

EXPERIENCING the AMLS CONFERENCE BERLIN 2019

QUEERING MY MEMORY, MY MEMORIES OF QUEERS

by Ms. Bob Davis

It was mammoth. Simply mammoth. Queering Memory ended a week ago and I'm still trying to digest it, like swallowing an orange whole. How exciting to meet so many colleagues, discuss thoughtful, respectful work and to hear how so many diverse groups, world-wide, are working to preserve their unique LGBTQ+ history. The conference lasted three days. There were three sessions each day, six simultaneous presentations each session and other events as well. Like an iceberg, you could only see about one seventh of Queering Memory.

I was delighted that there were three transgender-focused panels. As the founder of the 3-year-old Louise Lawrence Transgender Archive (LLTA or simply Louise) in Vallejo, CA, it was fascinating to hear about trans media in Ankara, trans artists in Pakistan, the treatment of trans people in Nigerian tabloids and the life of a trans child in Thailand.

Networking? Two or three people told me they would be in Northern California this summer and wanted to visit Louise for their research. On Friday I was talking to a transman and after a few minutes we realized we knew each other, prior to his transition, but hadn't spoken in 25 years. After my panel Eliza Steinbock, editor of *Transgender Studies Quarterly's* arts and culture review section, asked if I'd be interested in revising my talk for their publication.

I appreciated hearing the three cities present their proposals for hosting the next conference. Bergen, Norway seemed the most committed. They were the only group to discuss funding and government support. They knew when they wanted to hold the conference and why. And the year they picked is significant to their unique LGBTQ+ history. I am convinced they would present a superior event, as well organized, diverse and informative as this year's AMLS conference.