

# S. J. McKee Archives

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## Local history research

<http://archives.brandonu.ca/en/permalink/descriptions13668>

Other Title Info: Title based on the contents of the subseries  
Part Of: Fred McGuinness collection  
Description Level: Sub-series  
Series Number: McG 4.1  
Accession Number: 1-2015  
GMD: textual records  
Date Range: c. 1881 - 2010  
Physical Description: Approximately 42 cm of textual records

### History /

#### Biographical:

During the Great Depression, Fred McGuinness launched his career with the Brandon Sun as a paper carrier beginning in 1933. His route had him delivering papers in Brandon's downtown core, to many of the city's, now, historic or demolished buildings. Four years later he was employed in the city working for CPR telegraphs as a messenger and then as an operator. These early Brandon experiences weaved their way into McGuinness' newspaper columns, his broadcasts, and his books. In turn, McGuinness' readers shared with him their own memories about Brandon and its local history.

McGuinness was passionate about the social history of regional communities and the province as a whole. In the 1970s, McGuinness was instrumental in helping to establish the Rural Resource Centre, the predecessor to Brandon University's SJ McKee Archives. He co-authored several monographs about Manitoba's social history with Brandon University Professor Ken Coates and published a pictorial history about Brandon. He was also a community booster and was consulted to serve on, promote and write about local, provincial and rural development initiatives. In his obituary, the last piece he would publish in the Brandon Sun, McGuinness wrote that he had a "deep and continuing interest in anniversaries."

In its editorial piece on the passing of Fred McGuinness, the Brandon Sun commented that McGuinness had a "genuine interest in the stories and memories that are part of every Canadian's experience...He loved driving through small Westman towns and communities, stopping at the local coffee shop to strike up conversations with the locals." He continued writing his Diary column for the Brandon Sun and mentoring aspiring writers in his memoir writing workshops until his death in 2011.

#### Custodial History:

Accession 1-2015 contains records created and collected over the course of McGuinness' career as a newspaper journalist and freelance writer. The Estate of Fred McGuinness donated the materials to the SJ McKee Archives circa 2011. The Archives accessioned the records in 2015.

## Scope and Content:

The subseries consists of records created and collected by Fred McGuinness during his time as a journalist, editor, and freelance writer. As part of his research and writing process, McGuinness kept numerous files on various subjects and continued to add to them throughout his career. He accumulated his local history materials by personally collecting newspapers and clippings, books, and magazine articles; by readers' forwarding materials for his interest; and from workshop participants submitting memoirs and personal narratives for his interest, review and feedback.

Local history materials consist of newspaper clippings, correspondence, biographical documents and memoirs, obituaries, and manuscript drafts on Brandon (Manitoba) topics including:

the City of Brandon's origins, anniversaries (75th, centennial), reunions (Victoria 1969, Toronto 1977)

historic buildings and streets (Brandon's Central Heating System, Brandon's Fire Department, Brandon Gun Club, Brandon water power plant)

businesses (Assiniboine River ice harvest; Brandon woolen mills, skating arenas; Snellie brothers (Russell, MB); Meighen, Haddad, & Co., Prince Edward Hotel)

citizens and early pioneer/families (Armitage family, Beaubier family, Thomas Black, J.A. Brock, Henry Carroll, Q.C., Chalmer-Harden families, Clement family, Flora Cowan, Eliza Durston, William A. Elliott, Dr. Fleming, Hall family, Eleanor Kidd, Jack Lane, William Langdon, Lindenberg family, A.E. McKenzie, Margaret Muir, William Muir, W.S. Orchard, Mrs. Osmond (Griswold), General Thomas Lafayette Rosser, Harry Spafford, Allena Strath, George Treherne, Wallace family)

institutions (ACC, Brandon Research Station)

military units (181st Battalion)

museums (Commonwealth Air Training Plan Museum)

local newspapers

politicians (R.O. Lissaman, Sir Clifford Sifton)

railways (1916 Brandon trainwreck)

religious organizations (Sisters, Faithful Companions of Jesus, Beresford Church)

McGuinness also maintain files on the local history of surrounding communities, including: Birtle, Beresford, Camp Hughes, Hartney, Kemnay, Russell, and Souris.

Notes: Information in the history/biography was taken from "We're Going to Miss You, Fred," Brandon Sun, March 24, 2011, A8

Items dating to the 1880s are photocopies and transcripts of original materials

In the file level inventories, square brackets at end of file names reference the original location of the file in the unprocessed Fred McGuinness collection. The original location is also noted on the front of each file folder

Accruals: Closed

Finding Aid: A file level inventory is available

Storage Location: 2015 accessions

Related Material:

John Everitt collection

Clarence Hopkin collection

Provincial Exhibition Association of Manitoba fonds

Lawrence Stuckey collection

Jack Stothard collection

William Wallace papers

Fred McGuinness would write/publish about a topic in a number of forums. Therefore, it is possible work and correspondence pertaining to his research materials may be found in the Fred McGuinness collection Monograph series (McG 5) and subseries: Correspondence (McG 1.2), Brandon Sun (McG 2.2), Neighborly News (McG 2.3), Miscellaneous freelance (McG 3.2), Talks and workshops (McG 6.3). McGuinness also “filed” many clippings between the pages of his books in his personal library (see McG 8 Library series)

Arrangement:

Arrangement was artificially created by the Archives. Subseries has been re-arranged according to publication period

## Documents

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McG 4\_1 Local history  
research inventory.pdf

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