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# Why are archives important?

George Watley



NORTHAMPTONSHIRE  
**Black History**  
ASSOCIATION



Arts & Humanities  
Research Council

# Brief history of NBHA and University of Northampton helping to create archives

- Oral History Roadshow
- Research: Consumer behaviour of Northampton Caribbeans c.1955-1985
- Black British History module at University of Northampton

# Inspiration through and by archival discovery

*It sounds preposterous, but  
I learned that it exists!*



*Having it  
accessible ... it's  
inspiring!*

*It would encourage  
them to share some of  
their own stories.*

# Understood importance of experiencing archives



*To hear the voices playing back and listening to ...  
Because as much as you would learn from a book ...  
You get deeper answers and responses ...*

*Now that's recorded, it  
means someone else may  
understand more.*

# Sharing archives with others: seeing the importance of 'your' history



*Something like this makes you realise how it fits in and hopefully then it can be transferred to wider (audiences).*

*They'll find out that they've missed a lot of the cultural narrative of their own country.*



# Archival created with view towards their accessibility and portability



*It doesn't occur to (people)  
to investigate ... So it's nice  
that it's been brought (to  
audiences) to nip down at  
lunchtime to listen ...*

*Often (archives) are in  
museums.*

*Photographs really add to their  
voices as well.*

# Why are archives important?

- Recognition of the importance of your organisation
- Others will understand the importance of your work
- Sharing archives will help others understand the depth of your experiences
- Discovering archives will inspire some to learn more and possibly participate in your work