

S. J. McKee Archives



Provincial exhibition of Manitoba tickets

<http://archives.brandonu.ca/en/permalink/descriptions4360>

Part Of: RG 2 Provincial Exhibition of Manitoba Association fonds
Description Level: Series
Fonds Number: RG2SF1
Series Number: 1.8
GMD: multiple media
Date Range: 1951, 1955-1973
Physical Description: 13 cm textual records
tickets, badges, ribbons

History /

Biographical:

The records are a product of the administrative staff of the Provincial Exhibition of Manitoba.

Custodial History:

The records were housed with the PEM and the MEA until c1986 when they were transferred to the S.J. McKee Archives at Brandon University.

Scope and Content:

The series contains letters regarding complimentary tickets in 1951 and 1955. As well, the series contains examples of tickets, badges, and ribbons used or worn by guests and exhibitors to the provincial exhibitions from 1955 to 1973. There is also a pin from the 1909 Inter-Provincial Fair.

Notes: Part of RG2SF1. Inventory of documents in the series is available in the printed finding aid.

Storage Location: RG 2 Provincial Exhibition of Manitoba Association fonds
RG2SF1 Provincial Exhibition of Manitoba



RG 2 Provincial Exhibition of Manitoba Association fonds

<http://archives.brandonu.ca/en/permalink/descriptions4351>

Part Of: RG 2 Provincial Exhibition of Manitoba Association fonds
Description Level: Fonds
GMD: multiple media
Date Range: 1884-1992
Physical Description: 9.46 m textual records; 1919 photographs & graphics

History /

Biographical:

Brandon, Manitoba was incorporated as a city in 1881. In 1882, led by Charles Whitehead and a small Board of Directors that included J.W. Vantassel, Charles Pilling, George Halse, J.E. Smith, William Johnson, R.T. Evans, and Thomas Lockhart, it was decided to hold an

agricultural exhibition. These men were all involved in the farm business in one way or another, and they wanted an opportunity to help residents realize the agricultural potential of the region. In October of that year, the fledgling community held its first agricultural exhibition. The fair was held in downtown Brandon at what was known as "Market Square." Market Square was two acres of land located on Princess Avenue between Eighth and Ninth Streets. Due to poor weather, and the fact that not many people were ready to show animals and grain, there was a relatively small turnout. The following year was much improved. There were 730 entries into the exhibition. By 1884, the Board of Directors of the Brandon Agricultural Society, which was in charge of the exhibition, realized that they were in poor financial shape, to the point of being personally out of pocket. It was realized that October was not the best time for farmers to be leaving their farms to go to an exhibition. In 1888, it was decided to move the exhibition to the summer time, when it was much easier for people to attend.

The first Brandon Summer Fair was held in July 1889, and it was a resounding success. The Board of Directors had added many items of interest to appeal to the entire public, not just agricultural people. In 1892, the Western Agricultural and Arts Association (WAAA) was formally established to take over duties from the Brandon Agricultural Society. However, it was not until 1897 that the WAAA held its first meeting. There is no explanation as to why there is a five year gap between the formation and the first meeting of this organization. 1897 was the turning point of the Brandon Exhibition. The fair was now firmly established in Brandon, and the Board of Directors was instrumental in ensuring that it remained so. This was done by petitioning to both the municipal and provincial governments for grant money. As well, the Board booked midway and grandstand acts that would bring the city dwellers to the agricultural exhibition.

There were also early attempts at holding an agricultural exhibition in the winter. The first such attempt was in 1884. There was also a Spring Stallion show held in 1891. By 1904, however, a petition by J.D. McGregor had gone out to formally establish a winter exhibition. This effort also failed, but by 1906, it was decided by businessmen, politicians, and farm representatives in Brandon, including McGregor, to organize a winter fair. Rather than seeing this new fair as competition, the Board of Directors of the summer fair felt that it would complement their exhibition. The new fair would remain primarily agricultural. The first winter fair was held in 1906. While the two fairs were not amalgamated, they did share the same secretary-manager. The secretary-manager was responsible for the day to day management of the fair, as well as keeping track of meetings and decisions reached by the various fair boards and committees. In 1907, the Brandon Winter Fair and Livestock Association (BWFLA) was formed to act primarily as a land-holding joint stock company. The following year the Provincial Winter Fair and Fat Stock Association (PWFFSA), an entirely separate organization from the BWFLA, was formed to manage the activities of the winter fair. The PWFFSA name was soon changed to the Manitoba Winter Fair and Fat Stock Association (MWFFSA).

By 1906, Brandon could boast two full size exhibitions, one in the summer and one in the late winter, both of which were considered to be premiere events. In 1908, the Brandon summer fair was renamed the Inter-Provincial Exhibition, and in 1912 it held its first Traveller's Day, an event which would soon become an important addition to the fair and is still in existence today. It is thought that the name "Traveller's Day" came from the fact that it was held on a Saturday, a day when many people could travel to Brandon for the exhibition.

In 1913, Brandon was bestowed with the honour of hosting the Dominion Exhibition. This was a national exhibition sponsored by the federal government. It was held in a different city every year. There were several cities vying for the 1913 Dominion Exhibition, but it was Brandon that impressed the sponsors the most. With the government funds received for this honour, the Board of Directors supervised the building of a new grandstand, display buildings, and racetrack, as well as the general expansion and improvements to the fairgrounds.

In the spring of 1912, it was decided by the Board of Directors of the winter fair that the facilities they were currently housed in were inadequate for their needs. The mayor and city

clerk of Brandon went to the provincial legislature in order to request that there be an amendment added to the Brandon city charter. This amendment would allow the city to guarantee bonds issued by the winter fair board to help pay for the construction of a new facility. This request was granted, and a \$70 000 addition was built next to the original winter fair building. The new building was opened in 1913.

Throughout the First World War, both the winter fair and Provincial Exhibition buildings were used for the war effort. There was one distinct difference however. The summer fair Board was able to negotiate a deal with the army that enabled it to reclaim the fair buildings during fair week. The winter fair, however, had to give up the idea of holding fairs in 1915 and 1916. It was not until 1917, that the winter fair was able to resume.

During this time, due to the financial problems that had beset the winter fair, the two exhibitions considered amalgamation. The Board of Directors of the winter fair felt that because they were the smaller of the two fairs, their interests would be swallowed up by the summer fair. The winter fair withdrew from the negotiations to amalgamate. With this rather sudden turn of events, the Board of Directors of the summer fair petitioned the government to be allowed to incorporate. This was granted, and in 1920, the WAAA was incorporated as the Provincial Exhibition of Manitoba. From 1920, the summer fair was officially known as the Provincial Exhibition of Manitoba. This was the first time that the summer fair was incorporated, and received the "status and financial assistance" that came with incorporation.

More problems beset the winter fair in the 1920s. In 1920, a fire burned down the winter fair pavilion, located at the south end of the winter fair buildings, and caused the Board to cancel the 1921 winter fair. It was not until 1922, that a new building was completed. By 1929, both fairs were well regarded throughout Canada. In 1929, a decade long Depression hit the west. While many fairs closed during this time, Brandon struggled to keep its open. The Directors of both fairs felt that the agricultural shows "encouraged excellence at a time when faith and enthusiasm were at a low ebb." The summer fair proved to be quite successful during the Depression, likely as a result of the few moments one was able to forget one's troubles while there. The winter fair was not quite as successful, although both fairs received government grants and work relief projects. There was little new entertainment in these exhibitions.

There were changes about to manifest themselves at the summer fair, however. While the winter fair had representatives from various associations on its Board of Directors, the summer fair Board of Directors was a small close-knit group of men. Citizens saw entry into this elite group as elusive and difficult. To ward off the possibility of the Board becoming a "self-sustaining clique," that only chose Directors from within, it was decided by several citizens to try and elect some new blood into the fair Board. In 1933, there was a general election for the Board. Instead of the usual men shuffling positions, there were forty-four nominations for the twenty positions. When the voting was all over, seven new men sat on the Board. Despite some inner rumblings, especially on the summer fair Board over the next few years, both exhibitions survived the Depression.

During the Second World War the fairs once again were forced to operate under adversity. Once again, the buildings were requisitioned for the army, although they were released during fair week. The summer fair was forced to make several concessions, and the winter fair was relocated to the summer fair grounds for the duration.

The winter fair did not survive the Second World War intact. Due to financial reasons, in December of 1945, the Board of Directors turned the winter fair buildings over to the City of Brandon. By 1946, the BWFLA, which was the joint-stock land holding company, had ceased operations because the city now controlled the winter fair land and buildings.

The next fifteen years would be a time of rebuilding for both of Brandon's exhibitions. Children especially were more active participants in the agricultural exhibitions. The summer fair continued to diversify and look for new ways of entertaining the public at large. The winter fair

remained primarily agricultural. By the end of the 1950s the winter fair, which was used to struggling, was now both successful and stable; and the summer fair, a perennial success, was starting to fade.

By 1969, both the winter and summer fair Boards had realized that amalgamation was the best possible decision, both practically and financially, for the future of the two fairs. On 29 October, 1969, the two exhibitions amalgamated to become the Manitoba Exhibition Association. The reconstituted Provincial Exhibition of Manitoba was now responsible for both the winter and summer fairs. A new building was erected on the summer fair grounds to house both of the exhibitions. On 2 April 1973, the Keystone Centre was officially opened at the winter fair, although it had been in use since October of the preceding year.

In 1970, Manitoba's Centennial, it was decided that an organization in Manitoba would receive the title of "Royal," as a way to celebrate the centennial. Although many organizations applied for the honour, it was the Brandon winter fair that received the accolades. The winter fair was bestowed with the title "Royal", and became known as the Royal Manitoba Winter Fair.

In 1975, a third exhibition was added, this time a purely agricultural fall show known as the Agricultural Exhibition, or AgEx. This fair was partly organized on behalf of the cattle growers, who found that the summer and winter fairs did not give them adequate time and space to properly show their cattle. The return to a fall show, which had not existed since 1888, would be the return to a purely agricultural exhibition. This show was to be primarily a show and sale event. On 3 November 1975, the first AgEx was opened to resounding success.

The Provincial Exhibition of Manitoba, the Royal Manitoba Winter Fair and AgEx are all still in existence in Brandon. They are regarded as three of the most important events to take place annually in the city.

Custodial History:

These files were housed with the Manitoba Exhibition Association until c1986 when they were transferred to the S.J. McKee Archives at Brandon University.

Scope and Content:

The fonds consists of textual records and photographs comprised of the records from the three annual exhibitions that are held in Brandon, Manitoba: the Provincial Exhibition of Manitoba, the Royal Manitoba Winter Fair, and the Agricultural Exhibition (Ag-Ex). The textual records include prize lists, programs, minutes, financial, administrative files, original results, scrapbooks, tickets, news releases, contracts, by laws, documents as well as a miscellaneous section. There are approximately 1846 photographs that include scenes from these three exhibitions. These records provide a unique perspective on the development of agriculture and rural life in southwestern Manitoba. Fairs such as these have been and remain prime media of farm improvement, technological and scientific advancement in rural Canada, and the promoters of country living. These fairs also reflected the long tradition inherited from Britain and Europe of country fairs as centers of entertainment, social interchange and diversion. These records are a principal source of information about the most broadly based vocational, entertainment and social events held on an annual basis in southwestern Manitoba over the last century. The records are vital to academic research on agriculture or fairs, individual biography, or community history.

Notes: The RG 2 Provincial Exhibition of Manitoba Association finding aid was created by Karyn (Riedel) Taylor with the exception of Series 9 and the accompanying database, which were created by Donica Belisle. This finding aid was created in August 1999.

Name Access: Charles Whitehead
J.W. Vantassel
Charles Pilling
George Halse

Subject Access:	Brandon Agricultural Society Provincial Exhibition of Manitoba Royal Manitoba Winter Fair Agricultural Exhibition Brandon Manitoba AgEx
Repro Restriction:	Researchers are responsible for observing Canadian copyright restrictions.
Finding Aid:	Available
Storage Location:	RG 2 Provincial Exhibition of Manitoba Association fonds
Storage Range:	RG 2 Provincial Exhibition of Manitoba Association fonds
Related Material:	Additional records regarding the Provincial Exhibition of Manitoba, the Royal Manitoba Winter Fair, and AgEx are housed at the Provincial Exhibition of Manitoba Association offices. To gain access to these records, it is necessary to contact the general manager of the Provincial Exhibition of Manitoba Association.

Arrangement:

The fonds is divided into sous-fonds by exhibition. There is a Provincial Exhibition sous-fonds, a Royal Manitoba Winter Fair sous-fonds, an Ag-Ex sous-fonds, and a Miscellaneous sous-fonds that holds information that could not be easily broken down into one exhibition. The arrangement is as follows:

RG 2 Provincial Exhibition Association of Manitoba fonds

RG2SF1 Provincial Exhibition of Manitoba

- 1.1 Documents
- 1.2 Minutes
- 1.3 Financial Records
- 1.4 Administrative Files
- 1.5 Prize Lists and Programs
- 1.6 News Releases
- 1.7 Original Results
- 1.8 Tickets
- 1.9 Photographs
- 1.10 Scrapbooks
- 1.11 Miscellaneous

RG2SF2 Royal Manitoba Winter Fair

- 2.1 Documents
- 2.2 Minutes
- 2.3 Financial Records
- 2.4 Administrative Files
- 2.5 Prize Lists and Programs
- 2.6 News Releases
- 2.7 Original Results
- 2.8 Tickets
- 2.9 Photographs
- 2.10 Scrapbooks
- 2.11 Miscellaneous

RG2SF3 AgEx

- 3.4 Administrative Files
- 3.5 Prize Lists and Programs
- 3.6 News Releases
- 3.7 Original Results
- 3.9 Photographs

RG2SF4 Miscellaneous

- 4.1 Documents
- 4.2 Minutes
- 4.3 Financial Records
- 4.4 Administrative Files
- 4.9 Photographs
- 4.10 Scrapbooks
- 4.11 Miscellaneous



Brandon University Art Exhibition Committee

<http://archives.brandonu.ca/en/permalink/descriptions4065>

Part Of: RG 6 Brandon University fonds
Description Level: Sub-series
Series Number: 9.3
Accession Number: 69-1997
GMD: multiple media
Date Range: 1960-1972
Physical Description: 44 cm textual records; approx. 20 photographs

History /

Biographical:

The Brandon College and Brandon University Art Exhibition Committee was active from 1960 to 1972. The Committee was established to promote the visual arts in Brandon through education and to sponsor exhibitions featuring the work of local artists.

Custodial History:

The records were assembled by Robert Inch of the Brandon University Extension Office and Professor D.V. Reilly, who taught art through the Faculty of Education at Brandon University. They were donated to the McKee Archives in 1997.

Scope and Content:

The sub-series contains records of past exhibitions, minutes and correspondence of the Brandon University Art Exhibition Committee. Sub-series also contains personal files on some artists consisting of correspondence and information pertaining to exhibitions of their work. There are also extensive files on past exhibits including advertising, correspondence, newspaper clippings, publications and files concerning local affiliated art clubs, such as the Student Camera Club at Brandon University.

Name Access: Gissar Elliason
Bernard Polly
Ken Esler
Mikuska Eyre

Subject Access: pottery
Japanese prints
ceramics
textiles

Repro Restriction: Researchers are responsible for observing Canadian copyright restrictions.

Storage Location: RG 6 Brandon University fonds
Series 9: Office of Extension



Archives - exhibits and displays

<http://archives.brandonu.ca/en/permalink/descriptions7981>

Part Of: RG 6 Brandon University fonds

Description Level: Sub sub series

Series Number: 8.2.4

GMD: multiple media

Date Range: 2004-2007

Scope and Content:

Sub sub series consists of archival exhibits and displays, as well as records generated to create the displays.

Storage Location: RG 6 Brandon University fonds
Series 8: Library Services
8.2 S.J. McKee Archives



RG2SF2 Manitoba winter fair

<http://archives.brandonu.ca/en/permalink/descriptions4364>

Part Of: RG 2 Provincial Exhibition of Manitoba Association fonds

Description Level: Sous-fonds

Fonds Number: RG2SF2

GMD: multiple media

Date Range: 1908-1992

Physical Description: 2.65 m textual records
780 graphics

History /

Biographical:

The first attempts to hold a winter agricultural fair in Brandon happened in 1884, when a show was held in the buildings owned by A. Harrison and Company. However, this did not become an annual event. There were also several unsuccessful attempts to establish annual Stallion Sales in the late spring by horsemen in the area. In 1904, J.D. McGregor petitioned Brandon City Council for a winter fair. The petition was accepted by the city, and in 1906 Brandon's first winter fair was held. It was a big success, and the Board of Directors looked forward to it becoming an annual event. The summer fair, which had been in operation since 1882 welcomed this new exhibition. The Board of the summer fair felt that a winter fair would be complementary to the summer exhibition. Although the two fairs were not amalgamated, they did share a secretary-treasurer and several Board members.

In 1907, the Cattle Breeders Association decided to make the Brandon Winter Fair the site of its annual stock sale. With this support, it was felt that the winter fair would become an annual event. A joint stock company was created in 1907 entitled the Brandon Winter Fair and Livestock Association (BWFLA), to be used primarily as a land-holding company. Land was purchased at Tenth Street and McTavish Avenue in order to erect a winter fair building.

The following year, the Provincial Winter Fair and Fat Stock Association was created to manage the winter fair. The name was soon changed to the Manitoba Winter Fair and Fat Stock Association (MWFFSA). Unlike the summer fair, the winter fair was solely an agricultural event. The Board felt no need to please the citizens with carnivals and midways. The winter fair was "by and for the farmers...[and]...the primary functions of the Brandon Winter Fair were to

educate the agricultural community and to honour the community's accomplishments."

Additional land was bought on Eleventh Street and Victoria Avenue to build a new winter fair building. The building opened in 1913. By this time, the Brandon Winter Fair was one of the best livestock and agricultural exhibitions in the province.

When the First World War broke out, the winter fair buildings were requisitioned by the military for troop accommodation and eventually as a detention centre for Ukrainian internees and other "enemy aliens." Unlike the summer fair, which was allowed to use their buildings during fair week, the winter fair buildings were not released for the exhibition. This led to the cancellation of both the 1915 and 1916 winter fairs.

By 1917 the winter fair was allowed to open again, but by this time both the BWFLA and the MWFFSA were experiencing financial difficulties. It was at this time that the proposal first went out regarding an amalgamation of the summer and winter fairs. The provincial government approved of the idea of an amalgamation, and both fair Boards considered the proposal. However, in early 1920 the winter fair Board pulled out of the discussions, as it felt that the winter fair would lose out to the WAAA. The winter fair Board decided to struggle on independently.

Financial problems heightened Board concerns that the winter fair was not exciting enough to keep the public interest. To add to the financial concerns of the winter fair board, in the fall of 1920, the old winter fair pavilion caught fire and burned. Forty six horses were killed and the fair Board had to cancel the 1921 winter fair. When the new winter fair building opened in 1922, it was greeted with enthusiasm. The Directors, in an attempt to ease the increasing financial burden they were feeling, tried to keep the buildings open year round for other events.

In 1929, the Depression began in Canada. While the winter fair continued to run, its buildings were once again requisitioned by the government, this time to house men looking for work. The winter fair Directors were conscious of the problems that the citizens of Brandon were facing, and they offered free admission to those on relief. The fair received grants from the government to provide work relief programs, but these were often small or canceled. The Board members may have resorted to helping to pay for the fair out of their own pockets.

Despite financial problems, the winter fair managed to survive the Depression. Unfortunately, as Brandon recovered from the Depression of the 1930s, the Second World War broke out. For the third time in as many decades, the government requisitioned the winter fair buildings. This time, however, instead of canceling the fair as in previous years, the winter fair went on as scheduled, although it was held on the summer fair grounds.

By 1945, the directors were at a loss financially. They decided that the best course of action in order to keep the fair going was to turn over the buildings to the City of Brandon. By the fall of 1946 the BWFLA had ceased operations.

While the Manitoba Winter Fair and the Provincial Exhibition of Manitoba were still not amalgamated, they continued to share the same secretary-manager and several Board members. After the cessation of the war, the Directors knew they had to become more appealing to the wider public. There were promotional events held and more entertainment was offered to attract the public. These additions led to dissension among Board members, as some wanted the fair to remain purely agricultural. The appeal for the greater good of the fair, even if it did include some non-agricultural attractions, eventually won out.

The fair was still to be plagued with difficulties though. In 1952 the fair had to be canceled because of an outbreak of hoof and mouth disease. Despite setbacks such as this, the Board persevered. The following year a 4-H seed show was created and sponsored by the provincial agronomist, P.F. Ford. A carcass class was added in 1957. Soon the fair was successful and stable and rapidly outgrew its facilities.

It was decided by 1966 that the winter fair and the summer fair should be housed in one building. In 1969, the respective Boards went one step further and decided to become one organization. The Manitoba Winter Fair and the Provincial Exhibition of Manitoba amalgamated in 1969 to become the Manitoba Exhibition Association. In 1970, the year of Manitoba's Centennial, it was decided that an organization in the province would receive the designation "Royal" by Queen Elizabeth II. After much consideration by the province, the Manitoba Winter Fair was chosen, and in 1970 it became known as the Royal Manitoba Winter Fair. In 1972 the construction of a common facility was completed, and the 1973 winter fair was the occasion of the official opening of the Keystone Centre. The winter fair continues in this facility and under this designation to this day.

Custodial History:

The records were housed at the MWFFSA, the MWF and the MEA until c1986 when they were transferred to the S.J. McKee Archives at Brandon University.

Scope and Content:

The sous-fonds consists of textual records and photographs pertaining to the Winter Fair. The textual records include prize lists, programs, minutes, financial, administrative files, original results, news releases, scrapbooks, and tickets. The photographs include animal shows and events, dignitaries, entertainment, ceremonies, buildings, and other events.

The sous-fonds has been divided into eleven series, including: (1) Documents; (2) Minutes; (3) Financial records; (4) Administrative files; (5) Prize lists and programs; (6) News releases; (7) Original results; (8) Tickets; (9) Photographs; (10) Scrapbooks; and (11) Miscellaneous

Storage Location: RG 2 Provincial Exhibition of Manitoba Association fonds



Manitoba winter fair tickets

<http://archives.brandonu.ca/en/permalink/descriptions4372>

Part Of: RG 2 Provincial Exhibition of Manitoba Association fonds

Description Level: Series

Fonds Number: RG2SF2

Series Number: 2.8

GMD: multiple media

Date Range: 1966-1973

Physical Description: 10 cm textual records
tickets, badges, ribbons

History /

Biographical:

The records were created by a member of the administrative staff of the winter fair.

Custodial History:

The records were housed at the MWF, and the MEA until c1986 when they were transferred to the S.J. McKee Archives at Brandon University.

Scope and Content:

The series includes two files that house correspondence dealing with the issue of complimentary tickets. As well, the series includes many examples of tickets, badges, and ribbons from the winter fairs of 1966-1973.

Notes: Part of RG2SF2. Inventory of the documents in the series is available in the printed finding aid.

Storage Location: RG 2 Provincial Exhibition of Manitoba Association fonds
RG2SF2 Manitoba Winter Fair