

**S. J. McKEE ARCHIVES
ANNUAL REPORT
2007**

I. APPRAISAL

This year the S. J. McKee Archives placed more emphasis on the monetary appraisal of collections in excess of \$1000. As a result, a new relationship was formed with Northland Books out of Saskatoon, SK, while at the same time we continued our relationship with Spafford Books in Regina, SK. Richard Spafford and his daughter Leah, as well as Gary and Janice Shoquist of Northland Books each spent a couple of days on campus appraising two collections for the Archives:

1. W. Leland Clark fonds - MG 3 1.14 (20 m. textual records)
2. Alfred Angus Murray McPherson collection - 21-2006 (4 m. multiple media)

The combined appraised value of both collections exceeded approximately \$50,000. The actual tax receipts under federal Income Tax legislation were issued by the Development Office on behalf of the University.

II. ACCESSIONING, PROCESSING, ARRANGING AND DESCRIBING

The general accessioning, processing, arranging and describing of archival holdings continues as a central activity of the Archives. Thirty-four new accessions were added to the Archives' holdings in 2007. This cleared the bulk of the non-University records backlog of unaccessioned records. The majority of these accessions were done by archives' staff, with the exception of the W. Leland Clark fonds, which was processed, arranged and described (including file level entries in the database) by Karen Taylor. This project was made possible through a grant from the Birks' Family Foundation. In addition, the Archives hosted a high school student as part of Neelin High School's career preparation course. During her time in the Archives Jessica Taylor processed and arranged the photographs and musical scores from the Joseph H. Hughes fonds.

III. REFERENCE AND RESEARCHERS

The Archives responded to a variety of inquiries through e-mail and telephone, as well as personal visits to the Archives this year. A significant number of inquiries continue to be related to interest in historical images of Brandon. Questions related to genealogical matters were also attended to on a fairly regular basis. In 2007, a number of donors returned to the Archives to use records donated to the Archives at an earlier point. Other inquiries related to B.J. Hales Museum, the former School of Nursing at the Brandon Mental Health Centre, sculpture Victor Tolgesy, fire insurance maps for the city of Brandon, W.A. Mackintosh, Camp Hughes, and the Allen/Capitol Theatre.

Archival staff continue to provide archival reference services for the Public Communications Office, Alumni Relations and outside bodies, such as the Daly House Museum including assistance in identifying archival artifacts.

In a more general consultative fashion, the Archives – C. M. Henry - was consulted regarding our photograph storage system by members of the AMA Rural Archives Association. The University Archivist addressed the City of Brandon ad hoc General Museum and Archives Committee on the archival situation in Brandon in general. The Archives also responded to inquiries from an external researcher regarding the reporting structure of the Archives, records management and freedom of information at Brandon University.

Brandon's 125th Anniversary generated a number of inquiries related to businesses and activities in Brandon. The Archives also assisted reporters from both the *Wheat City Journal* and the *Brandon Sun* in preparing pieces, as well as providing photographs, for each publication's anniversary issue.

Students from George Buri's History of Canadian Education course used a number of fonds and collections. Also students from Education classes, Native Studies classes and English for Academic Purposes classes visited the Archives.

Perhaps the most interesting use of Archival materials this year involved the records of the A.E. McKenzie Seed Co. Ltd. A Winnipeg based horticulturalist (Biology – University of Winnipeg) and a cooperating student used these records, in particular the annual catalogues of the company, to recreate an Edwardian garden for a historical residence in Winnipeg.

IV. EXHIBITS

Tom Mitchell and C. M. Henry collaborated on the curatorial work required to put on an exhibition of photographs for Brandon's 125th Anniversary entitled "Wonder City of the Northwest." The exhibit, which drew historical images of Brandon from the Lawrence Stuckey collection and the Alfred Fowler collection, was launched at the end of June with a reception and silent auction. The exhibition and silent auction closed at the end of August. The silent auction was very successful, allowing the Archives to recover the cost of putting on the exhibit.

A previous Archive's exhibit, "Images of a Prairie City" (2004), was lent out to the Brandon Regional Health Authority for their annual general meeting and celebration of Brandon's 125th Anniversary.

V. PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES

Beginning in January 2007, Tom Mitchell in collaboration with Gordon Goldsborough began working on a special edition of *Manitoba History* in honour of Brandon's 125th Anniversary. Mitchell served as guest editor, while C.M. Henry copy-edited the issue.

Records held in the S. J. McKee Archives were used for four of the articles in the issue; a number of the Archive's photographs were also used. The publication of the issue in November was launched in the Gathering Space of the John E. Robbins Library. The event was very successful; President Louis Visentin of the University, and Dave Burgess, Mayor of the City of Brandon participated, as did Brandon native and former Chancellor of the University Kevin Kavanagh. The launch was also attended by a number of the contributors and an audience of approximately 40 people. The issue was a great success; it proved to be the best selling issue of *Manitoba History* in the history of the journal.

In February, C.M. Henry attended the *Law and Original Order* workshop in Winnipeg hosted by the Association for Manitoba Archives. The workshop was led by Loryl MacDonald from the University of Toronto Archives. The workshop focused on copyright law, privacy legislation, legislative requirements and other legal issues that apply to and impact archival materials.

In March and November, the Archives held information sessions for Patricia Birch's English for Academic Purposes class. The sessions included a brief description of what constitutes an archives and archival materials, as well as an examination of some of the Archive's holdings.

From mid-May to the end of December, Tom Mitchell was on sabbatical working on a book on the Citizens' Committee of 1000 and the Winnipeg General Strike. During Mitchell's relative absence from the Archives, C.M. Henry undertook a renovation of the Archive's Brandon University Photograph collection beginning in the summer of 2007. This renovation continues. It will require the re-processing, re-arranging, and re-describing of approximately 3000 photographs already in the Archives' database. In addition the project will require the processing, arranging and describing of an additional 3000 photographs.

On June 15, the S.J. McKee Archives hosted the Association for Manitoba Archives Rural Archives Group. The meeting was chaired by Diane Haglund, AMA Co-ordinator and held in the Convergys Learning Centre of the John E. Robbins Library. It was attended by approximately 15 rural archivists and representatives from Daly House Museum in Brandon and the ad hoc General Museum Committee of Brandon City Council. In total there were around 25 participants in the meeting.

In June, Tom Mitchell gave two lectures for the Brandon Retired Teachers Association project for Brandon's 125th Anniversary. The same month he presented slides of historical images of Brandon at Fairview; he used the same slides in a similar presentation at Hobbs Manor in October.

In October, at the request of Alumni Relations, the Archives once again created a display for Homecoming weekend. The display, which consisted of class flags, photographs, yearbooks, scrapbooks and issues of the *Quill*, was open to alumni on the morning of October 21, 2007.

This year the Archives continued working towards the microfilming of *The Brandon Daily Sun* (1900-1917). The consortium responsible for *Manitobia* received a grant from the Council on Postsecondary Education, part of which was to be used to microfilm *The Brandon Daily Sun*. The funds for this project were granted as early as 2006.

VI. RARE BOOKS

With the assistance of Shuzhen Zhao, Angie Bishoff, Joanne Walker and Karen Anderson in the Robbins Library, a number of the vintage periodicals were entered into the Library Catalogue and bound for conservation. Noteworthy among these was *The Canadian Magazine* (1893-1939) an invaluable primary source of Canadian social and cultural themes in late Victorian and Edwardian Canada. In addition, the Archive's continues the ongoing project of searching the Library Catalogue for titles to move to the Rare Books collection held in the Archives. The primary but not exclusive focus of this project concerns titles related to matters Western Canadian.

VII. HIGHLIGHTS

The descriptions of the Archives archival holdings, as well as its special collections, are now available online as a result of the purchase of the Archives Online2 interface from Andornot Consulting. The creation of the database and redesign of the Archives website was achieved through consultation with Rex Turgano of Andornot during a number of web conferences. The launch of the new database was posted on the Andornot website on September 24, 2007. The descriptions of the S. J. McKee Archives holdings and special collections can be searched at: <http://bartok.brandonu.ca/intro.aspx>.

Barb Flemington, a local artist sponsored by the Canada Council, is working on a collection of works utilizing artifacts of the former Brandon College Building. Among the artifacts she plans to use are historical blueprints held in the S. J. McKee Archives. Ms. Flemington provided valuable assistance in processing these documents that for too long have been left by the Archives in a disorganized state of affairs.

In the spring, the Archives acquired new office furniture from Brandon Business Interiors. This furniture more than doubled the available work surface in the Archives and provided much needed office storage.

C.M. Henry
Tom Mitchell
January 2008