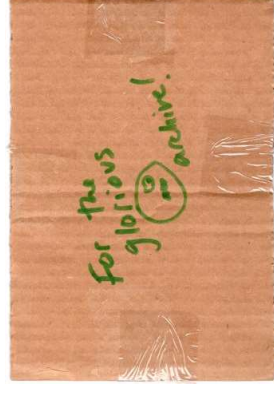
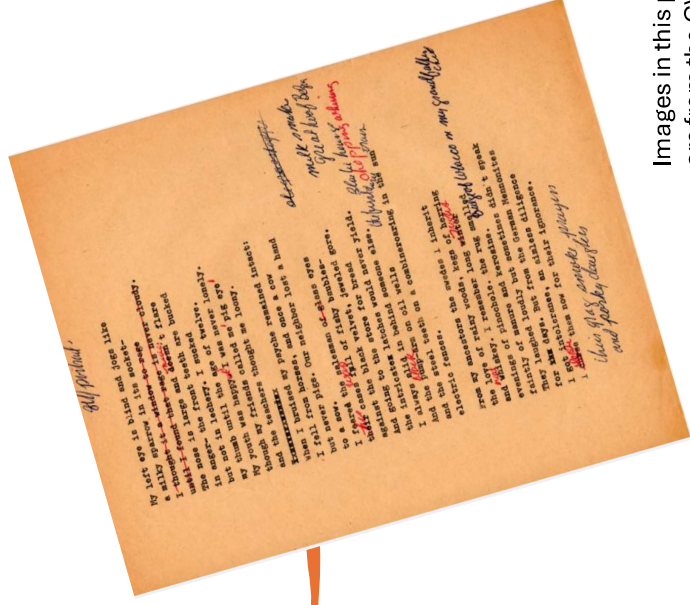


Trust the (Re)Process: Enhancing Accessibility for the Jim Harrison Collection

Andrea Howard
Visiting Processing Archivist
Grand Valley State University
Allendale, MI

Society of Ohio Archivists
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Images in this presentation
are from the GVSU Archives

Conference Theme: Accessibility

- *ac·ces·si·ble (adjective) /əkˈsesəb(ə)l/*
- (of a place) able to be reached or entered;
- **Able to be easily obtained or used;**
- **able to be reached, entered, or used by people who have a disability;**
- **easily understood or appreciated.**
- (of a person, typically one in a position of authority or importance) friendly and easy to talk to; approachable.



Collection Background

- Purchased by GVSU through the Meijer Foundation in 2005
- 160 linear feet (approx. 366 boxes)
- Contains a variety of handwritten drafts and typescripts of published and unpublished works of poetry, fiction, and non-fiction
- Events ephemera, reviews, interviews with Jim Harrison
- Extensive correspondence from friends, family, fans, and fellow writers
- One of our most heavily used collections

Original Processing

- One archivist and her successor
- Years-long process
- Later additions from Harrison, others



Our Reprocessing Philosophy

- Centered around main goal: increasing user accessibility
- Wish list of things to fix
- Can afford to take our time
- Comprehensive yet targeted

Dear Jim Harrison -
I was very happy to get your book
even though I already have 3 of
No one ever inscribed any of
to me though so I was real
specially because it was you
I too was bummed that I
didn't get a chance to talk to
other much that one that w
is I told you that night (whe
inally got the chance) I thin
an are a really pretty am
inter - so great.
I hope we get a chance
together one of these days
and maybe, if I'm lucky I
really get to say some of
wards one day.

Take care!

Winston

P.S. That "New Love" prem



Questions I Considered About Proposed Changes

- Will this change improve user accessibility in some way?
- How much of the collection will be positively impacted?
- How many users will be positively impacted?
- How much time will this take?





Collection Audience

- English classes
- Biographers
- Students
- Filmmakers
- Fans

STUDENT RESEARCHER



MICHAEL B.
A frequent visitor to Seidman House's Reading Room, Michael B is researching Michigan author Jim Harrison, reading through our collection of Harrison's writings, correspondence, and drafts.

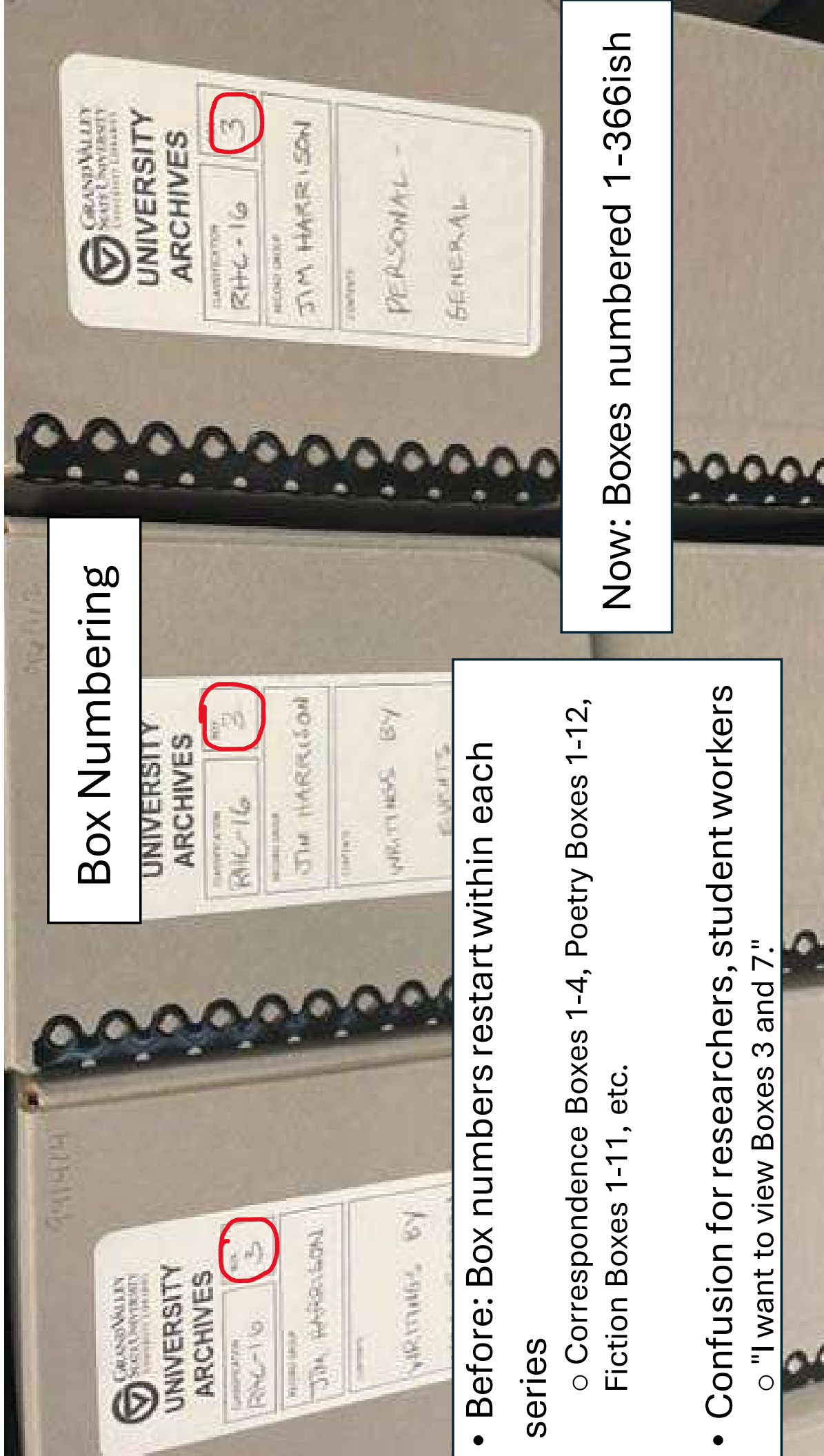
JIM HARRISON PAPERS, RHC-16
<https://gvsu.lyrasistechology.org/>

Access Concerns

- Arrangement
- Description
- Unprocessed additions
- Physical access



Box Numbering



- Before: Box numbers restart within each series

- Correspondence Boxes 1-4, Poetry Boxes 1-12, Fiction Boxes 1-11, etc.

- Confusion for researchers, student workers
 - "I want to view Boxes 3 and 7."

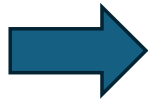
Now: Boxes numbered 1-366ish

Correspondence Everywhere!

If you wanted to find all correspondence between Jim Harrison and Jack Nicholson, you would need to

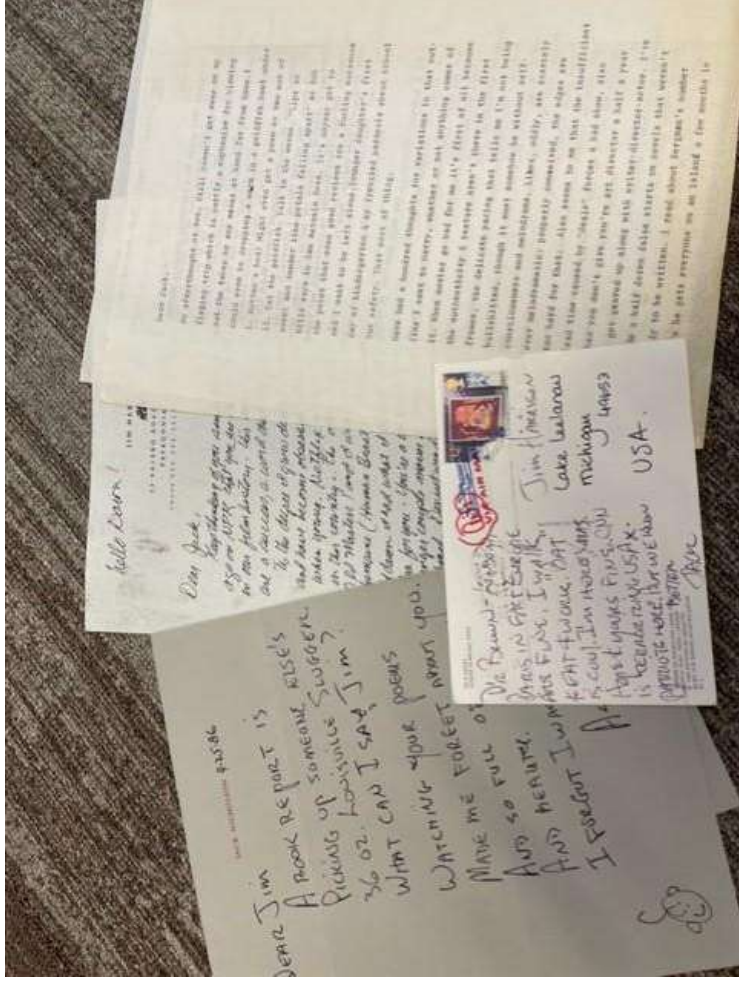
search:

- o Jack Nicholson folder
- o Correspondence additions
- o General Correspondence, 2007-2016 (6 large boxes)



Correspondence additions,

General Correspondence consolidated



Folders not Numbered or Inventoried

- Difficult for researchers to put folders away correctly
- How many folders do we have per box?
 - in the whole collection?



- Folders will be numbered, added to ArchivesSpace



Memorabilia?

- Not labeled
- Not memorabilia
 - Children's artwork, personal books
 - Large items



▼	Memorabilia
	Memorabilia
	Memorabilia
	Memorabilia
	Memorabilia



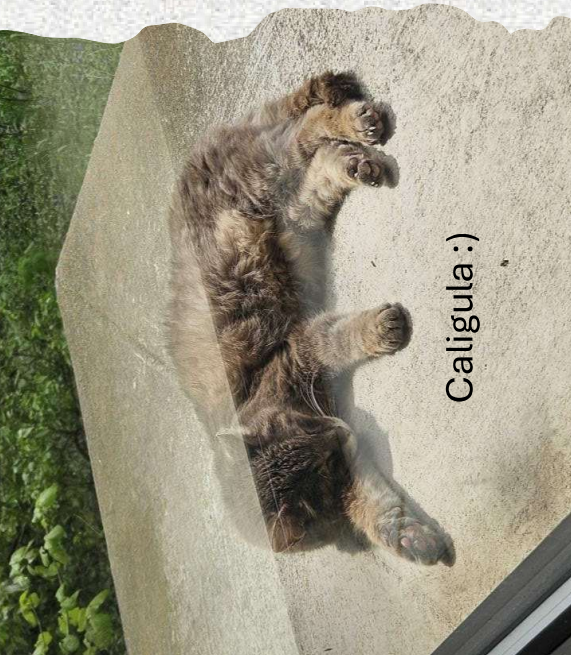
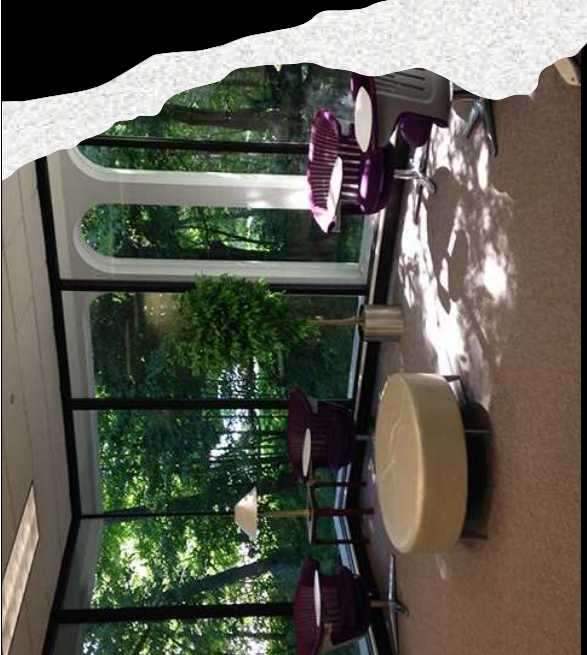
▼	Memorabilia
	Drawings of Jim Harrison, 1981-1995, undated
	Cartoon of Jim Harrison, by Richard Guindon, 1988
	Jim Harrison author trading cards from The Booksmith, undated
	Jim Harrison with Exotic Dancers T-shirt, undated
	Légendes d'automne matchbox, undated
	Novelty Gift Certificate on Tobacco Wrapper, undated
	Cigarette Haiku by Jim Harrison, undated

Unprocessed Materials

- Multiple boxes of materials
 - Correspondence, writings, books, video tapes, etc.
- Generally unavailable for use
- Processed just in time for patron research!



Our Location: Seidman House



Caigula :)

Physical Accessibility

- Old building...with no elevator
- Moved collection to top floor for easier physical access



Digitize the Collection?

- Yes, when patrons can't visit in-person
- But... copyright
- Future goal to tackle



Priority Questions for Accessibility

○ Correspondence:

- Users will have fewer places to check for correspondence
- Correspondence series impacted, patrons using correspondence (popular series)
- Medium time commitment - (in hindsight, High)

○ Boxes

- The boxes will be easier to find on the shelves, and easier to understand in the user interface
- Entire collection impacted, all users (patrons and staff) impacted
- Low to medium time commitment

○ Folder numbers:

- Easier to use folders, easier to put them back properly for patrons and staff
- Entire collection impacted, all users (patrons and staff) impacted
- Medium to high time commitment

○ Memorabilia:

- Both patrons and staff now know what is in the memorabilia boxes, and it fits the memorabilia definition
- Memorabilia series impacted, patrons using memorabilia impacted (and might increase)
- Low to medium time commitment

○ Physical Access:

- Staff no longer need to use stairs to pull boxes for patron use
- Entire collection impacted, all staff positively impacted
- Medium to high time commitment

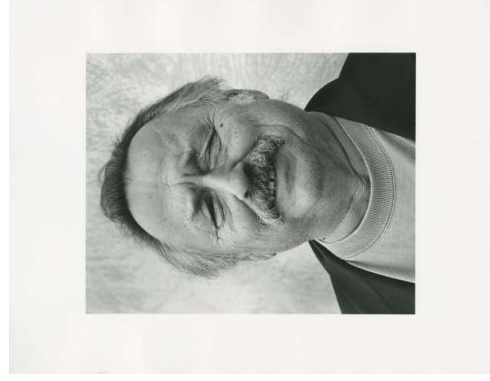
○ Paper clips/sticky notes:

- Does not improve user accessibility
- Entire collection would be impacted, users would not be impacted
- High time commitment

Helpful Project All Around!

Processing Archivist (me)

- Experience working with and reprocessing a large collection
- Experience putting accessibility at the forefront of processing
- Experience working with a literary figure's collection



GVSU Archives

- Collection is fully processed
- Easier experience for users = easier experience for reference staff



Users

- Easier to understand what is in the collection
 - Easier to understand what to request
 - Full access to all materials
- More physically accessible to students and staff



Conclusion, or, is the collection perfect now?


- No
- Analyze wish list
- Prioritize according to user needs includes student workers/staff
- Can revisit in the future if needed



Birds know us as "THE PEOPLE OF THE FEET"

I am watched as I walk
 sound and sound my own
 a man of many beaten feet
 they see I walk flycatcher
 they see I walk a swift more
 that I compare to nothing whatsoever
 that I do. They own the air we
 breathe. I've studied
 how they seem to be made of spiderwebs
 and then the wings of all birds which on close inspection don't seem possible. Most birds own the ancient clock of north and south, a clock that never had hands, the god-time with which the universe began. As the end draws nearer I've taken to praying to be re-incarnated as a bird, and if not worthy of that, a tree in which they live so I could cradle them as I did our daughters and grandsons. Three times last April down on the border a dozen Chihuahuan ravens accompanied me on walls when I sang the right croaking song. I was finally within them. For the first time in my life I dared to say aloud, "I am blessed"

Old Bird Boy
 Jim Harrison



BIRDS KNOW US AS "THE PEOPLE OF THE FEET"

I am watched as I walk
 sound and sound my own
 a man of many beaten feet
 they see I walk flycatcher
 they see I walk a swift more
 that I compare to nothing whatsoever that I do.
 how they seem to be made of spiderwebs so
 precariously attached to perch or ground, also the feet of the golden eagle which are death angels, and then
 the wings of all birds which on close inspection don't seem possible. Most birds own the ancient clock of
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Copyrighted poem used by permission of the author. Image © Photographer: Andrew
 Poljan. This bookplate was printed by the New Milligen Press in collaboration of the
 author's visit to Grand Valley State University in October 2007. This is number 367 of 500.

Jim Harrison

Thank You!