgender author, Jane Gomeldon. The collection included her collection of satirical essays, 'The Medley'

3. Conclusions

Historical Changes

- When researching LGBT histories, there tends to be a focus on broad movements, such as the liberation movement of the 1980s, not individuals.
- Sexuality is rarely discussed between the sixteenth to early twentieth century.
- Individuals, such as Ethel Williams, have been commemorated for their professional achievements, yet their sexuality remains private.

Newcastle as an LGBT Space

- For decades Newcastle has provided a safe haven for many LGBT individuals through leisure spaces and an open community.

4. Outcome

Presenting Findings

- We chose Omeka.net to present our findings. It allowed us to create multiple exhibitions, feature items and create an interactive map.
- Our site consists of three separate exhibitions:

Exhibition One: 'The Ethel Williams Archive'

- Exhibition displays digitised images from the Philip Robinson Special Collections Department relating to the suffragist.

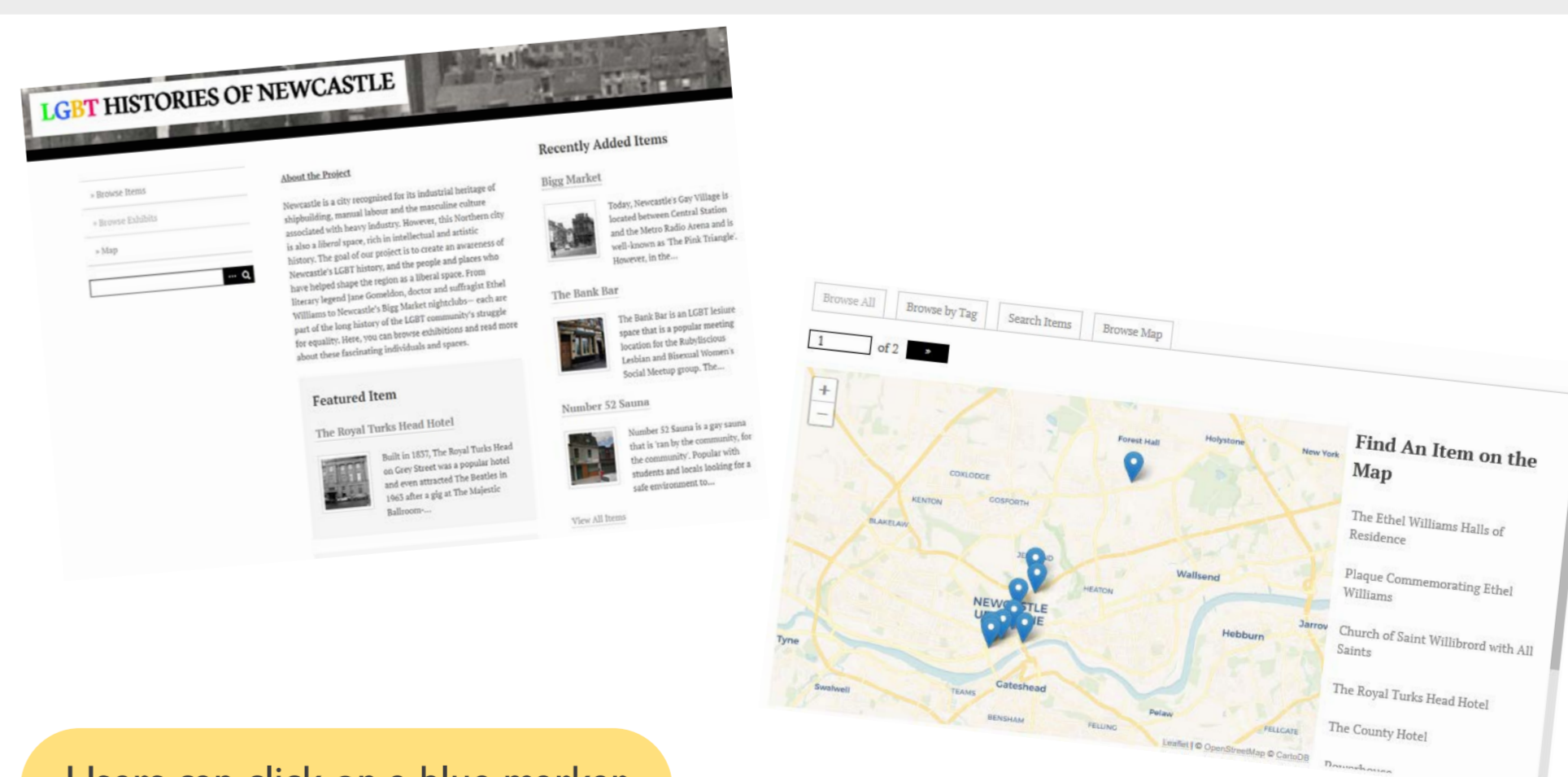
Exhibition Two: 'LGBT Individuals'

- Relating to transgender literary figures Jane Gomeldon and Thomasine Hall.

Exhibition Three: 'Map of LGBT Spaces'

- We created an interactive map of leisure spaces which were significant to the LGBT liberation movement in Newcastle, particularly during the 1980s.
- Spaces range from saunas, nightclubs and hotels. The map also includes landmarks relating to the LGBT individuals featured in our online exhibitions, such as a plaque commemorating Ethel Williams.

Find out more at:
lgbthistoryofnewcastle.omeka.net



Users can click on a blue marker to find further information about key spaces. Each landmark includes a photograph and brief description of its significance to the LGBT movement.

Just click on the blue markers to discover some of Newcastle's most significant LGBT spaces!

