

Pride photographic exhibition

The images in the exhibition reflect some of the joys, struggles and triumphs that our community has faced in recent years. The first Gay Pride march was held on 1st of July 1972 about 2000 lesbians and gay men marched down Oxford Street to Hyde Park.

Pride Marches were not universally supported with the LGBT community, with many men and women wanting to live the "quiet life". However from 1986 onwards numbers increased steadily, with support from the Greater London Council and other Local Authorities.

For many people Pride is the one day of the year when they can "sing if you're proud to be gay". Coaches, from Wales, Scotland and the English Regions came for the day in London. Since then many more local Pride Marches have been held in June July or August each year.

Pride has become more diverse and more inclusive, with all groups celebrating and being celebrated.

It is important that we honour the bravery and solidarity that is reflected in these images, it was not easy to be out in the 1960's, 70's, and 80's, and for many people even in the 21st century, it is not easy to be out as a lesbian, gay man, bisexual or trans person. And yet Pride is now a part of the cultural agenda for the UK and with it should come greater equality and justice for all.

Pam Isherwood Photographer

Somehow I didn't know about those first few Gay Pride marches. News didn't reach Streatham, and anyway I was busy being heterosexual for most of those years. They began for me in 1978, a strange meander around Shepherd's Bush, chosen so the radical marchers could shout at the Coleherne unradicals and feel smug. I was proudly wearing my new lesbian identity and a set of hand-made badges, the prize one being Perverts Against Fascism (this being the glory days of the Anti Nazi League). And I had my new toy, the first decent affordable SLR camera, a Canon AE1, so I took pictures. This little habit has grown, as has the size and importance of Gay Pride and all of its later affiliates. So as self-appointed Photographer To The Lesbian World, I now have the annual brief, originally given me by Diva magazine, to "Go out and photograph as many gorgeous women as you can find". It's a tough job I know, but if someone has to do it I guess I'll keep volunteering.

See you in July.....

SOUTHWARK **LGBT** NETWORK

Exhibition commissioned by Southwark LGBT Network for the LGBT History Month
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