

A Guide to the Bob Bersson Papers, 1981-2017 SC 0272

Bob Bersson Papers
1981-2017



Title Statement

A Guide to the Bob Bersson Papers, 1981-2017 SC 0272

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Descriptive Summary

Unit ID

SC 0272

Unit ID

/repositories/4/resources/495

Unit Date

1981-2017

Language

English

Abstract

The Bob Bersson Papers, 1981-2017, are comprised of documents and media related to Bersson's work as a community activist in Harrisonburg, and professor of art at James Madison University. It contains Bersson's professional papers, material related to the Citizens for Downtown organization, Taxpayers against Golf Spending (TAGS), WMRA's "Our Little Radio Show," and images of downtown Harrisonburg and JMU Campus.

Creator

Bersson, Robert

source

Bersson, Robert

Extent

1.22 cubic feet 4 boxes, 3 VHS, 31 audiocassettes, 2 3.5" floppy disks

Repository

James Madison University Libraries Special Collections

Administrative Information

Access Restrictions

Collection open to research. Researchers must register and agree to copyright and privacy laws before using this collection. Please contact Research Services staff before visiting the James Madison University Special Collections Library to use this collection.

Use Restrictions

The copyright interests in this collection have not been transferred to the James Madison University Special Collections Library. For more information, contact the Special Collections Library Reference Desk (library-special@jmu.edu).

Acquisition Information

Items were donated by Bob Bersson in five separate accessions between 2014 and 2018.

Processing Information

Duplicate copies of materials were discarded. Newspaper clippings related to the JMU Faculty and restructuring were returned to donor. A large number of 3.5 inch floppy discs and zip discs which contain drafts of Bersson's two books, "Worlds of Art," published by Mayfield Publishing Company in 1991, and "Responding to Art: Form, Content and Context," published by McGraw Hill in 2003, as well as other academic work, were returned to the donor.

Cassette tapes containing WMRA recordings of "Our Little Radio Show" were digitized and returned to the donor. In January 2019, 770+ slides from Series 1: Citizens for Downtown (CFD), 1989-2017 were inventoried, photographed, and rehoused. The original slide cases, slide boxes, and slide carousels were photographed and discarded.

Preferred Citation

[identification of item], [box#, folder #], Bob Bersson Papers, 1981-2017, SC 0272, Special Collections, Carrier Library, James Madison University, Harrisonburg, VA.

Bio/Historical Note

Bob Bersson was a professor of Art at James Madison University from 1983 until his retirement in 2003. He taught modern and contemporary art history, art criticism, aesthetics, and art appreciation. He wrote two art history/art appreciation text books: "Worlds of Art," published by Mayfield in 1991, and "Responding to Art," published by McGraw-Hill in 2004. Bersson founded the Interfaith Initiative for Peace and Justice in Harrisonburg, and remains active in local interfaith activities. In 2016, Bersson served as visiting Jewish Scholar for the Center for Interfaith Engagement at Eastern Mennonite University.

Scope and Content

The collection is comprised of documents and media related to Robert Bersson's work as an art professor at JMU and community organizer in Harrisonburg, Virginia. It is arranged into four series: Citizens for Downtown (CFD) in Harrisonburg, Taxpayers against Golf Spending (TAGS), WMRA "Our Little Radio Show," and Professional Papers.

Related Materials

Keywords

Membership lists
Reports
Letters (correspondence)
Floppy disks
Color slides
Slides (photographs)
VHS
Maps (documents)
Newspaper clippings
Art -- Study and teaching (Higher) -- United States
Art appreciation -- Study and teaching (Higher) -- United States
Religions -- Relations
Community organizations -- Virginia -- Harrisonburg
Citizens' associations -- Virginia -- Harrisonburg
Social action -- Virginia -- Harrisonburg
Blacks Run (Va.)
Bersson, Robert
James Madison University. School of Art and Art History
James Madison University. Department of Art
James Madison University. School of Art

Arrangement

The collection is arranged into four series. Series 1 is arranged further into subseries.

- Citizens for Downtown (CFD), 1989-2017
- Taxpayers against Golf Spending (TAGS), 1992-2002
- WMRA "Our Little Radio Show," 1987-1988
- Professional Papers, 1991-2004

Description of Subordinate Components

Citizens for Downtown

Unit ID 1

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/16277

Unit Date 1989-2017

Scope and Content

The Citizens for Downtown files contain meeting minutes, correspondence, financial reports, newspaper clippings, speeches, membership information, advertisements, and slides related to the historic preservation and revitalization of downtown Harrisonburg. A summary of the history of CFD and the Blacks Run clean-up and restoration project, written by Bob Bersson, can be found in Box 1:8.

The series contains 771 slides with images of Harrisonburg, James Madison University, Rockingham County, and other locales in Virginia and the Northeast. Specific locations include images of downtown Harrisonburg, Hillandale Park, Black's Run, Purcell Park, and JMU buildings and campus. One slide container was labelled, "Good Models for Downtown Development," and contained images of Charlottesville, Roanoke, Richmond, Alexandria, among other locales. Another slide case was labelled, JMU Architecture, 1909-2003.

The series also contains three VHS tapes with interviews of Bersson related to Harrisonburg downtown revitalization, as well as two 3.5 inch floppy discs labelled, "Citizens for Downtown."

Arrangement

Arranged into two subseries: Administrative Files, 1989-2017, arranged chronologically, and Subject Files,

1989-2017, arranged alphabetically.

Administrative Files

Unit ID 1

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/16281

Unit Date 1989-2017

Prehistory of Citizens for Downtown

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/16327

Unit Date 1981-1989, undated

Mixed Materials [1000886364] 1 (box)

Container 1 (folder)

Citizens for Downtown Documents 1

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/16328

Unit Date 1989, undated

Mixed Materials [1000886364] 1 (box)

Container 2 (folder)

Bob Bersson Notebook

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/16329

Unit Date 1989-1990

Citizens for Downtown Documents 2

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/16330

Unit Date 1990

Mixed Materials [1000886364] 1 (box)

Container 3 (folder)

Citizens for Downtown Documents 3

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/16331

Unit Date 1991

Mixed Materials [1000886364] 1 (box)

Container 4 (folder)

Citizens for Downtown Documents 4

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/16332

Unit Date 1992-1994

Mixed Materials [1000886364] 1 (box)

Container 5 (folder)

Citizens for Downtown Documents 5

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/16333

Unit Date 1995-2000

Mixed Materials [1000886364] 1 (box)

Container 6 (folder)

Citizens for Downtown Documents 6

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/16334

Unit Date 2004

Unit Date 2006

Mixed Materials [1000886364] 1 (box)

Container 7 (folder)

Citizens for Downtown Narrative and Blacks Run Clean-up Narratives

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/16335

Unit Date 2014

Unit Date 2017

Mixed Materials [1000886364] 1 (box)

Container 8 (folder)

Citizens for Downtown Documents 7

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/16336

Unit Date undated

Mixed Materials SC0272-FL3-001 (3.5 Floppy Disk)

Citizens for Downtown Documents 8

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/16337

Unit Date undated

Mixed Materials SC0272-FL3-002 (3.5 Floppy Disk)

Subject Files

Unit ID 2

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/16282

Unit Date 1989-2017

Architectural Awards

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/16338

Unit Date 1990-2002, undated

Mixed Materials [1000886364] 1 (box)

Container 9 (folder)

Blacks Run Restoration Project Documents

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/16339

Unit Date 1989-2003

Mixed Materials [1000886364] 1 (box)

Container 10 (folder)

Blacks Run Restoration Project Photos

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/16340

Unit Date circa 1992

Mixed Materials [1000886364] 1 (box)

Container 11 (folder)

Blacks Run Restoration Project Newspaper Clippings

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/16341

Unit Date 1990-2017

Mixed Materials [1000886364] 1 (box)

Container 12 (folder)

Fridays on the Square

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/16342

Unit Date 1992-2013

Mixed Materials [1000886364] 1 (box)

Container 13 (folder)

Gallery Walk

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/16343

Unit Date 1989-1990

Mixed Materials [1000886364] 1 (box)

Container 14 (folder)

Downtown revitalization, WHSV TV

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/16344

Unit Date circa 1981

Moving Images SC0272-VHS-001 (VHS)

Identity Crisis, WVPT

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/16345

Unit Date 1989 September 7

Moving Images SC0272-VHS-002 (VHS)

Citizens for Downtown on TV3 News

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/16346

Unit Date 1989

Moving Images SC0272-VHS-003 (VHS)

Slides of Downtown Harrisonburg, Blacks Run, and JMU campus

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/16347

Unit Date circa 1981-2005

Mixed Materials [1000886367] 4 (box)

Scope and Contents

The box contains 781 slides with images taken by and compiled by Bob Bersson. The slides depict buildings in downtown Harrisonburg; the Blacks Run River area; Hillendale Park, Harrisonburg; JMU campus and buildings; Bridgewater, Dayton, Citizens for Downtown activities; and various historic districts in northern Virginia, Charlottesville, Boston, Maryland, and other locales. A complete inventory of the slides is available upon request.

Taxpayers Against Golf Spending (TAGS)

Unit ID 2

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/16278

Unit Date 1992-2002

Scope and Content

TAGS is comprised reports, memos, maps, studies, advertisements, newspaper clippings, correspondence, and audio recordings related to a campaign against the Harrisonburg City Council's plans to build a municipal golf course in the Hillendale Park in Harrisonburg. The organization eventually formed the Citizens of Harrisonburg Advocating New Government for the Electorate (CHANGE) in 2000, who endorsed

three candidates for city council -- Dorn Peterson, Carolyn Frank, and Joe Fitzgerald – all of whom were elected in May 2000. Three audiocassettes contain interviews with individuals in 2002 regarding their involvement with TAGS.

Arrangement

Arranged chronologically.

Harrisonburg Golf Course Feasability study

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/16283

Unit Date 1992

Mixed Materials [1000886365] 2 (box)

Container 1 (folder)

Studies and Reports by City of Harrisonburg

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/16284

Unit Date 1994–2000

Mixed Materials [1000886365] 2 (box)

Container 2 (folder)

Advertisements

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/16285

Unit Date 1999

Mixed Materials [1000886365] 2 (box)

Container 3 (folder)

Correspondence

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/16286

Unit Date 1999

Mixed Materials [1000886365] 2 (box)

Container 4 (folder)

Financial Analysis of Golf Course

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/16287

Unit Date 1999

Mixed Materials [1000886365] 2 (box)

Container 5 (folder)

Newspaper clippings

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/16288

Unit Date 1999

Mixed Materials [1000886365] 2 (box)

Container 6 (folder)

Correspondence

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/16289

Unit Date 2000

Mixed Materials [1000886365] 2 (box)

Container 7 (folder)

Newspaper clippings

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/16290

Unit Date 2000

Mixed Materials [1000886365] 2 (box)

Container 8 (folder)

CHANGE Campaign Material

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/16291

Unit Date 2000

Mixed Materials [1000886366] 3 (box)

Container 1 (folder)

CHANGE Documents

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/16292

Unit Date 2000–2002

Mixed Materials [1000886366] 3 (box)

Container 2 (folder)

Ben Fordney recording

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/16348

Unit Date 2002 May 17

Audio SC0272-CS-030 (Audiocassette)

Warren Dillenbeck recording

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/16349

Unit Date 2002 May 19

Audio SC0272-CS-029 (Audiocassette)

Carolyn Frank recording

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/16350

Unit Date 2002 May 27

Audio SC0272-CS-031 (Audiocassette)

WMRA - Our Little Radio Show

Unit ID 3

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/16279

Unit Date 1987–1988

Scope and Content

The series, "Our Little Radio Show," contains documents and audio recordings related to a variety show co-founded by Bersson in 1987, and hosted at JMU. Audio cassettes with episodes of the show have been digitized and returned to Bersson.

Our Little Radio Show Documents

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/16293

Unit Date 1987

Mixed Materials [1000886366] 3 (box)

Container 3 (folder)

Our Little Radio Show Documents

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/16294

Unit Date 1987 March 3, undated

Mixed Materials SC0272-SET-001 (Digital-Materials)

Scope and Contents

Comprised of photographs of a document with a list of Our Little Radio Show programs and dates, and an image of the article, "Show Prepares for Airwaves: 'Our Little Radio Show' Runs Through its Paces," Daily News Record, March 3, 1987.

WMRA Spring fund drive with Our Little Radio Show

Unit ID SC0272-01

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/16295

Unit Date April 1987

Audio SC0272-SET-001 (Digital-Materials)

Our Little Radio Show with Dominion Express

Unit ID SC0272-02

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/16296

Unit Date 1987 May 10

Audio SC0272-SET-001 (Digital-Materials)

Our Little Radio Show with Joyce Breeden and Steve Parks

Unit ID SC0272-03

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/16297

Unit Date 1987 May 17

Audio SC0272-SET-001 (Digital-Materials)

Our Little Radio Show with Nick Whitmer, Mel and Karen Lee

Unit ID SC0272-04

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/16298

Unit Date 1987 May 24

Audio SC0272-SET-001 (Digital-Materials)

Our Little Radio Show with Rick Richardson & Steve Edick

Unit ID SC0272-05

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/16299

Unit Date 1987 May 31

Audio SC0272-SET-001 (Digital-Materials)

Our Little Radio Show with Crooked Run String Band

Unit ID SC0272-06

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/16300

Unit Date 1987 June 7

Audio SC0272-SET-001 (Digital-Materials)

Our Little Radio Show with Musikanten

Unit ID SC0272-07

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/16301

Unit Date 1987 June 14

Audio SC0272-SET-001 (Digital-Materials)

Our Little Radio Show with Musikanten

Unit ID SC0272-08

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/16302

Unit Date 1987 June 14

Audio SC0272-SET-001 (Digital-Materials)

Our Little Radio Show with Belzona Bluzz Revue

Unit ID SC0272-09

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/16303

Unit Date 1987 June 21

Audio SC0272-SET-001 (Digital-Materials)

Our Little Radio Show with Windfall

Unit ID SC0272-10

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/16304

Unit Date 1987 June 28

Audio SC0272-SET-001 (Digital-Materials)

Our Little Radio Show with Roy Book Binder

Unit ID SC0272-11

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/16305

Unit Date 1987 July 12

Audio SC0272-SET-001 (Digital-Materials)

Our Little Radio Show with Mandelay

Unit ID SC0272-12

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/16306

Unit Date 1987 July 19

Audio SC0272-SET-001 (Digital-Materials)

Our Little Radio Show with Wanda Hardy and the Hardy Boys

Unit ID SC0272-13

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/16307

Unit Date 1987 August 2

Audio SC0272-SET-001 (Digital-Materials)

Our Little Radio Show with Gary Green and Rick Harris

Unit ID SC0272-14

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/16308

Unit Date 1987 August 9

Audio SC0272-SET-001 (Digital-Materials)

Our Little Radio Show with John Glick & Steve Phillips, Mac McCumsey

Unit ID SC0272-15

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/16309

Unit Date 1987 August 16

Audio SC0272-SET-001 (Digital-Materials)

Our Little Radio Show with Steve Speakman

Unit ID SC0272-16

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/16310

Unit Date 1987 October 4

Audio SC0272-SET-001 (Digital-Materials)

Our Little Radio Show with Reverend Billy C. Wirtz

Unit ID SC0272-17

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/16311

Unit Date 1987 October 25

Audio SC0272-SET-001 (Digital-Materials)

Our Little Radio Show with Joyce Breeden

Unit ID SC0272-18

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/16312

Unit Date 1987 November 15

Audio SC0272-SET-001 (Digital-Materials)

Our Little Radio Show, Christmas Show with Boffo

Unit ID SC0272-19

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/16313

Unit Date 1987 December 20

Audio SC0272-SET-001 (Digital-Materials)

Our Little Radio Show with Robin and Linda Williams

Unit ID SC0272-29

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/16314

Unit Date 1988 January 17

Audio SC0272-SET-001 (Digital-Materials)

Our Little Radio Show with Michael Geddes

Unit ID SC0272-20

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/16315

Unit Date 1988 February 7

Audio SC0272-SET-001 (Digital-Materials)

Our Little Radio Show with Cabin Fever (Side A)

Unit ID SC0272-21

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/16316

Unit Date 1988 February 14

Audio SC0272-SET-001 (Digital-Materials)

Our Little Radio Show with John D'Earth and Robert Jospé

Unit ID SC0272-30

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/16317

Unit Date 1988 February 21

Audio SC0272-SET-001 (Digital-Materials)

Our Little Radio Show with Debbie and Peter Hunter

Unit ID SC0272-22

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/16318

Unit Date 1988 February 28

Audio SC0272-SET-001 (Digital-Materials)

Our Little Radio Show with Eddie Adcock and Talk of the Town**Unit ID** SC0272-23**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival_objects/16319**Unit Date** 1988 March 6**Audio** SC0272-SET-001 (Digital-Materials)**Our Little Radio Show with Joyce Breeden, Steve Parks and Two-Gun Terry****Unit ID** SC0272-24**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival_objects/16320**Unit Date** 1988 March 13**Audio** SC0272-SET-001 (Digital-Materials)**Our Little Radio Show with Wanda and the White Boys****Unit ID** SC0272-25**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival_objects/16321**Unit Date** 1988 March 27**Audio** SC0272-SET-001 (Digital-Materials)**Our Little Radio Show with Windfall****Unit ID** SC0272-26**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival_objects/16322**Unit Date** 1988 April 10**Audio** SC0272-SET-001 (Digital-Materials)**Our Little Radio Show with Kirk Edwards****Unit ID** SC0272-27**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival_objects/16323**Unit Date** 1988 April 17**Audio** SC0272-SET-001 (Digital-Materials)**Our Little Radio Show with Heartland****Unit ID** SC0272-28**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival_objects/16324**Unit Date** 1988 May 1**Audio** SC0272-SET-001 (Digital-Materials)**Professional Papers****Unit ID** 4**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival_objects/16280**Unit Date** 1991-2004**Scope and Content**

Professional Papers contain the papers and media created by Bersson during his tenure as a professor of Art at James Madison University. There are two folders contain documents related to significant and controversial restructuring under the Carrier Administration in 1993. Files include comments made by President Carrier during a JMU Faculty Senate Meeting in October 14, 1993, as well as other articles and reports related to faculty governance and structure.

AAUP Committee Documents**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival_objects/16325**Unit Date** 1993**Mixed Materials [1000886366]** 3 (box)**Container** 4 (folder)

Faculty Senate Documents

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/16326

Unit Date 1993-2007

Mixed Materials [1000886366] 3 (box)

Container 5 (folder)