

# **National Fairground and Circus Archive Access Policy**

## **1. Introduction**

The National Fairground and Circus Archive (NFCA) is a unique collection of photographic, printed, manuscript and audiovisual material covering every aspect of the travelling fair, circus and allied entertainments as well as the culture, business and life of travelling showpeople from the 1600's to the present day.

## **2. Statement of Access**

The Archive endeavors to offer the widest and most appropriate forms of access to its collections, expertise, facilities and services and has a strong commitment to the research and interpretation of its holdings.

## **3. Audience Definition**

The NFCA acknowledges the diversity of its audience, their interests and needs. Our key identified audiences are:

- Organisations and academics who sit on the NFCA Advisory Board, with whom we maintain a close relationship
- Members of the showland community, businesses and professional bodies
- Fairground and allied Entertainment experts, authors and researchers
- University staff and students
- International research community
- Local historians
- Family historians
- The broadcasting industry
- The creative industries
- School groups
- General public
- Virtual audiences

## **4. Levels of Access and Discoverability**

The NFCA acknowledges the different needs for access and wide range of learning styles of its audience and offers access to its collections at three levels:

### **4.1 Intellectual Access:**

#### **4.1.1 Research, Articles and Publications**

The NFCA is committed to welcoming researchers to the Archive as well as to conducting its own research projects in order to enhance access and discoverability through the interpretation of the collections. A wide range of

articles and publications are made available through its website and reading room.

#### **4.1.2 Collection Level Descriptions and Finding Aids**

The NFCA aims at developing accurate and informative collection level descriptions and finding aids that help contextualise and understand its holdings. The classification of the collections is performed in accordance with recognised sector standards, i.e. the Library of Congress, ISAD-G and Dublin Core.

#### **4.1.3 Interpretation Strategy**

The NFCA aims at communicating with its audiences in an accessible, engaging manner, using plain English and avoiding unnecessary jargon.

#### **4.1.4 Public Talks**

We deliver public talks linked to key events and research projects and partnerships.

### **4.2 Physical Access:**

#### **4.2.1 The Reading Room**

The reading room is a dedicated research and study space within the Western Bank Library, where books and publications can be freely explored during opening hours and primary resources can be accessed through previous appointment.

Reading Room opening hours <https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/NFCA/visiting>

Reading Room Guidelines for Users

[http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/polopoly\\_fs/1.495418!/file/ReadingRoomGuidelinesforUsers.pdf](http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/polopoly_fs/1.495418!/file/ReadingRoomGuidelinesforUsers.pdf)

Remote research and reproduction services

<https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/nfa/research>

#### **4.2.2 The Living Archive**

The living archive refers to three key aspects of the Archive:

- The active relationship it holds with members of the showland profession and families, enthusiasts and organisations.
- The collecting practices within the contemporary entertainment sector exercised within key collecting areas of the Archive.
- The outreach activity focused on taking the archive outside its physical setting and into the community through the organisation of and collaboration in public events and festivals.

### **4.2.3 Exhibitions and loans**

The Archive curates exhibitions of its holdings in its dedicated exhibition space at the Western Bank Library and collaborates in external exhibitions, through curatorship and loans.

## **4.3 Virtual Access:**

### **4.3.1 NFCA website**

The NFCA aims to make collections discoverable through the online publication of its finding aids, collection level descriptions, research and articles.

<https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/NFCA>

### **4.3.2 Digital Collection**

The Archive has a strong digitisation programme in place to enable remote access to the collections, through NFCA Digital.

<http://cdm15847.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/landingpage/collection/p15847coll3>

### **4.3.3 Social Media**

The NFCA is committed to embracing new ways of communicating and divulging awareness of its collections, through its Twitter and a Facebook accounts.

### **4.3.4 Archives Hub**

Collection level descriptions are published in Archives Hub and can be freely accessed through the internet.

### **4.3.5 Adam Matthews Digital**

The NFCA has worked with Adam Matthews Digital to achieve the digitisation of thousands of items in its collection. Access to this material is available through subscription libraries internationally or free of charge through our reading room.

### **4.3.6 The National Archives**

The NFCA submits annual updates of its holdings to the National Archives, which are publicised on [Discovery](#) and <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/accessions/>

### **4.3.7 Copac**

The book collection is available through Copac <http://copac.jisc.ac.uk/>

## **5. Restrictions to Public Access**

The NFCA endeavors to provide access to its holdings and knowledge whilst being committed to safeguarding the material entrusted to its care and the wishes of its depositors, and to abiding by current legislation, which may restrict access to some holdings.

Access to fragile material due to its physical condition is restricted and we are unable to offer access to collections prior to processing, cataloguing or while undergoing conservation.