At BGSU, we have an extensive sound archive that includes almost a million recordings in a wide variety of formats, focused most particularly on 12-inch LPs, 7-in 45s, 78s, and CDs.

Since the bulk of our archive is made up of commercial sound recordings, we have, historically, depended on traditional MARC records (and cards before that) to describe our contents. Since these are formats with established cataloging procedures in a library, this approach has the benefit of discoverability in WorldCat, consistent authority and record validation, and the inclusion of many, many access points that we find critical for the ways that our users interact with our collections. Here’s an example of a box set and the level to which we go to provide access to titles and performers.
Title: Cowabunga! [sound recordings]
Publication: Los Angeles, CA : Rhino Records, 1996
Permalink: https://maurice.bsu.edu:443/record=b113644--59

Full Details

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Notes: Surf rock music; various performers
Contains songs previously released 1960-1995
Compact discs
Booklet contains program notes by John Bair and a history of surf music

Contents
set 1. Grund aulua (1960-1963): Buldog (The Fireballs) -- Moon dawn (The Gamblers) -- Church key (The Revels, with Barbara Adams) -- Underwater (The Frogmen) -- Mr. Moto (The Belairs) -- Let's go rippin' (Dick Dale & the Del-Tones) -- Surfer's stompe (The Man-Kets) -- Surfs (Beach Boys) -- Paradise cove (The Surftones) -- Latin'ia (The Sentinals) -- Bustin' surfboards (The Tornadoes) -- Misfire (Dick Dale & the Del-Tones) -- Surf beat (Dick Dale & his Del-Tones) -- Cheater stompe (The Fabulous Payboys) -- Pipeline (Chantay's) -- Surfer Joe (long version) (The Surfaris) -- Wipe out (long version) (The Surfaris) -- The rising surf (Kshie Allen & the Pacific Surfaris) -- Surf rider (The Levy Chens) -- Shoot that curl (Chris & Kathy)

set 2. Big waves (1963): KFMB inoue (live) (Beach Boys) -- Surfin' U.S.A. (Beach Boys) -- Isabella (The Illusions) -- Body surf (Ali Aleong & the Nobles) -- Surf bungee (Gene Gray & the Stingerays) -- Soul suffer (Johnny Fortune) -- Shoot the curl (The Honeys) -- Baja (The Astronauts) -- Pintor (The Pharaoh) -- Get on ne har foam board (The New Dimensions) -- Surf city (Jan & Dean) -- Breakfast at Trestles (Rhythm Rockers) -- King of the surf guitar (Dick Dale & the Del-Tones) -- Surfin' at Mazatlan (The Centurions) -- Surfin' idolleny (M. Casey, with The K.C. Elites) -- The lonely surfer (Jack Nesbe) -- Surfer girl (The Beach Boys) -- Beaver patrol (The Blazors) -- Fiberglass jungle (The Crossfires) -- Mr. Rebel (Eddie & the Showmen)
set 3. Elbo tide (1963-1967); Penetration (The Pyramids) -- Bombora (The Surfaris) -- Heavies (The Rotations) -- Moment of truth (Dave Myers & the Surftones) -- My little surfin' woddy (The Sunsets) -- Let there be surf (The Chervells) -- Surfin' bird (The Trashmen) -- Ski storm (The Snow Men) -- Disintegration (The Ready Men) -- Beach party (Annette) -- Theme from Endless summer (The Sandals) -- New York's lonely town (The Trade Winds) -- K-99 (The Challengers) -- Tel 'em I'm surfin' (The Fantastic Baggys) -- On the run (The Rondels) -- Walk don't run '64 (The Ventures) -- I live for the sun (The Surveys) -- Malibu run (The Fender IV) -- Muriou (live) (Bobby Fuller Four) -- Hit the surf (The Sea Shells)

set 4. New Wave (1977-1995): Storm Dancer (Jon & the Nightriders) -- Goin' to Malibu (The Mailbox) -- Waves wek'n (The Surf Raders) -- Night of the living wedge (The Wedge) -- My beach (Surf Punks) -- Ten punks on boards (Corky Carroll & the Cool Water Casuals) -- The rebel (The Cruncher) -- Polaris (Insect Surfers) -- Chummin' (The Halibuts) -- Save the waves (The Surfboards) -- Desert bound (The Looney Tunes) -- Pier pressure (Tessas Del Rey) -- A night in Tunisia (Lake & the Comorans) -- Reverb 1000 (live) (Man or Astra-Man?) -- Banzai run (The Phantom Surfers) -- Spanish blue (The Aqua Velvets) -- XXI (The Boss Martians) -- Killer Dana (The Chintays) -- Honeybomb (live) (Mercury) -- Punta Baja (The Eliminators) -- Wingnut's theme (The Sandals) -- Esperanza (Dick Dale)

CCLC # 31279436
Phys. Description 4 sound discs (210 min) : digital ; 4 3/4 in. + 1 booklet (65 p. : ill. ; 29 cm.)
Other authors:
Cruncher (Musician) Performer.
Adkins, Barbara. Performer.
Dale, Dick (Guitarist) Performer.
Allen, Richie, 1940- Performer.
Along, Ike. Performer.
Gay, Gene. Performer.

page 2: contents and performers
Niino, Jack, Performer,
Mieke, Dave (Musician) Performer,
Funicello, Annette, Performer,
Carrol, Corky, Performer,
Del Rey, Teisco, Performer,
Fireballs (Musical group) Performer,
Gamblers (Musical group) Performer,
Revels (Musical group) Performer,
Frogmen (Musical group) Performer,
Belairs (Musical group) Performer,
Marketts (Musical group), Performer,
Beach Boys, Performer,
Surfriders (Musical group) Performer,
Sentinals (Musical group) Performer,
Tornados (Musical group) Performer,
Del-Tones (Musical group) Performer,
Fabulous Playboys (Musical group) Performer,
Chariots, Performer,
Surfers (Musical group) Performer,
Pacific Surfers (Musical group) Performer,
Lively Ones (Musical group) Performer,
Chris & Cathy, Performer,
Illusions (Musical group) Performer,
Noties (Musical group) Performer,
Stingrays (Musical group) Performer,
Honeys (Musical group) Performer,
Astronauts (Musical group) Performer,
Pharoa (Musical group) Performer,
New Diamonds (Musical group) Performer,
Jan and Dean, Performer,
Rhythm Rockers (Rock and roll group) Performer,
Centurians (Musical group) Performer,
K-C-Eleos (Musical group) Performer,
Blazers (Musical group) Performer,
Crossties (Musical group) Performer,
Eddie & the Showmen (Musical group) Performer,
Pyramids (Musical group) Performer,
Reations (Musical group) Performer,
Surfretes (Musical group) Performer,
Sunssets (Musical group) Performer,
Chevel's (Musical group) Performer,
Trashmen (Musical group) Performer.
Trashmen (Musical group) Performer,
Snow Men (Musical group) Performer,
Ready Men (Musical group) Performer,
Sandvik (Musical group) Performer,
Trade Winds (Rock group) Performer,
Challengers (Musical group) Performer,
Fantastic Beagles (Musical group) Performer,
Rendelks (Musical group) Performer,
Ventures (Musical group) Performer,
Sunrays (Musical group) Performer,
Fender IV (Musical group) Performer,
Bobby Fuller Four (Musical group) Performer,
Sea Sirens (Musical group) Performer,
Xan & the Nightcrawlers (Musical group) Performer,
Malaboa (Musical group) Performer,
Wedge (Musical group) Performer,
Surf Punks (Musical group) Performer,
Coral Water Casuks (Musical group) Performer,
Insect Surfers (Musical group) Performer,
Halibuts (Musical group) Performer,
As you might imagine, this level of preciousness has resulted in a huge backlog – more than half of our total numbers. Further, our old inventory system predates online catalogs by a couple of decades and is primitive, to say the least, and not available to the public.
I should note that this is the high-tech version of the many hundreds-of-pages print out that our sound recordings archivist carried around for the first 40 years of his career. It’s organized by label and simply includes label name and manufacturer number.

We realized several years ago that if we wanted the public to have access to our vast backlog, we needed to start thinking differently about description. Along came More Product, Less Process, and we had inspiration to address this overwhelming issue.

We looked closely at our cataloging process and identified several areas that we thought could result in significant changes to the time involved, if we were willing to rethink our priorities.
These included:

Authority control

All those access points

Navigation of utilities like OCLC’s Connexion or our own Innovative Sierra Client (both require lots of clicking, OKing changes, etc.)

With these ideas in mind, we decided to approach from a different angle, and turned each of these factors on its head. While it was, decidedly, painful to approach bibliographic description without authority control, verifying and establishing individual identities is the most time-consuming part of our processes because of the number of added entries and the fact that we do full NACO authorization on our performers. To develop a faster process, this had to go.

Likewise, we are very dependent on our content listings and title indexing but when we weighed that level of access against patrons having no idea what existed in our collection, we decided that this was something we could sacrifice in preliminary description. Finally all the clicking involved with cataloging something directly in our OPAC was not something anyone would miss, but we did have to devise a workflow to get around it.
In the end, our process looks like this:
For each format (and we’re doing this right now with LPs and 45s), we create a spreadsheet that includes all of the fields that we want to have in a record. These vary slightly by format, but are uniformly minimal and always include at least performer, title, label name, manufacturer number, and access information.
We then use MARC Edit, a free utility developed by Terry Reese at Ohio State University, to convert the spreadsheet data to a batch of MARC records. This set up is the most complex part of the process, but it's the key to making the whole thing work. Once you get the hang of it, it's not too hard. We do some testing to make sure that the files output by MARC Edit will load appropriately in our catalog – and this takes some tweaking – then we're ready to run.

Once we have students hired and trained, we hand over the spreadsheets to them for data entry. Our cataloger waits until there is a critical mass of spreadsheets that are filled out, then combines them by format. With this longer spreadsheet, she is able to do some spot checking for typos and mass enter certain standard fields like format and access information that the students don’t need to type.
Once this is done, she runs them through MARC Edit with the templates that we’ve already created, which results in an mrd file, that she then loads into our local catalog, and the process is finished.
Here’s an example of a complete record using this MPLP approach. It’s not a fair comparison to the record I showed you earlier since this is a single and that was a box set, but please believe me when I tell you that we could find a way to make this record at least twice as long if we were taking our traditional approach.
For brief records, we load them locally only, without loading them into our statewide consortial catalog or updating holdings in OCLC. This last concession, not loading into OCLC, is another painful one, but without initiating record creation in OCLC, it is a process that is too time consuming, especially for such incomplete records.

There are a few things we wanted to achieve in approaching a cataloging project with MPLP, but there were distinct tradeoffs, as well.
On the plus side, this approach gives us huge throughput. For instance, we currently have a CLIR Hidden Collections grant to provide access to our 45-rpm record collection. Our initial 3-year goal for this project was to create brief records for almost 65,000 titles. By the end of the first year, we had created records for almost 40,000 titles, so we’ll likely be able to double our original goal.
Another advantage is that this process lets us expand our cataloging labor force by using student assistants where we can’t afford additional professional catalogers. The process is simple enough that training goes quickly and sticks.

The downsides of this approach are the sacrifices we knew we’d be making, and they’re all ones that we decided were outweighed by the improved discoverability of our collections locally.
Lack of authority control, for instance, results in multiple entries for given artists. This is something that we can do some cleanup on after the project for artists whose works are well represented in the catalog, but you can see the difficulty in this catalog search.
Likewise, we miss the greater discoverability of having our holdings in OCLC, but at least we’re able to train our local researchers to start with our catalog.
To the future

- Full cataloging on demand
- No new backlog
- Authority clean up where possible


We’ve made several commitments to minimize the long-term effects of this process.

First, as materials are requested for listening, they are cataloged fully, creating a demand-driven cataloging queue.

We’ve also made a commitment not to build on the undocumented backlog. New materials get at least brief records before going on any shelf, and purchases go into the full cataloging queue immediately.

Finally, as mentioned earlier, when we get to major stopping points with entering records for our 45s and LPs, we’ll do at least some global updates on performer names to eliminate the current conflicts.
In the end, this strategy has been contrary to our usual approaches to description and required a fair amount of realignment of our priorities, but we’ve found that the benefits do outweigh the causes of concern and that, most importantly, our patrons are able to make better use of our collections.