

**S. J. McKEE ARCHIVES
ANNUAL REPORT
2009**

I. APPRAISAL

An accrual was made to the **W. Leland Clark fonds** this year, which included scrapbooks, individual files, and copies of “Brandon Politics and Politicians.” An in house monetary appraisal was conducted by Mitchell. The body of records acquired included seventeen copies – the balance of the stock of this publication - of *Brandon Politics and Politicians* (Brandon Sun, 1981) a published version of his doctoral thesis; 60 cm of textual files related to Dr. Clark’s research and teaching including many files of primary sources drawn from the Archives of Manitoba and Library and Archives Canada; and most important of all, 11 parliamentary scrapbooks containing clippings, photographs, pamphlets and campaign materials spanning Dr. Clark’s years as a member of Parliament.

II. ACCESSIONING, PROCESSING, ARRANGING AND DESCRIBING

Thirty-five new accessions were added to the Archives’ holdings in 2009. Of particular note were the **Ruth and Archie MacLachlan fonds** and the **Maureen Johnson collection**. The MacLachlan fonds consists of approximately 197 letters written by Ruth Wade and Archie MacLachlan to each other during the spring and summers of 1932, 1933 and 1934. The letters were written during the courtship of the couple and contain details not only about their lives in Brandon and Alberta but also more personal information about their relationship, families and future plans. Because Ruth and Archie were students at Brandon College during this period the letters also often reflect on events and personalities related to the College, as well as their own personal studies.

The Johnson collection contains records related to three individuals involved with Brandon College: Sarah Persis Darrach, Eileen McKenzie and Maureen Johnson. The collection includes a copy of the sound recording and program for Mr. College Spirit, a musical comedy presented by the Brandon College Literary Board and written by students James Struthers and Kenneth Gunning, a number of photographs and textual records related to student life in the 1920s and 1950s and digital photographs of Sarah Persis Darrach during her years as a nurse prior to and during the First World War.

The Archives also acquired the **Clarence Hopkin collection** in 2009. This collection consists of scrapbooks, programs from various musical and dramatic events held in the City, copies of the Brandon Collegiate Institute yearbook, as well as a number of books and photographs. The records document an important area of city life during the years between 1925-1965.

Accruals were also made to a number of fonds/collections including the **OGAMAS Aboriginal Literary Festival**, the **Northern Great Plains History Conference**, the **Jack Stothard collection** and the **Margaret (Doran) Roberts fonds**. Records of the **Brandon Festival of the Arts** were also added to the Archives through an accrual to the **Gerald Brown collection**.

III. REFERENCE AND RESEARCHERS

During 2009 the McKee archives handled reference request on matters ranging from sports scores (what was the score in the game between the hockey **Bobcats** versus North Dakota Fighting Sioux), genealogical matters, to inquiries from the President's Office, Alumni Relations, Development, Senate Office, Visual arts, the **Brandon Sun**, the Justice local history committee, the **Brandon Fire Department** on how to archive photos and textual material, to requests from a patron looking for passenger train photographs, a novelist looking for physical context for a new work of fiction, a teacher looking for archival material online for his class, a couple renovating their historic Brandon residence, and a film maker working on a production about Nellie McClung.

This year Dr. Dan Olsen's **Geography Research Methods** class spent an hour in the archives learning about how archives operate and how researchers can use them. As has been the case for several years, Dr. James Naylor's **54-437 Historical Methods and Historiography** devoted time to archival work. Each member of the class was assigned the task of completing ten item level descriptions that were RAD compliant. For each of the items described a PDF and TIFF were required: one for publication on the archives website; one for preservation purposes. In addition several of the students have undertaken research papers based on holdings in the S. J. McKee Archives.

A few deserve special mention: the Archives assisted a patron with photos and textual research in the preparation of a new book to be published by Fifth House (Saskatoon) on **Tommy Douglas**, an illustrious graduate (1930) of Brandon College. The book has been composed with a colleague at the University of Saskatchewan.

CM Henry assisted a patron with research concerning the members of the family of **A.P. McDiarmid**, the first President of Brandon College. McDiarmid was the patron's grandfather. Ms Henry shared registration cards and articles from the Brandon College Quill with the patron who subsequently made a generous donation to the archives..

A patron acting on behalf of her sister was assisted with research on species of the tomato grown in western Canada. The records of the **A.E. McKenzie Company** provided detailed a record of the kinds of tomato marketed in Western Canada since 1900.

In December 2009 the archives was pleased to be able to assist with photographs and archival audio records in the production of a promotional video for Brandon University being prepared by the Dean of Students in conjunction with the University's Chancellor **Henry Champ**.

IV. EXHIBITS

In early 2009 the Archives, in collaboration with local artist **Barb Flemington**, mounted the first exhibit in the newly renamed Tommy McLeod Curve Gallery. The exhibit, entitled “*translate*,” featured a collection of works by Flemington in which she carved blueprint images of Brandon University campus buildings from the S.J. McKee Archives onto century-old slate chalkboard salvaged from the Brandon College Building/Clark Hall renovations. The slate works were paired with a selection of S.J. McKee Archives photos selected by CM Henry. A reception was held on January 9, 2009 at which **Linda Burridge**, Tom Mitchell, Henry and Flemington spoke. Approximately forty people attended the opening of the exhibit. Both Henry and Flemington appeared on CKX’s *The Noon Show* to promote interest in the exhibit.

In April 2009 the McKee Archives provided a display on the history of photographic media in the Brandon College Alcove for an exhibition of film-based photography titled *Positive/Negative: A Celebration of Traditional Photography* that featured the work of Tim Bowles, Colin Corneau, Maggie Ross, John Scott and John Turabian.

In October Ms. Henry created a display of rare books in the Brandon College Alcove for the **OGAMAS Aboriginal Literary Festival** (October 15-17).

In October CM Henry, with the help of Jill Sutherland, created an additional two displays for Homecoming Weekend. The Brandon College Alcove was used to exhibit the archive of **Archie and Ruth McLachlan**, Class of 1933. An additional display using books from Dr. J.R.C. Evans’ library and photographs of Evans from the Archives was set up in the Gathering Space on October 24. Both collections were formally donated to the Archives as part of the Homecoming events sponsored by the Alumni Association

In December Tom Mitchell and Jill Sutherland helped Di Brandt mount an exhibit of the **Envoy Series** (a series of broadsheets containing compositions by noted Manitoba authors produced as part of a fundraising campaign by the Manitoba Writers’ Guild. Copies of the broadsheets are in Rare Books). The exhibit was in the Louis Riel Room as part of a literary event involving Brandon University authors.

V. PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES

Through the good offices of **University Librarian Linda Burridge**, Scott Grills, Vice-President Academic and Research was asked for and offered financial support for the development of the archives web site with a grant of \$2600 for the purpose of upgrading the capacity of the site to handle PDF files and to prepare PDF and TIFF versions of the **Fabian tracts** in the Robert Dudley Howland collection by Simon Fraser University. This project also required the redesign of the Special Collections portion of the website. The publication of over 200 Fabian tracts on the Special Collections section of the

Archives site was publicized on H-Albion, the online discussion list for historians of Great Britain and Ireland. Through this list, Dr. Laura Beers a historian at **Cambridge University**, Cambridge England became acquainted with our Fabian tracts and has been using them in a British labour history course.

This past summer the Archives employed two students through grants from the Heritage Grants Advisory Committee of the Provincial Heritage Branch, Government of Manitoba and the BUSU Work/Study Program. Both student projects were also funded through a generous donation made by an Archives' patron. The first student project was the digitization of approximately 1000 negatives held in the **Lawrence Stuckey collection**. The digitization, as well as the creation of descriptions to accompany the scans, was conducted by **Patrick Elves**. Mr. Elves' work was facilitated by the earlier (2003) preparation of archival descriptions by Natalie Griffiths. Elves was also able to complete scanning the items in the Alf Fowler collection. The second project, which included processing and describing the most recent (1998-2002) **Manitoba Pool Elevator records**, was conducted by **Jill Sutherland**. During her three months at the Archives, Ms. Sutherland added no less than 17 m of records, mainly for the Central Office, to the shelves and to the description database.

CM Henry undertook two projects initiated by the Association of Manitoba Archives in 2009. Images were selected from archival holdings for the AMA's **Rural and Northern Archives** calendar. This is the second year of the project's existence. Calendars are to be used to raise awareness of rural archives in Manitoba. Henry also completed a detailed inventory of sound and moving images held by the McKee Archives as part of the AMA's **Sound and Moving Images at Risk** project.

The **Brandon Daily Sun** was shipped to Philadelphia for microfilming in early June. Work on microfilming this paper of record for Brandon and southwestern Manitoba is progressing well. It is expected that the project will be completed in the spring of 2010.

VI. RARE BOOKS

In addition to the use of the **Aboriginal writers collection** for the OGAMAS exhibit, an inventory of pamphlet style items in the Aboriginal writers collection was also undertaken by Henry. The purpose of the survey was to determine how many four-fold enclosures were needed to properly preserve those items of the collection. With **Linda Burridge's** assistance the enclosures were purchased and in December Henry proceeded to house the collection in these folders.

VII. FACULTY & STAFF ACTIVITY

C.M Henry completed her **M.A. in History (Archival Studies)** through the University of Manitoba, graduating in May. She has also begun a six-part certificate course in records management through the Winnipeg chapter of **ARMA**, attending multi-day workshops in both May and September. In conjunction with these activities, the S.J. McKee Archives joined ARMA International and the Winnipeg Chapter of ARMA as institutional

members. Ms. Henry also attended AMA workshops on **Sound and Moving Image Media at Risk** (March and November) and the annual ACA Conference in Calgary (May).

In 2009, Henry continued as a member at large on the **AMA Board** and as the Archives' representative at the AMA's Rural and Northern Archives group meetings held in Winkler (April) and Boissevain (October). She also joined a sub-committee within the **Rural and Northern Archives** group responsible for the organization of a photograph exhibit and mini-conference to be held in June 2010 at Brandon University.

When the State Trembled (University of Toronto Press, forthcoming), a book co-authored by **Tom Mitchell** and Reinhold Kramer (English department), is scheduled for publication in September 2010. Tom Mitchell's review of Bill Waiser's *Who Killed Jackie Bates* appeared in the *Canadian Historical Review*, 90.3 (Sept 2009). In 2009, Mitchell also composed an entry on American "Citizens Alliances" for the *Encyclopedia of American Labor History*, ed. Melvyn Dubofsky, Distinguished Professor Emeritus, Binghamton University, SUNY. Mitchell was the keynote speaker at the AMA Annual General Meeting on September 24. In November Mitchell was interviewed for the revamped AMA Newsletter.

Mitchell also undertook to act as external examiner for the thesis defense of **Ian Richards**, a student in the joint Masters program in Archival Studies at the University of Manitoba. Mr. Richards was formerly a student at Brandon University. Mitchell also evaluated book manuscripts for the **Canadian Committee on Labour History** and the **University of Toronto Press**. In 2009, Mitchell continued as a member of Brandon University's Research Ethics Committee and the **Municipal Heritage Advisory Committee**,

C.M. Henry
Tom Mitchell
December 2009