

S. J. McKee Archives



Maria Nelson, Laura Cole and Alex McPhail interview

<http://archives.brandonu.ca/en/permalink/descriptions14492>

Part Of: Westman Oral History collection

Description Level: Item

Item Number: OH275.Nel

Accession Number: 35-1998

GMD: sound recordings

Date Range: June 1982

Physical Description: 1 audio cassette [01:02:01]

History /

Biographical:

Maria Corlette Nelson (nee Grant) was born on December 29, 1900 on the family homestead at Forrest, MB. Maria attended Clark Hall Academy at Brandon College and continued her education until she received her BA in 1925, and her Certificate of Education from Toronto in 1927. Returning to the prairies, she spent the next six years teaching. In 1930, Maria married Wesley Gordon Nelson (1899-1981) and moved to the Nelson farm in the Sparling district. The couple had three daughters, Catherine, Helen and Marion, the latter who died at 3 years of age. In 1960, Maria entered Brandon College's teacher training course (TTC). Maria Nelson died on May 16, 1996 in Winnipeg, MB. She is buried at Brandon Municipal Cemetery.

Ella Laura Cole was born on in 1897 in the RM of Elton in what is now the North End of Brandon, MB. She came to Brandon, MB in 1923 to attend business college. Laura worked for Hughes and Company for over 39 years, then worked for Gordon West until retiring in 1969. Laura was a member of Knox United Church. She never married. Laura Cole died on January 12, 1989 in Brandon, MB. She is buried at Brandon Municipal Cemetery.

Peter Alexander (P.A.) Alex McPhail was born on July 11, 1897 in the RM of Elton in what is now the North End of Brandon, MB. Raised on the family farm in Forrest, MB, he was the eldest son of Archie and Mary McPhail who came to Manitoba from Ontario. Alex took over the farm in 1915, and farmed there until 1949, when he and his family moved to Brandon. During the First World War, Alex as a lieutenant in the Royal Canadian Air Force. He married Effie Irene Weir (1900-1999) in 1933 and together they raised four children: Ronald, Malcolm, Archie and Donna. Effie and Alex were both active members of their community. Alex was especially involved in the agricultural community and won many prizes over the years for his livestock. From 1954-1965, Alex was the General Manager for the Provincial Exhibition Association of Manitoba and the Manitoba Winter Fair. He also served one term as the president of the Canadian Association of Exhibitions. Additionally, Alex was on the Brandon General Hospital board, the Brandon College board, and was a member of the Kiwanis and Shriners clubs. He was also involved in local sports. Both Alex and Effie McPhail were active members of the United Church. Alex McPhail died on June 28, 1989 in Brandon, MB. He is buried at Humesville Cemetery.

Custodial History:

As part of the Westman Oral History Collection, this collection was accessioned by the McKee Archives in 1998. The original tapes from the Westman Oral History project were deposited in the Brandon Public Library. Copies of these originals were made by Margaret Pollex of the Brandon University Language Lab at the request of Eileen McFadden, University Archivist in the early 1990s. These copies compose the collection held in the McKee Archives.

Scope and Content:

Item is an audiocassette tape containing an interview with Maria Nelson, Laura Cole and Alex McPhail about the early days in the North End of Brandon, MB. The interviewer is Effie McPhail.

Notes: History/bio information from the records and obituaries for the interviewees. Description by Christy Henry.

Language Note: English

Conservation: Preservation copy made 2021 (R. Hess)

Audio Tracks
