

# DOROTHY KUYA ARCHIVE BLOG: DOROTHY AT WoWFEST

By Vicki Caren and Janaya Pickett



## The Granby Residents Association

Dorothy Kuya was one of the founding members of the Granby Residents Association, established in the early 1990's to campaign against planned housing demolition in the Granby Triangle. The GRA disbanded in 2010 reforming in 2011 as the Granby Four Street Community Land Trust and focusing their attentions on the four streets near Prince's Park (Beaconsfield, Cairns, Jermyn, and Ducie). The CLT would go on to redevelop homes with architecture design team Assemble, winning the prestigious Turner Prize for the project in 2015. Granby CLT has gone on to establish the Granby Workshop and Granby Winter Garden. The Granby Market, held on the first Saturday of every month, has grown into a popular and thriving community enterprise. The stars seemed to align when we realised 2023 was the 30th anniversary of the GRA and what better day to celebrate the successes of the Liverpool 8 community, as well as the life of Dorothy, than to hold our events on Market Day!



WoW has worked with Granby CLT on numerous projects over the years and we are incredibly proud to host our own stall at Granby Market every month. We are enthusiastic in our support for this innovative community and hope to still be doing so in another thirty years time!



Click here to watch Dorothy at the 1992 Granby Street Residents Meeting: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4EFwGwZwn-Q>

*'Working with the archives gave me a behind the scenes feel for who and how Dorothy communicated with others, her sheer relentless determination and also the myriad of organisations, institutions, and people she worked with in her endeavour of racial justice.'*

**Narsa Elliott**

## Dorothy Kuya at WoWFEST

For over a decade Writing on the Wall have developed and delivered creative heritage projects - a unique approach to local history and archives through actively engaging with community volunteers. Starting with the George Garrett project, followed by the Great War to Race Riots letters, then the archives of the L8 Law Centre and LARCAA, the focus is now on the Dorothy Kuya collection. Naturally we planned to hold events for WoWFEST. As our volunteer participants were so enthusiastic and keen to share what they had learned throughout the project, it was clear they were going to be involved.

*'I have been inspired and upskilled during the archiving process and Dorothy's work has already advised and informed on my current grassroots project and is another driving force for putting my plans into action.'*

**Nasra Elliot**



*'I have really enjoyed taking part on the course. It has been great to spend an evening a week learning and meeting lots of people from a range of different backgrounds. I loved hearing everyone's unique insights and interpretations of the documents and forming my own opinions as I learned more about Dorothy's life. I like that the volunteer work we did was during the sessions rather than being given compulsory 'homework.'*

**Olivia**

We have worked and volunteered on a number of community projects ourselves, we are keen to work collaboratively and to explore co-production, whether curating exhibitions or planning events and activities.

We were part of the team that created the popular Great War to Race Riots walking tour, and we were keen to design another one, this time relating to Dorothy's life and work in Liverpool. For us, a walking tour is a great way to bring history to life, whether standing in the exact spot where a specific event took place or learning about a particular building that people often walk past without a second thought. We also like the interactive nature of a walking tour - people are free to ask questions and share their knowledge. Additionally, we're eager to take archives out of their traditional setting and into the community, hoping this will encourage people to use archive material for their own learning or creative practice.



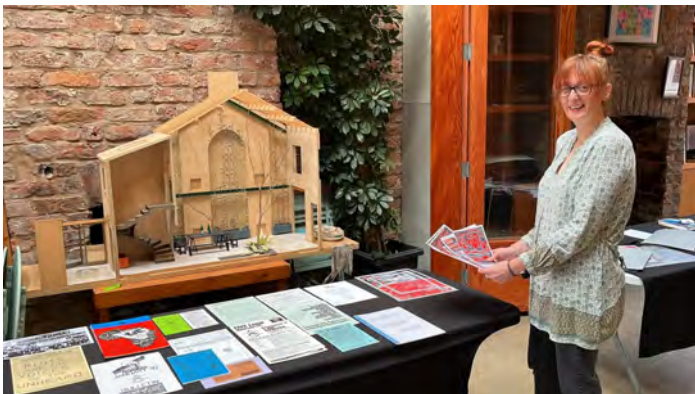
## Handling Session at Granby Winter Gardens

by Vicki Caren

The archive contains papers from the Granby Residents Association, which was formed in 1993 in response to planned demolition of a number of terrace streets in Granby. Dorothy was one of a number of residents who strove to fight back. I was able to scan and reproduce flyer's, press statements, a map, and publications from organisations concerned including the city council. There was a great response from people who visited our stall. Some were long standing local residents who clearly recalled the period and remembered Dorothy spearheading the campaign. Others were new to the area and were aware of the battle fought by previous generations to save the community. Two of our volunteers joined me at the stall to help raise the profile of the archive project, share their experiences and hopefully, encourage more people to get involved with Writing on the Wall's next creative heritage project.



*'I liked that we got to try our hand at a range of different things like art, archiving, researching, discussing, planning, and leading. I relished being able to take some ownership when planning for the walking tour and being part of the Living Library [part of International Women's Day event in collaboration with National Museums Liverpool]. Being part of both events has been a confidence booster and shown me that I can do things even if the idea scares me at first. The course content was always interesting and gave me the chance to do things that I wouldn't get to do in everyday life or at work. The passion of the WoW Team is evident. Thank you, guys!'*  
Olivia



## Dorothy Kuya Walking Tour

by Janaya Pickett

For the walking tour research, the project team focused on three different aspects or phases of Dorothy's life in Liverpool. After reading through Dorothy's early diaries, I was able to note her various addresses as well as other locations significant to her. For the first portion of the tour, we focused on the years 1945-1960. We then explored Dorothy's time as the first Community Relations Officer for Liverpool (later Merseyside) Community Relations Council from 1970-1977. The last section of the tour was dedicated to Dorothy's later years, as a founding member of the Granby Residents Association and her involvement with the development of the International Slavery Museum from 1993 until her passing in 2013.

In preparation for the walking tour the participants met at Liverpool Record Office to research and source contemporary photographs. We thought these images were important to include on the walking tour, not only to show the area as it would have appeared to Dorothy at the time but also to highlight the gentrification of Liverpool 8. The area of Dorothy's early years in particular, around Falkner Square, has since rebranded as the 'Georgian Quarter' with its restored cobbled streets and homes that sell for close to £1,000,000.



The walking tour was well attended and led by myself and participants Olivia Currie, Nasra Elliott, Nkechi Onuora, and Aisha Taylor-Durán. As a group of mostly Liverpool Black women who had dedicated weeks to the project it was an incredibly proud moment to share the information we'd gathered. We were especially proud of our participants for delivering the very first (but hopefully not the last!) Dorothy Kuya walking tour.

Much of the information from the walking tour will soon be available to the public, in our Dorothy Kuya podcast, produced with Rory Ballantyne and the lovely folks at Melodic Distraction. Keep an eye out for the first episode, to be released later this month.



Also in June we will be working to complete our Dorothy Kuya inspired posters with Liverpool 8-born artist Sumuyya Khader, as well anticipating the reveal of her own commissioned piece. In July we will be handing the archive back to the Kuya family and NML in an event at the Museum of Liverpool, celebrating Dorothy Kuya's life, archive and the amazing work of our project team.