

East Anglian Film Archive

Collections Care and Preservation Policy

Background

The East Anglian Film Archive is a regional film archive wholly owned by the University of East Anglia. Established in 1976, and part of the University since 1984, EAFA contains a collection of thousands of films and television programmes from 1896 to the present day, including unique collections from Anglia Television, BBC East, and the Institute of Amateur Cinematographers. The collection includes approximately 75,000 catalogue titles and 148,000 physical items in total in the vaults.

Vision Statement

By 2020, the East Anglian Film Archive will be regarded as a world-class regional media archive.

It will be recognised as a central source to access unique audio-visual heritage resources that promote learning, citizenship, community, and regional and national identity; resources that are regularly utilised by national and international media partners.

Mission Statement

The East Anglian Film Archive collects, preserves and protects the rich regional audio-visual heritage of the East of England (Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Essex, Hertfordshire, Norfolk and Suffolk).

It provides and promotes access to these historical materials for educational, research and cultural use, to inform wider understanding of history and culture for regional, national and international audiences. It works closely with media organisations and heritage partners to ensure broader use of those materials.

Preservation

The East Anglian Film Archive's aim is to preserve moving image material held in its collection. We also aim to ensure that the material is accessible and can be used.

Both aims are equally important.

Moving image material includes a range of analogue and digital formats including born digital material.

Storage

EFAFA has purpose built vaults which are humidity and temperature controlled. In addition EFAFA has ensured that the following conditions are in place -

- modern purpose-built secure premises
- dedicated collections storage areas
- fire suppression system
- fresh air change
- clean environment
- appropriate shelving
- appropriate film cans, boxes and other containers
- Each item is bar coded
- Location is noted in EFAFA's collection database

EFAFA aims to provide the optimum conditions for each physical medium held in the collections, within practical and financial constraints.

EFAFA has a range of environments within its five vaults.

A Vault 10 degrees centigrade 30% relative humidity

B Vault 10 degrees centigrade 30% relative humidity

Acclimatisation/ D Vault 18 degrees centigrade 45% relative humidity

Video Vault 16 degrees centigrade 40% relative humidity

C Vault – 4 degrees centigrade 30% relative humidity

EFAFA aims to preserve moving image material by ensuring that the collection is stored appropriately and that where possible duplicate digital copies are made ensuring long term preservation. Digitisation of film and video is generally funded on a project by project basis.

Film Preservation

Wherever possible EFAFA will preserve originals. For example, moving image material originally produced on film such as 35mm, 16mm, 9.5mm, 8mm standard, Super 8mm and other rarer gauges will be stored in perpetuity. This is because of the evidence value of the original, because of its significance as historical artefact, because there may be more latent quality in the original and because future copying will require access to the originals.

EFAFA aims to continue to keep its knowledge of different formats current.

We aim to put long term preservation before the short term exploitation of material.

When a film is copied the master/original will always be retained and stored in EFAFA's vaults. For access and for preservation purposes a master digital copy will be made which can be made available to third parties.

Analogue Tape Preservation/ Digitisation

EFAFA stores a wide range of tape formats in temperature and humidity controlled vaults.

Where material has been produced on analogue tapes it may be digitised and the digital file preserved. Where tapes are digitised we will, wherever possible, record any information/evidence on the physical tapes and add this to EAFA's collection management system. Following the digitisation of analogue tapes the archive may consider disposing of the original tape with the agreement of the donor/ copyright owner. Analogue tapes will be migrated to new digital masters.

Specialist Off Site Storage

EAFA is unable to store nitrate film on site owing to site restrictions. However, EAFA has made arrangements with the British Film Institute to store its small nitrate collection at a specialist store at Gaydon.

EAFA has a small paper collection stored at the Norfolk Records Office. Storage is PD5454 compliant.

Digital Preservation

EAFA preserves files in their original format. A duplicate file in EAFA's current mastering format is also created. Upon archive acquisition the metadata is extracted and ingested into the CMS. The original filename is renamed to a unique identifier generated by the CMS. The original filename is preserved in the CMS.

For entire hard drives of films the process is similar, but the hard drive could potentially include other data of interest such as NLE project files, rushes, notes, stills and other files of interest. EAFA will assess the importance of this data on a case by case basis. If it is decided that the working drive is of particular importance EAFA will take a snapshot image and log in the Collection Management System with its own unique identifier. Files within the drive will also undergo duplication/remastering and stored independently of the image as decoded by EAFA.

Audio and Video Codecs are preserved to ensure future playback of file formats. This does not provide complete protection against codecs being usable in the future due to Operating System updates. This is why EAFA also duplicates and transcodes the masters to a modern standard.

Digital Storage

Data storage is fully managed by UEA ITCS. There are 4x copies of every file stored. Two are in duplicate tape libraries and two offsite in different storage facilities. One of these is a fire vault. Data is wholly managed in this way in the UEA's IBM Tivoli Storage Manager which performs checksum verification to ensure copies are always exact and matching previous checksums. If errors are found then tapes are recalled in to the system (or from the duplicate library) and new files generated from the backups.

UEA ITCS keeps up to date with the newest generations of LTO drives and tapes as they are released. The IBM TSM manages the migration automatically.

Standards

EFAA works to the European standard EN15907 in structuring filmographic and technical data.

Training

Everyone involved in handling film is given full training. EFAA has a procedure in place to support academics and researchers in handling film and this is intended to support but not replace one to one training that is offered.

Disaster Recovery

EFAA will maintain an appropriate and up to date disaster recovery plan.

Review of Collections Care & Preservation Policy and Related EFAA Documents

This statement of acquisition policy replaces all previous statements, and will be reviewed every 5 years.

This document forms part of EFAA Collections management policy. Other policies include Acquisition and Disposal, Documentation and Access.

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