

S. J. McKee Archives



A.E. McKenzie Seed Co. Ltd. fonds

<http://archives.brandonu.ca/en/permalink/descriptions4309>

Part Of: RG 3 A.E. McKenzie Company fonds

Description Level: Fonds

GMD: multiple media

Date Range: 1887-1996; predominantly 1910-1974

Physical Description: 7.47 m of textual records
500 photographs

History /

Biographical:

The A.E. McKenzie Seed Co. Ltd. originated with the McKenzie family Flour, Grain and Seed business, started by F. B. McKenzie in the early 1880's. When F. B. McKenzie passed away in 1896, his son, Albert Edward McKenzie, assumed control of the company, and renamed it The Brandon Seed House. With its main office and plant in Brandon, Manitoba, the company specialized in the production and sale of field seeds and service exclusively to seed buyers in the prairie provinces and British Columbia. In later years, a complete line of products including garden seeds, lawn grass, and other allied lines was developed for sale across Canada.

In 1906, the company underwent a change of name when A. E. McKenzie determined that the growth of the country demanded a larger seed institute than could be managed by one man. As a result, the company was incorporated under provincial statutes and the federal Joint Stock Companies Act as A. E. McKenzie Seed Co. Ltd., and new personnel were hired.

Under the Joint Stock Companies Act, A.E. McKenzie Seed Co. Ltd. was required to elect a Board of Directors of not less than three, and not more than nine individuals. Only shareholders of the company were eligible for election, and election was to take place yearly with each shareholder entitled to as many votes as shares owned in the company. The Act also dictated that the directors were, from time to time, to elect from among themselves, a president of the company. They were also able to appoint and remove all other officers of the company and to create company by-laws. The directors were not obliged to pay any dividend on shares if the company should become insolvent. Under the Act, the stock of the company was deemed a personal estate and was only transferable as such. In addition, the company could acquire, hold, and transfer real estate, and was required to submit annual statements.

A. E. McKenzie was elected President of the newly constituted company. For the remainder of his natural life he remained in this position and supervised the operation of the company. S. A. Bradford, who was given responsibility for various company departments, filled the position of General Manager. H. L. Patmore became the Vice-President, overseeing the nursery business, while W. A. McCracken was put in charge of the warehouse stock, and shipping department. McCracken also supervised the mail order department.

The Company was initially comprised of three divisions: The Brandon Seed House, Brandon Nurseries, and Brandon Greenhouses. Each division was registered under Dominion Patents. Later, the company was divided into Retail Mail Order, Wholesale and Commission Packet Trade divisions. It also undertook some export business.

By registering the divisions of the company under federal legislation affecting trademarks and industrial designs, McKenzie and the Board, were able to register both the company's trademarks and to protect the company's industrial techniques. The company could thus patent the methods and processes of its operations so that no other individual or business could duplicate them.

Located at 30 9th Street, the head office and plant of A.E. McKenzie Seed Co. Ltd. housed all the facilities and staff of the company, with the exception of the regional sales offices and warehouses. The business of the A. E. McKenzie Co. Ltd. was conducted from a frame warehouse until the current McKenzie building was constructed on the same site after a fire destroyed the original premises. Designed by architect Thomas Sinclair, and built by the Brandon Construction Company, the new building opened in 1911. In time, The A. E. McKenzie Co. Ltd. came to be known as Western Canada's Greatest Seed House.

During the 1930's, before a new building was erected in 1945, the A. E. McKenzie Co. occupied space at five different locations in Brandon, including the Massey Harris Building, the International Harvester Building and the Security Building. The last of these premises was destroyed by fire in 1972. As a result of its proximity to the Security Building, the main McKenzie Building also suffered heavy fire and water damage. A. E. McKenzie Co. Ltd. also utilized a warehouse on the north side of Pacific Avenue alongside the Canadian Pacific Railway tracks between 5th and 6th streets. This building and its contents were destroyed by fire (1946). In May of 1949, the company purchased and erected a Quonset structure on the west side of 15th Street between Rosser and Pacific Avenues.

In 1908, the first branch of the A. E. McKenzie Seed Co. Ltd. was established at Calgary. In the following sixteen years, additional branches were established in Edmonton and Saskatoon (1923), Moose Jaw, Toronto (1934) and Winnipeg (1935). Both the Edmonton and Saskatoon branches were seasonal, operating for a four-month period, March to June inclusive. Business in the Maritime Provinces of Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick further extended the company's operations by the mid 1940's. In 1946, the company purchased property in Gilbert Plains, Manitoba, 120 miles north of Brandon. This purchase enabled the company to handle larger quantities of Sweet Clover, a popular crop that was grown in the surrounding area. Additional offices were opened in Vancouver and Quebec City in rented premises by the early 1960's.

In the years 1944-1945, the McKenzie Foundation was created. Through the Foundation, arrangements were put in place to transfer shares of the company to the Manitoba Government for the benefit of higher education, specifically Brandon College. In return for this gift, which included 90% of all capital resources of the company together with all of the income earned each year, except for the amount retained annually to ensure sufficient operating capital, the A.E. McKenzie Co. Ltd. received exemption from paying Corporate Tax.

Prior to the establishment of the McKenzie Foundation, in 1945, the National Trust for the benefit of the College held the shares of McKenzie Seeds. On April 7, 1945 the Manitoba Legislature passed legislation whereby A. E. McKenzie retained effective management control of his company, but 1031 shares out of 1145 issued shares were gifted to the Provincial Government. In return, the government agreed that all financial benefits from the shares would go to Brandon College through the A. E. McKenzie Foundation. When Mr. McKenzie passed away in 1964, the primary responsibility of appointing the Board of Directors for McKenzie Seeds passed to the Provincial government.

The remaining 114 shares of the Company were turned over to the Crown on July 16, 1975 in accordance with an agreement between Brandon University, A. E. McKenzie Co. Ltd. and the Manitoba government. The same agreement also turned the McKenzie Foundation over to Brandon University. Therefore, since 1975 the crown has held all shares of the McKenzie Co. through the Province of Manitoba.

A.E. McKenzie died on September 25, 1964 at the age of 94 and was succeeded as President of the company by J. Lasby Lowes. When Mr. Lowes retired in 1968, A. R. Swanson was appointed by the government to fill the position and was responsible for all operations of the company under a Board of Directors comprised mainly of appointees of the government. It has proven impossible to establish a complete list of those individuals who held the positions of President/General Manager of McKenzie Seeds after 1964. A partial account is as follows: Anthony J. Maruca became President of A. E. McKenzie Co. Ltd. in 1972. In 1975, the Board of Directors appointed William Moore General Manager, creating a new position to relieve the President of the company from management of plant operations. At the same time, Pat Kelleher was named new interim President. Following the resignation of Kelleher, William Moore assumed the role of President as well. Moore left the company in the early 1980s. He was later convicted of criminal misconduct as President of the company. Keith Guelpa became President/General Manager in the mid 1980's; Raymond West was his successor.

Beginning in 1969, the A. E. McKenzie Seed Co. Ltd. began phasing out the Field Seed division of their company, including business related to forage crops and cereals. Seed cleaning equipment located in Brandon and the company's Calgary and Toronto cleaning plants was sold. The Company concentrated its resources on the production and sale of vegetable and flower seeds, and lawn and turf grasses. It acted as a wholesaler and conducted business through chain stores, grocery, hardware and general stores.

Late in 1971, A. E. McKenzie Co. Ltd. purchased its largest competition in packaged seeds - Steele Briggs Seed Co. from Maple Leaf Mills Inc. for two million dollars. At the time of the acquisition the company changed its name to A. E. McKenzie Co. - Steele Briggs Seeds, in order to benefit from the favorable reputation held by Steele Briggs Seeds across Canada. In the early 1970s, the acquisition of Brett-Young Seeds Ltd., a Winnipeg company that dealt exclusively in the production and sale of field seed, brought the A. E. McKenzie Co. back into the field seed market.

In 1994 the Manitoba Government sold the A.E. McKenzie Seed Co. Ltd. to Regal Greetings and Gifts, Canada's largest non-retail mail-order catalogue company, which is owned by MDC Corporation of Toronto.

In 2001, McKenzie Seeds is Canada's leading supplier of packaged seeds and related gardening products. It is divided into a Retail Consumer Products division which features well known seed brands including McKenzie Seeds, Pike Seeds and Thompson & Morgan Seeds from England. As well, this division also carries a complete range of lawn seeds and perishables. It also continues to ship the seed racks invented by A.E. McKenzie to numerous retail stores. The second division, Direct Mail, consists of the McFayden and McConnell catalogues which reach over 500,000 Canadian homes each year.

Custodial History:

Following the sale of the A.E. McKenzie Seed Co. Ltd. to Regal Greetings and Gifts, the records of McKenzie Seeds and its subsidiaries were retained in the McKenzie Plant on 9th Street. In April of 1997, the records were transferred to the McKee Archives at Brandon University. Because the company was a crown corporation, the records of McKenzie Seeds belonged to the Province of Manitoba and might have been placed in the Provincial Archives. However, Provincial Archivist Gordon Dodds permitted the retention of the records in Brandon at the S. J. McKee Archives. The minutes of the Board of Directors, previously transferred to the Provincial Archives, remain in Winnipeg. Until 1960 these minutes, by-laws of the Company, and the letters patent of incorporation (April 7, 1906) were in the possession of the Company's lawyers, Johnson, Garson, Forrester, Davidson, & Steen.

Scope and Content:

The fonds consists of textual records, photographs and artifacts from A.E. McKenzie Seed Co. Ltd. The textual records include minutes, documents, financial records, administrative records, by-laws, legal records, catalogues, sales literature, seed packets, newspaper clippings, appraisals, publications, scrapbooks and miscellaneous sections.

In addition, some of the records within the fonds relate to the operations of McKenzie subsidiaries -- Brett-Young Seeds, Steele-Briggs Seeds, Pike & Co. and McFayden Seeds -- and various properties owned by McKenzie Seeds.

Fonds contains approximately 500 photographs. These depict the operations and employees of McKenzie Seeds and the seed industry in general. Artifacts contained in the fonds include blueprints, newspaper clippings, copper printing plates, seed bags and plaques.

Fonds also includes an artificially created series of records dealing with Brandon College Inc., the A.E. McKenzie Foundation, the Brandon Allied Arts Council and the Brandon Board of Trade. These records stand outside the provenance of the McKenzie Seed Co.

Of particular interest within the textual records are the transcripts of various features of the company's history as dictated, researched and recalled by its second President/General Manager, J. Lasby Lowes. The fonds also contains a collection of company catalogue which is almost complete. Outside of the seed industry, the records dealing with both Brandon College Inc. and the McKenzie Foundation are significant records relating to the history of Brandon College/University and the City of Brandon.

Notes: Description written by Christy Henry (2001).

Name Access: A.E. McKenzie
J. Lasby Lowes
Irene Cullen
Joseph Airey
Alan R. Mundie
Sandy Black
Brett-Young Seeds/Sabetha
McFayden Seeds
Steele-Briggs Seed Co
Pike & Co
Davidson & Gowen
Davidson Studio
Frank Gowen
Dean Photo Service
Jerrett's Photo-Art Studio/Jerrett's Photo Service
Crawford Drug Store
Leech Printing Ltd
Eastman Photographic Materials Ltd

Subject Access:	Seed Industry Seed Catalogues Brandon Business Seed Photographs Brandon Photographs Seed Packets Agriculture Women Workers Labour Relations A.E. McKenzie J. Lasby Lowes A.R. Swanson William Moore Anthony J. Maruca Pat Kelleher Keith Guelpa Raymond West Brett-Young Seeds Sabetha Steele Briggs Seed Co Pike & Co McFayden Seeds Seed Marketing Co Brandon Board of Trade Brandon Allied Arts Council McKenzie Foundation Regal Greetings and Gifts
Repro Restriction:	Because the A.E. McKenzie Seed Co. Ltd. was a crown corporation, the records in the fonds are subject to the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FIPPA).
Storage Location:	RG 3 A.E. McKenzie Company fonds
Related Material:	Additional records regarding A.E. McKenzie Seed Co. Ltd. are housed at the Provincial Archives of Manitoba. In order to gain access to these records it is necessary to contact the Archives of Manitoba.
Arrangement:	RG 3 A.E. McKenzie Seed Co. Ltd. Fonds McS 1 Board of Directors 1.1 Documents 1.2 Minutes/Meetings 1.3 Management Consultant Reports 1.4 Miscellaneous 1.5 Financial Records McS 2 Office of the President/General Manager 2.1 A.E. McKenzie 2.2 J. Lasby Lowes 2.3 Comptroller 2.4 Properties

- 2.5 Marketing
- 2.6 Reference Library
- 2.7 Miscellaneous Publications/Correspondence

McS 3 Acquisitions

- 3.1 Brett-Young Seeds/Sabetha
- 3.2 Steele-Briggs Seed Co.
- 3.3 Pike & Co.
- 3.4 McFayden Seeds

McS 4 Seed Marketing Co.

McS 5 Photographs

- 5.1 McKenzie Seed Co. Ltd. Executives
- 5.2 Construction at McKenzie Seed Co. Brandon (two files)
- 5.3 Exterior Photographs of the A. E. McKenzie Co. Building
- 5.4 McKenzie Seed Co. Plant Operations and Workers (2 files)
- 5.5 McKenzie Seed Co. Equipment and Plant - Head Office 1983
- 5.6 McKenzie Seed Co. Field Operations and Workers
- 5.7 McKenzie Seed Co. Strike 1944
- 5.8 Fires at McKenzie Seed Co. 1910, 1945, 1972
- 5.9 McKenzie Seed Co. Centennial Exhibition 1996
- 5.10 Miscellaneous McKenzie Seed Co. Photographs
- 5.11 People Connected to McKenzie Seed Co.
- 5.12 Princess Anne's Visit to McKenzie Seed Co. 1982
- 5.13 Onion Set Production Book
- 5.14 Irene Cullen Photographs - McKenzie Seeds Employee Photos
- 5.15 Josiph Airey Photographs - McKenzie Product Photos
- 5.16 Alan R. Mundie Seed Production Photographs
- 5.17 Steele Robertson/Steele Briggs Seeds Photographs
- 5.18 Seed Packet Display Units Photographs
- 5.19 Product Photographs
- 5.20 Parade Photographs
- 5.21 Oversized Photographs
 - 5.21.1 Drawer #1: Executive Photographs
 - 5.21.2 Drawer #2: Office and Equipment/Plant Photographs
 - 5.21.3 Drawer #3: Miscellaneous Oversized Photographs
 - 5.21.4 Drawer #4: Artifacts

McS 6 Miscellaneous

- 6.1 Centennial Exhibition
- 6.2 Miscellaneous Publications
- 6.3 Scrapbooks

MG 1 A.E. McKenzie Fonds

- 1.1 Brandon College Inc.
- 1.2 McKenzie Foundation
- 1.3 Brandon Allied Arts Council
- 1.4 Brandon Board of Trade
- 1.5 Miscellaneous



<http://archives.brandonu.ca/en/permalink/descriptions4722>

Part Of: RG 5 Western Manitoba Manuscript Collection

Description Level: Fonds

Fonds Number: RG 5

GMD: multiple media

History /

Biographical:

This record group was artificially created in January 2007 by Tom Mitchell and Christy Henry of the McKee Archives.

Scope and Content:

The record group consists of various fonds and collections concerned with the political, cultural, social, and educational life of western Manitoba. See the Subject Access field for a list of titles.

Notes: Description written by Christy Henry (2007).

Subject Access: Joseph H. Hughes
Canadian Federation of University Women
Verna Gamey
Brandon Cinema Club
Birtle Indian Residential School
Brandon Assisted Passage Association
Binscarth Women's Institute
Griswold School District
Manitoba School Trustees Regional Association
Riverbank/Berbank Red Cross
A.C. Miller
C.J. Barnes
David Sommerville Charleson
Southwest A Region Manitoba Women's Institute
Berbank Ladies Aid
Berbank Church
Blyth Protestant School District #471
Crown Protestant School District #184
Ward Watson
Laurie V. Smith
Marion Doig
Elm Creek/Wingham Branch United Farmers of Manitoba
Roseland Church
Fairfax United Church
Humesville & Forrest Women's Missionary Society
Chater Protestant School District
William Wallace
United Grain Growers
G.R. Rowe
Cecil Herbert Edward Johnston
Western Manitoba Centennial Auditorium
Brandon Art Club

James Duncan McGregor
Stephan Adolph Magnacca
Harry "Hap" Fraser
Leslie Victor Robson
Bertha School District #861
Manitoba Genealogical Society
Brandon Golf & Country Club
Keystone Centre Development and Construction
Manitoba Elevator Company
B.J. Hales
Brandon Council of Women
Westman Oral History
Mildred (Mollie) Kellet
Gerald McKinney
Janet Donnelly
Minnedosa OddFellows
Basswood OddFellows
Archibald E. Wilson
Audrey Silvius
Western Manitoba Philharmonic Choir
Lawrence Stuckey
Minnedosa Women's Institute
Clanwilliam Women's Institute
Cordova Women's Institute
Crocus Women's Institute
Rathwell Women's Institute
Strathclair Women's Institute
Manitoba Women's Institute
Brandon Business & Professional Women's Club
Minnedosa Business & Professional Women's Club
Neepawa Business & Professional Women's Club
Brandon Women's Musical Club
International Toastmistress Club - Land O'Lakes Region
Fred McGuinness
Reg Forbes
Jack Stothard
Janet Louisa May More
William J. Birtles
Ruby Miles
Manitoba Action Committee on the Status of Women
Canadian Union of Public Employees
Brandon & District Labour Council (CLC)
Westman Multi-Cultural Council
Westman Coalition on Equality Rights
Martin Kavanagh

James Buckley
James Douglas Wall
Brandon Women's Institute
Trillium Business & Professional Women's Club
Westridge Senior Citizens
Kodaly in Manitoba
WARUCC - Western Association of Registrars of the Universities and
Colleges of Canada
Margaret Laurence Endowment
Douglas Women's Institute
Albert Angus Murray McPherson
Edward Walker
Alexander MacPhail
Inventory of Archival Material in Western Manitoba Project
Greenway Fair
Brandon Hills Busy Bees
Prairie Horizons Toastmistress Club
Grand Valley School District #206
Douglas Brolund
Norma Laird
Brandon Square Dancing Club
Tully McKenzie
Basswood School District
Anna Enns
Frank Robb
Bankburn School District
John Crawford
J.C. Cousins
William Ridley Sheridan Wade
Mary Schwalm
Robert (Bert) Lane
Ross Hume
Quincy H. Martinson
Helen Dutka
Dorothy Frances Davidson
Brandon Sno-Goers Snowmobile Club
Brandon Folk, Music & Art Society, Inc.
Baker family
Brandon Daily Sun microfilm
Western Manitoba Home Economic Association
Hubert Weidenhamer
Len Evans
Henry Hlady
Delta Kappa Gamma Society International
Westman Recycling Council

Storage Location: Herbert Goodland
RG 5 Western Manitoba Manuscript Collection

Storage Range: RG 5 Western Manitoba Manuscript Collection

Arrangement:

The fonds and collections in RG 5 Western Manitoba Manuscript collection have been arranged primarily by accession number.



Edith Laycock fonds

<http://archives.brandonu.ca/en/permalink/descriptions4886>

Part Of: RG 1 Brandon College fonds

Description Level: Sub-series

Series Number: MG 2 2.20

Accession Number: 12-1998

GMD: multiple media

Date Range: 1934-1973

Physical Description: 24 cm textual records
12 photographs

History /

Biographical:

Edith Mary Laycock was born on June 25, 1913. She attended Brandon Collegiate from 1929 until her graduation in 1931. Ms. Laycock attended Brandon College from 1931-1934, graduating with a Bachelor of Arts degree. In 1935, she attended the Wheat City Business College and graduated from the Stenographic Course. Ms. Laycock was employed by the Canadian Pacific Railway as a stenographer for many years and belonged to the Canadian Pacific Expressmen's Mutual Benefit Society from 1939.

Edith Laycock was very interested in drama. While attending Brandon Collegiate and Brandon College she participated in school and college plays. She was involved in drama and theatre throughout her adult life. Edith Laycock directed many of Brandon College's major productions beginning in 1950. She was also the director of many of the plays put on by the Brandon Little Theatre from 1950. Ms. Laycock also performed in the Little Theatre productions when she was not directing.

Ms. Laycock was also involved in many other elements of Brandon life. She served alternatively as the vice-president, secretary, treasurer, and production manager of the Little Theatre throughout the 1940's and 1950's. She was the Social Manager for the Brandon Festival Committee in 1948, the Publicity Chairperson for the Brandon Music Festival Association in the 1950's, and the Secretary of the Brandon Overture Concert Association. Laycock also wrote play reviews for the Brandon Sun in the 1950's. She was the director of the Manitoba Delta Chapter of Beta Sigma Phi. In the 1960's Laycock was a member of the Brandon Council of Women and Chairperson of its Arts and Letters Committee. She was also the Vice-President of the Brandon Art Club in 1960. Edith Laycock also held a 12-week class in creative dramatics for children at the Allied Arts Centre in the early 1960's.

Edith Laycock died in Brandon on December 17, 1987.

Custodial History:

This fonds was accessioned by the McKee Archives in 1998. Prior custodial history is unknown.

Scope and Content:

This fonds consists of memorabilia kept by Edith Laycock. A large part of the collection consists of programs from plays that Laycock performed in or directed during the 1950's and 1960's. There are also numerous newspaper clippings about Laycock's plays including reviews, pictures, and advertisements. This collection also includes a folder of programs from the Brandon Little Theatre productions in the 1950's, as well as clippings about the Little Theatre. There are also numerous articles about miscellaneous drama and art events throughout Brandon, Manitoba, and Canada. The fonds also includes Laycock's daybook from 1962, and travel notes from Laycock's 1952 trip to Great Britain and Europe. The latter contains a passenger list for the Empress of Scotland, August 5, 1952. The collection further includes Canadian Pacific Railway passes dating from 1947-1963 and a copy of the Canadian Pacific Pension Plan. Fonds also contains material from the various organizations that Laycock was involved with including the Brandon Council of Women and Beta Sigma Phi. Fonds includes 12 photos that appear to be family photos from Laycock's childhood. Finally, the fonds contains various copies of plays that Laycock performed in or directed.

Notes: CAIN No. 202585

Subject Access: Edith Laycock
Kaye Rowe
Brian MacDonald
J.R.C. Evans
Brandon College
Brandon College Literary Board
Brandon Collegiate Dramatic Society
Brandon College Students' Association
Brandon Council of Women
Brandon Little Theatre
Canadian Pacific Railway
Beta Sigma Phi
drama
plays
travel
playscripts

Storage Location: MG 2 Brandon College Students
2.20 Edith Laycock