

S. J. McKee Archives



Fred McGuinness collection

<http://archives.brandonu.ca/en/permalink/descriptions13654>

Other Title Info:	Title based on the name of donor
Part Of:	RG 5 Western Manitoba Manuscript Collection
Description Level:	Collection
Accession Number:	1-2015
GMD:	multiple media
Date Range:	c. 1880 - 2010
Physical Description:	Approximately 7.4 m of textual records Approximately 300 photographs (unprocessed) Other media (see Material Details)
Material Details:	10 sound recordings 17 artifacts 49 booklets 3 maps 3 newsletters 18 periodicals 16 pamphlets 35 newspapers [oversize drawer]

History /

Biographical:

Popularly known as the “voice of the prairies,” Fred McGuinness was known by many titles and honorifics: wordsmith, apiarist, author, beekeeper, brother, columnist, editor, father, historian, husband, journalist, memoirist, Morse operator, member of the Order of Canada, member of the Order of Manitoba, public speaker, publisher, radio broadcaster, son, telegrapher (CP), telegraphist (Navy), vice-president, and writer.

Frederick George McGuinness (b. 21 January 1921 – d. 22 March 2011) was born in Brandon, Manitoba. He attended Park and Earl Oxford public schools. Upon his father’s death in 1933, McGuinness worked as a paper carrier for the Brandon Sun, whose route covered the City’s downtown core. In 1937, he quit school and began working for the CP Telegraph Service initially as a telegram messenger and later as a Morse code operator.

In 1939, McGuinness enlisted in the Royal Canadian Navy in Winnipeg and served as a wireless operator on the HMCS Alachassee. On 23 September 1940, McGuinness was seriously injured in a naval accident when his ship ran aground; McGuinness’ leg was broken when the ship’s tow cable snapped and he spent the next 11 months convalescing at Camp Hill Hospital in Halifax, Nova Scotia. While in hospital McGuinness contracted scarlet fever and diphtheria and developed osteomyelitis as a complication of his femur fracture. McGuinness returned to Winnipeg to continue his convalescence at Deer Lodge Hospital and was ultimately discharged from the navy in 1941.

Fred McGuinness’ newspaper, public speaking, and broadcasting career began after he

enrolled at St. Paul's College in 1941. At St. Paul's, which was affiliated with the University of Manitoba, McGuinness was able to complete his high school equivalency and university preparation courses. Additionally, in 1942, he served as a Sports Editor for St. Paul's College Crusader student newspaper.

In 1943, McGuinness began his undergraduate university career at United College, which was also affiliated with the University of Manitoba. From 1943 to 1946, McGuinness served on the student union's Public Relations Committee; in 1945, he became chairman of the Radio Subcommittee working as the Director of the University Radio Series where he was responsible (i.e., writing, casting, directing) for a half-hour Saturday afternoon radio programme. During this period McGuinness also utilized his previous military experience to work as an Assistant Veterans Counsellor in the university, and, following a recommendation from the President of the University of Manitoba, as a speaker for the War Finance Committee in the Winnipeg Area.

In 1946, McGuinness moved to Port Arthur to work in public relations with the Wartime Prices and Trade Board. He married Christine Thompson (d. 14 August 2009) in Port Arthur, Ontario on 29 June 1946. Married for 61 years, the couple had four children together: Colleen, Fred Jr., Gallagher, and Timothy.

In 1947, the couple returned to Winnipeg when McGuinness took a job as a Public Relations Officer for the National Employment Service's Unemployment Insurance Commission (UIC). During the 1950 Winnipeg Flood the UIC offices served as a communication base between the federal, provincial, and municipal governments and McGuinness received commendation from the military for his assistance during the disaster. While employed with the UIC, McGuinness also travelled the summer fair circuit with displays promoting the UIC and its benefits. During that time, Royal American Shows also hired McGuinness as its Director of Publicity and Exploitation while the show toured with the fairs on the Canadian prairies. As part of his responsibilities McGuinness had to submit weekly reports to Billboard Magazine on the Royal American fairs. McGuinness also sold his first manuscript to the CBC in 1947, recording a 14-minute broadcast titled the "Class A Circuit" about the Royal American tour, after his summer fair schedule concluded.

McGuinness continued his work with Royal American and the UIC until he accepted a position with the Saskatchewan government in 1952 to promote its upcoming 1955 golden jubilee. McGuinness worked closely with Tommy Douglas during the jubilee preparations, driving the premier to sites throughout the province. His experience with the Saskatchewan Jubilee preparations led to McGuinness being appointed as a provincial representative to the Canadian Centennial Commission in 1963.

Fred McGuinness worked with The Medicine Hat News for 10 years, starting in 1955, when he was hired as an assistant to the paper's publisher. In 1958, he was promoted to publisher of the newspaper. At the same time McGuinness was also appointed vice-president of Southam Company Limited. In addition to his administrative and editorial work, McGuinness also authored a column titled, "The Lighthouse" while employed by The Medicine Hat News. During his time in Medicine Hat, McGuinness was heavily involved with the Chamber of Commerce and community service organizations. His position within the community had him delivering talks to many local groups and working in tandem with the Chamber to actively solicit businesses to the City.

In November of 1965, McGuinness resigned as publisher of The Medicine Hat News and moved with his family to Winnipeg where he was appointed manager of the New Personnel and Information Division with James Richardson and Sons. At that time McGuinness began developing broadcast scripts for the CBC in earnest.

In November 1966, McGuinness was hired as associate editor and vice-president to the Brandon Sun. He moved to Brandon with his family and had a career with the paper until his

death in 2011. During that time McGuinness also had an extensive career as a freelance writer and journalist for the CBC, Reader's Digest, and prairie weekly newspapers, as well as authoring several books. By the 1970s, McGuinness was writing copy for CBC's Radio Noon and Information Radio, as well as producing *Ashgrove Farm*, a CBC radio drama.

During his years with the Sun, McGuinness wrote a tri-weekly "Sunbeams" (sometimes spelled "Sun Beams") column using the nom-de-plume F.A. Rosser. The F.A. stood for "Fifth and," and referenced the fact that the Brandon Sun offices and publication plant occupies the city block between 6th Street and 5th Street along Rosser Avenue, and McGuinness' office overlooked the intersection at 5th Street and Rosser Avenue. The Sunbeams column was similar in style and content to McGuinness' "Lighthouse" column for *The Medicine Hat News*; commenting on a variety of current events, Sunbeams also included book reviews, local events, and reminiscences.

In 1979, McGuinness started writing the syndicated weekly news column "Neighorly News." He would write the column for 22 years until his age-related macular degeneration (AMD), diagnosed in 2001, became an impediment to his research, writing, and editing abilities. The column initially began with a dozen subscriptions from prairie weeklies and grew to publication in 55 weeklies.

The "Neighorly News" column evolved from the interest in and the impending cancellation of McGuinness' CBC Radio broadcast "Neighorly News from the Prairies," that he hosted from 1980 to 1983. The show was cancelled in 1983 but was picked up by Altona broadcaster CFAM later that year with McGuinness at the microphone. The radio show ended its run in the summer of 1987. McGuinness continued working with the CBC, however, and is popularly known for his work as the prairie essayist for CBC Radio's *Morningside* with Peter Gzowski, a position he held for 17 years.

Many of McGuinness' *Morningside* essays were autobiographical in nature. He often reported about life on Christmas Tree Farm, a section of land where the McGuinnesses built their dream home in the late 1970s. The couple planted a Christmas tree farm on the property and Christine maintained an extensive kitchen garden, while Fred tended honey bees. Life on the farm made its way into radiobroadcasts, Neighorly News columns, and the book *Letters from Section 17: A Collection of Morningside Essays*.

Upon his retirement in January 1987, McGuinness was made publisher emeritus of the Brandon Sun. A week after his retirement, he began writing a new column for the Sun called the "Diary." McGuinness continued writing the "Diary" until his hospitalization in 2010. The Diary column was primarily a historical retrospective of Brandon, although it also touched on broader topics of interest to McGuinness during the time period.

During the 1980s and 1990s, McGuinness co-taught an undergraduate journalism class at Brandon University with English Professor John Blaikie. Around that time, he also partnered with Brandon University History Professor Ken Coates and published a number of popular books on Manitoba social history. McGuinness also delivered community workshops on memoir writing, a past time he continued until shortly before his death.

McGuinness took an active roll in the community and cultivated his interest in local history. Consequently he was invited to guest speak and chair sessions on local history, rural development, and the economy while providing his personal insights as a newspaper publisher. His previous experience with the Saskatchewan Jubilee and Canadian Centennial Commission made him a desirable committee and board member for many local organizations and planning committees. McGuinness' lifelong commitment to prairie social history, earned him numerous awards and recognitions including an honorary doctorate from Brandon University, the Order of Manitoba, and the Order of Canada.

Fred McGuinness died on 22 March 2011 in Brandon, Manitoba.

Custodial History:

Records in this collection were acquired by the S.J. McKee Archives in four accruals. Prior to their donation to the Archives the materials were in the possession of Fred McGuinness.

Accession 18-2002 contains records created and collected by Fred McGuinness until the publication of *Only in Canada*, a history of the Kinsmen Club Association in Canada co-authored with BU history professor Ken Coates. During the research and writing process for the book, originals and copies of Kinsmen Club of Canada records were amassed at the McKee Archives. Coates and McGuinness added their research materials to these records circa 1987. The Kinsmen records have since been deaccessioned by the McKee Archives and transferred to Kin Headquarters in Ontario.

Accession 6-2008 contains records created and collected during the writing of the Provincial Exhibition book, *Pride of the Land*. Fred McGuinness, who co-authored the book with Ken Coates, donated these records to the McKee Archives circa 1988. The materials in the accession relating to Souris, Manitoba, were given to McGuinness by Kay Sullivan in August 2007, and were subsequently deposited in the Archives. The material in the accession related to Kemnay, Manitoba, was given to Colleen McGuinness (Fred's daughter) by Mona McKinnon (nee Corkish) in the fall of 2007. Colleen then passed the materials on to her father, who in turn donated them to the S.J. McKee Archives.

Accession 20-2009 contains records created and collected by Fred McGuinness over the course of his career as a newspaper journalist and during the research and writing period of the Brandon history book, *The Wheat City*. Records remained in his possession at his home until their transfer to the McKee Archives on July 28, 2009.

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

Scope and Content:

The records in this collection touch on every aspect of Fred McGuinness' life. From his childhood, his education, his war experience, his newspaper and freelance career, his work in radio and public speaking, and his family the collection covers both his personal and professional life. In addition to the records created by McGuinness, there are also records created and collected by a variety of his relatives (on both sides of the family), as well as correspondence from his readers. The collection includes newspaper clippings, research materials, letters, certificates, scrapbooks, photographs, books, periodicals, pamphlets, sound recordings, artifacts, maps, newsletters, magazines, teaching materials, workshop materials, and financial records.

Because of McGuinness' wide-ranging interests, the records include a significant number of subjects, both within his own writing and correspondence, but also within his library. They would be of particular interest to researchers who share McGuinness' passions for local history and rural topics.

The scope and importance of McGuinness' work in the prairies also resulted in a number of noteworthy honors, in particular the Order of Manitoba and the Order of Canada. The collection contains materials related to both.

The Fred McGuinness collection consists of nine (9) series further divided into subseries, including: (McG 1) Personal papers; (McG 2) Newspaper career; (McG 3) Freelance; (McG 4) McGuinness research materials; (McG 5) Monographs; (McG 6) Broadcasts, lectures, workshops; (McG 7) McGuinness artifacts and sound recordings; (McG 8) McGuinness library; and (McG 9) McGuinness photographs.

See the Arrangement Note for a more detailed breakdown of the collection's arrangement.

Notes:

The description of the Fred McGuinness collection was made possible by financial assistance from: The Manitoba Government Department of Tourism, Culture, Heritage Sport and Consumer Protection through the Manitoba Heritage Grants Program & The Fred McGuinness Endowment for Rural Archives, Brandon University

Information for the history/biography was compiled by the Archives and can be found in the Fred McGuinness timeline containing footnotes (see the S.J. McKee Archivist). Additional information was taken from his book, Letters from Section 17: A Collection of Morningside Essays, which is autobiographical in nature

Description by Suyoko Tsukamoto and Christy Henry (2015)

Finding Aid:

A file level inventory is available for each subseries, see subseries descriptions

Storage Location:

2015 accessions
Oversize drawer ?
RG 5 photograph drawer

Related Material: William Frederick McGuinness sous-fonds
Ray Bailey fonds
John Everitt collection
Clarence Hopkin collection
Provincial Exhibition Association of Manitoba fonds
Lawrence Stuckey collection
Jack Stothard collection
Trillium Business and Professional Women's Club records
Oriole Vane-Veldhuis collection
William Wallace papers
Fred McGuinness local history collection (John E. Robbins Library)
CBC Radio Archives – Morningside
Trent University, Peter Gzowski fonds (99-015)
Kin Headquarters, Mississauga

Arrangement:

The arrangement was artificially created by the Archives with the intention of grouping like materials. Records within files were placed in chronological order wherever possible. An inventory of the prearranged materials is available (consult the Archivist)

McG 1 Personal papers

McG 1.1 McGuinness family papers and letters
McG 1.2 Fred McGuinness correspondence
McG 1.3 Fred McGuinness Ltd. business documents
McG 1.4 Fred McGuinness certificates and scrapbook

McG 2 Newspaper career

McG 2.1 The Medicine Hat News
McG 2.2 The Brandon Sun
McG 2.3 Neighborly News

McG 3 Freelance

McG 3.1 Reader's Digest
McG 3.2 Miscellaneous freelance

McG 4 McGuinness research

McG 4.1 Local history research materials
McG 4.2 Newspaper clippings

McG 5 Monographs

McG 5.1 Pride of the Land (1985)
McG 5.2 Only in Canada (1987)
McG 5.3 Old Pathways, New Horizons (1995)
McG 5.4 Manitoba: The Province & The People (1987)
McG 5.5 The Keystone Province: Manitoba Enterprise (1988)

McG 5.6 The Wheat City (1988)
McG 5.7 Chronicle of Canada (1990)

McG 6 McGuinness broadcasts, lectures, workshops

McG 6.1 Radio broadcast scripts
McG 6.2 BU Journalism course
McG 6.3 Talks and workshops

McG 7 McGuinness artifacts and sound recordings

McG 8 McGuinness library

McG 8.1 Books
McG 8.2 Booklets
McG 8.3 Maps, newsletters, and periodicals
McG 8.4 Pamphlets
McG 8.5 Magazines and newspapers (oversize)

McG 9 McGuinness photographs

6-2008 photographs
20-2009 photographs
1-2015 photographs



Fred McGuinness certificates and scrapbook

<http://archives.brandonu.ca/en/permalink/descriptions13659>

Other Title Info: Title based on the contents of the subseries

Part Of: Fred McGuinness collection

Description Level: Sub-series

Series Number: McG 1.4

Accession Number: 1-2015

GMD: multiple media

Date Range: c. 1939 - 1960s

Physical Description: Approximately 51.5 cm records

History /

Biographical:

See collection level description for history/biography information on Frederick George McGuinness.

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:

Subseries consists of records created and collected by Fred McGuinness during his years in the Canadian navy, college, and as a journalist and publisher with The Medicine Hat News.

The subseries includes of variety of certificates pertaining to McGuinness' marriage, volunteer work, professional memberships, and awards. The scrapbook contains ephemera (e.g., photographs, newspaper clippings, programmes, invitations, certificates, napkins) during McGuinness' early years in the navy, college, and at The Medicine Hat News.

Notes: 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: File level inventory is available for the certificates

Storage Location: 2015 accessions

Related Material: Materials from McGuinness' time during his navy and college years may be found in the Personal papers series (McG 1). Materials pertaining to his time at The Medicine Hat News are in the Newspaper career series (McG 2)

Arrangement:

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

Document Not
Available

(Copyright
Restrictions)

McGuinness library

<http://archives.brandonu.ca/en/permalink/descriptions13683>

Other Title Info:	Title based on the contents of the series
Part Of:	Fred McGuinness collection
Description Level:	Series
Series Number:	McG 8
Accession Number:	1-2015
GMD:	multiple media
Date Range:	c. 1882-2010
Physical Description:	Approximately 2 m 83 books and other materials (see Material Details Note)
Material Details:	49 booklets 3 maps 3 newsletters 18 periodicals 16 pamphlets 35 newspapers [oversize drawer]

History /

Biographical:

The publications in this series were collected by Fred McGuinness during the course of his career as a newspaperman. McGuinness' personal library contained over 500 volumes pertaining to local history. He regularly consulted these materials when writing his radio broadcasts, newspaper columns, and monographs. McGuinness was known to file related materials (e.g., correspondence, newspaper clippings, invitations) between book covers of various titles.

McGuinness donated a substantial portion of his personal library to Brandon University's John E. Robbins Library when he moved to River Heights Terrace (Brandon, Manitoba). That collection can be found in BU's library catalogue under the McGuinness local history collection. The titles McGuinness retained upon his move were donated to the McKee Archives by his estate 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.

Accession 20-2009 contain records created and collected by Fred McGuinness over the course of his career as a newspaper journalist and during the research and writing period of the Brandon history book, *The Wheat City*. Records remained in his possession at his home until their transfer to the McKee Archives on July 28, 2009.

Accession 6-2008 contains records created and collected during the writing of the Provincial Exhibition book, *Pride of the Land*. Fred McGuinness, who co-authored the book with Ken Coates, donated these records to the McKee Archives circa 1988. The materials relating to Souris, Manitoba, were given to McGuinness by Kay Sullivan in August 2007, and were subsequently deposited in the Archives.

Scope and Content:

This series contains publications collected by Fred McGuinness during the course of his lifetime as a newspaperman. McGuinness was a well-known local history enthusiast and frequently wrote about Brandon's local history. Many of his readers forwarded booklets and pamphlets for his consideration and review.

Materials in this series include books, booklets pamphlets, periodicals, newspapers and maps. Subjects include, but are not exclusive to: the city of Brandon, the town of Souris, memoirs, family histories, Canadian Pacific Railway, and local businesses.

Accruals:	Closed
Finding Aid:	A file level inventory is available
Storage Location:	All library titles, except the newspapers in the McGuinness oversize drawer, are located in Special Collections

Arrangement:

Arrangement was artificially created by the Archives.

McG 8 McGuinness library

McG 8.1 Books

McG 8.2 Booklets

McG 8.3 Maps, newsletters, and periodicals

McG 8.4 Pamphlets

McG 8.5 Magazines and newspapers (oversize)

Documents



McGuinness artifacts and sound recordings

<http://archives.brandonu.ca/en/permalink/descriptions13682>

Other Title Info:	Title based on the contents of the series
Part Of:	Fred McGuinness collection
Description Level:	Series
Series Number:	McG 7

Document Not
Available

(Copyright
Restrictions)

Accession Number: 1-2015
GMD: multiple media
Date Range: c. 1985-1990
Physical Description: 17 artifacts
10 sound recordings

History /

Biographical:

Artifacts in this series were collected by Fred McGuinness during the course of his lifetime as a community volunteer and newspaperman. Beginning in the mid-1930s through the Second World War, McGuinness worked with the Canadian Pacific Telegraph service in Brandon and Winnipeg. McGuinness frequently wrote about those early experiences in his newspaper columns, journals, and monographs.

In the early 1950s, while McGuinness worked as a publicist with the Unemployment Insurance Commission in Winnipeg, he volunteered with community organizations such as the Winnipeg Community Chest Drive. From 1953 to 1955, McGuinness worked as an organizer for the Province of Saskatchewan's 1955 Golden Jubilee.

After the Saskatchewan Jubilee, McGuinness worked with The Medicine Hat News as a journalist and publisher from 1955 to 1965. During that time, McGuinness became heavily involved with the Medicine Hat Chamber of Commerce. His community and business connections resulted in his appointment as a fundraiser for the Medicine Hat Junior College Library, a building project intended to see the City established with its own college.

After his work with the Saskatchewan Jubilee, McGuinness was asked to be a Regional Director for the Canadian Centennial Commission from 1965 to 1967. During that time, McGuinness returned to his hometown of Brandon in 1966, to start a 20-year career with the Brandon Sun as a publisher and vice-president. McGuinness' interest in local history, of which he often wrote, made him the recipient of local ephemera from his readers.

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:

This series contains artifacts collected by Fred McGuinness during the course of his lifetime as a community volunteer and newspaperman. The artifacts include one telegraph sounder, four letterpress blocks, five typesetter rulers, two patches, two buttons, one token, one tin box, and ten sound recordings.

The telegraph sounder and relay system was possibly a gift from Bill Flett, a CPR superintendent. In his story "Canadian Pacific" published in *Letters from Section 17* (1999), McGuinness mentions receiving a package containing telegraph equipment while he was working at the *Brandon Sun*. The tin box in McGuinness' collection contained copies of telegraphs announcing the end of the war.

Two letterpress type blocks have the letters "WM" which may represent the initials of Fred McGuinness' father William McGuinness. J.R. Langford donated the "Colquhoun and Beattie" type plate to McGuinness, a known collector of Brandon local history. Mr. Beattie had gifted the plate to Lanford's father who worked as a barber in Brandon in 1906. The *Brandon Sun* letterpress is likely from the period when McGuinness worked at the *Brandon Sun*.

The five typesetter rulers come from a variety of typesetter and newspaper companies and include Teletypesetter (Chicago, IL), 6 Cutting Limited (Montreal, Toronto, Winnipeg), Mergenthaler Linotype Company (Brooklyn, NY), and *The Edmonton Journal*.

The two buttons in the collection come from McGuinness' time as a community-volunteer in Winnipeg, Manitoba. One button is from the Community Chest Drive, the other button is a guest badge from the 1953 Provincial Exhibition of Manitoba.

The two patches are from the Saskatchewan Golden Jubilee (1955). Photographs of Saskatchewan Jubilee events and participants wearing the patch on their blazers can be found in the McGuinness photograph collection.

McGuinness saved a Medicine Hat College Official Opening Token from October 3, 1971. McGuinness was likely at the opening as he was originally involved in the establishment of the junior college in the 1960s.

The sound recordings in McGuinness' collection largely pertain to centennial events, which McGuinness helped organize. There is one box set containing four records of the Saskatchewan Golden Jubilee Choir. Tucked in this volume is an additional record of the Choir recorded at CKCK, Regina, Saskatchewan. Also stored within the box set was a copy "Canada, A Centennial Song."

Accruals:	Closed
Finding Aid:	A file level inventory is available
Storage Location:	2015 accessions
Arrangement:	
	Arrangement was artificially created by the Archives

Documents

Document Not
Available

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McG 7 McGuinness
artifacts and sound
recordings inventory.pdf

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