

Booking from the active calendar

Listening-room booking guide

Briar Quay Sound Archive is a fictional community collection of oral history and harbour recordings. Visitors reserve a listening seat through the front desk. Staff select an access copy before the visit so the original recording can remain in its storage box. A booking reserves a seat, not ownership of a particular playback machine.

The current advance-booking window is up to 12 calendar days before the visit. Booking lead: Tessa Venn.

An archived desk circular allowed bookings up to 18 calendar days before the visit. It is kept in the bound circular file for reference when an older confirmation letter is queried. New reservations follow the current window even when a visitor brings an old printed form.

The desk confirms whether the requested material has an access copy. A recording awaiting an access copy can be placed on a preparation list, but the preparation list is not a listening reservation. Visitors receive a plain-language description of the room rules with their confirmation. Group visits use the same calendar and are checked against the number of working seats.

Preparing an access reel

Listening-room booking guide

The playback worker examines an access reel on the preparation bench. A loose leader is secured before the reel goes into the room. The case and reel are checked against one another, and the worker writes the case label on the session sheet. A reel with an uncertain label stays on the review shelf.

The preparation sequence uses 90 seconds for the leader segment and 24 seconds for the calibration segment.

The leader segment gives the worker a quiet lead-in before the recorded material begins. The calibration segment is the short reference used to set the listening chain. These segments have different purposes and are entered in separate boxes on the session sheet. Neither segment is a promise about the length of the visitor's requested recording.

A practice reel marked STAFF TRAINING includes a longer calibration exercise. It remains on the preparation bench and does not replace the sequence in this guide. After preparation, the worker places the reel in its case and clips the session sheet outside the case so the label can be read without opening it.

Inside the listening room

Listening-room booking guide

A visitor is shown the stop control before playback begins. The room host places the session sheet beside the seat and checks that headphones are comfortable. Visitors ask the host before moving a cable or opening a case. Food and wet coats remain outside the room to protect the equipment and the paper labels.

The listening ceiling is at most 62 decibels at the listening seat.

A reading beside the preparation bench is not the listening-seat reading. The host lowers the playback level if conversation at the desk makes it difficult to judge the room level. A faulty headset is taken out of use and marked on the equipment card. Staff do not ask a visitor to compensate for a fault by holding a plug in place.

At the close of a reserved session, the host follows the sleeve and reset procedure continued on the next page. The case is checked before the access reel returns to the preparation shelf.

For a reserved listening session, the return sleeve is the amber sleeve.

Session reset continuation

Listening-room booking guide

The seat is reset within 9 minutes after the headphones are returned.

Returning the case alone does not start this reset window. The host first receives the headphones, then checks the seat, control surface and cable. A headset needing attention goes to the equipment tray with a short note. The next visitor is invited in only after the host has finished the seat check.

The session sheet is closed with the recording title and any playback problem observed during the visit. A visitor's interpretation of a recording can be noted separately as a research comment; it does not become a correction to the catalogue merely because it appears on the session sheet.

At the desk, the host returns the booking card to the completed side of the calendar file. A person waiting for a preparation-list item is contacted through the address on that list when the access copy is ready. The sleeve and reset steps here belong to reserved listening sessions, while unscheduled staff checks stay on the preparation bench.

Copies and service charges

Listening-room booking guide

Visitors can ask the desk to prepare a listening copy of an analogue reel when the rights note permits it. The desk checks the note before work is scheduled. A catalogue entry alone does not grant permission to reproduce a recording. A declined copy request is recorded on the request slip so it is not accidentally sent back into the preparation queue.

The listening-copy service charge is 6.25 Canadian dollars per analogue reel, including tax.

The charge is attached to each analogue reel accepted for this service. It is not a room-admission charge, a recording licence or a price for the original reel. A request involving more than one reel keeps each reel on its own line so staff can see which items are ready.

The archive's old exhibition leaflet mentions a donation jar near the foyer. That leaflet is filed with exhibition material and does not set the listening-copy charge. The copy worker signs the request slip only after checking the copy against the requested reel. The desk then places the slip with the collection notice.

Catalogue comments and closing

Listening-room booking guide

A visitor may submit a catalogue comment at the front desk. The comment should identify the recording and the part that prompted the observation. The archive keeps the original comment with the review card. Staff distinguish a visitor's recollection from a correction verified against the recording and its accompanying papers.

The closing host removes loose session sheets from the listening room and returns them to the office file. A sheet found without a case label goes into the review tray. The host does not guess which recording it describes from a fragment of handwriting. The next shift can compare the sheet with completed bookings.

Headphones are returned to their hooks without wrapping cables tightly around the ear cups. The access shelf is checked for cases left open. Any equipment fault is written on its equipment card before the room light is switched off, because a spoken message alone may be missed by the next host.

This guide covers visitor listening and access-copy handling. The collection catalogue, rights notes and conservation records remain separate records and are consulted for their own purposes.