

# S. J. McKee Archives



## RG2SF1 Provincial Exhibition of Manitoba

<http://archives.brandonu.ca/en/permalink/descriptions4352>

Part Of: RG 2 Provincial Exhibition of Manitoba Association fonds

Description Level: Sous-fonds

Fonds Number: RG2SF1

GMD: multiple media

Date Range: 1903-1991

Physical Description: 3.47 m textual records; 793 graphics

History /

Biographical:

The Provincial Exhibition of Manitoba has been an institution almost as long as Brandon has been a city, although under the guise of several different names. The idea of an exhibition came from Charles Whitehead, who was the founder and first president of the fair. Whitehead was one of the earliest and most prominent businessmen in Brandon. The first Brandon fair was organized in October of 1882, by the Brandon Agricultural Society (BAS). The Board of Directors of the BAS offered up two hundred dollars in prize money, but poor weather and a subsequently small turnout of people and exhibits to the downtown location caused the fair to do poorly. Undeterred, the Board of Directors began to make plans for the second fair, in what was to become an annual event. This time, due to generous grants from the city, district, and province, the Board of Directors was able to purchase land just south of the city to hold the fair on and built a Crystal Palace to hold exhibits in. In October 1883, there were seven hundred and thirty entries, and the fair, the first to be held on the new fair grounds, was considered successful.

The Brandon Exhibition was not financially sound however, and by 1888, the Directors knew that major changes had to be made if they wanted to continue the fair. It was decided that October was not the best time to hold an agricultural exhibition because most farmers were in the middle of harvesting and did not have time to leave their farms for an exhibition. A decision was made to move the exhibition to the summer, when most farmers could get away for a few days. In July 1889, the first Brandon summer fair was held. The Directors had managed to revamp the fair in order to appeal to the wider public. The fair was a huge success, with both city and rural people attending.

The Board of Directors formally established the Western Agricultural and Arts Association (WAAA) in 1892 to take over management duties of the fair from the BAS. However, the first meeting of the WAAA was not until 1897. There is no explanation for the five year delay. The WAAA received generous donations from the various governments, and the citizens of Brandon. In 1897, the Board of Directors purchased another 42 acres of land from the city that was located beside the fair grounds. They erected a grandstand and new stables. Prize money was increased, there were special prizes offered for the first time, and special exhibition trains were available to transport fair goers at a reduced rate.

The 1897 fair was the major turning point for the Brandon exhibition. The fair appealed to both urban and rural dwellers. The Board wanted to put Brandon on the map, and accordingly, they brought forward events and entertainment that would do so. The first Traveller's Day, still running strong today, was put on in 1912. The parade associated with it was unlike any

Brandon had seen before. Despite the attractions, carnivals and midways that were beginning to dominate the fair, organizers insisted that it was still primarily an agricultural event. The promotion of agriculture was still prominent at the exhibition. As local historians have written, "the exhibition symbolized the accomplishments and potential of the region, and encouraged all agriculturists to strive towards higher standards."

By 1912, all outstanding loans had been paid off, and the Board of Directors could boast an eleven thousand dollar surplus in funds. As well, the physical assets available to the summer fair were expanded dramatically in 1913. In 1913, Brandon was granted the honour of hosting the Dominion Exhibition. From the funding that came in for this prestigious event the Board of Directors was able to build a new grandstand, erect new display buildings, replace the racetrack, and generally expand and improve the fair grounds. Another 80 acres of land was bought from the city for the summer fair. The Brandon Dominion Exhibition was declared open on 15 July 1913 by Manitoba Premier Rodmond Roblin. Although it was a resounding success, the Directors ended up having to pay for parts of it out of their own pockets.

Canada entered World War One in the late summer of 1914. The WAAA reached an agreement with the military that the army could use the fairgrounds during the year if they allowed the WAAA use of the grounds for the fair week. Because of limitations put on the fair because of the war, the Brandon exhibition became more involved with the Western Canada Fair Circuit. This organization enabled the summer fair to join in the exhibitions that worked together to bring events like the midway to their exhibitions.

It was also during this time that moral reform became more prevalent in Canadian society. Due to this growing concern with moral purity and the desire for social reform, the Directors had to find ways to ensure that the summer exhibition did not cross the boundaries of good taste. There was a short-lived protest in 1913 against horseracing, but by 1916, then-president of the fair, R.M. Matheson, cast the tie breaking vote in favour of letting both the horseracing and the betting continue. By 1917, the Board had decided against allowing betting, but the horseracing was allowed to continue.

After the war ended, financial stress on the part of the winter fair brought forward a proposal to amalgamate the summer and winter fairs. The provincial government stated that they were interested in supporting an amalgamation, and the two fair boards resolved to consider the option. In spring of 1920, the winter fair backed out the deal because they felt they would lose out to the WAAA in the deal. Not to be deterred, the WAAA applied for incorporation with the provincial government. On 3 April 1920, the WAAA was incorporated as the Provincial Exhibition of Manitoba (PEM). In 1920, the official title of the summer fair was changed from the Inter-Provincial Exhibition to the Provincial Exhibition of Manitoba.

After incorporation the Board of Directors was increased to a membership of twenty. The provincial exhibition continued to increase and change with the times. The directors tried to make each fair interesting and stimulating for the people of Brandon and the surrounding areas. A Manitoba Government Building was opened in 1927, by Premier John Bracken, and an Automobile Building opened in 1927. By 1929, the Provincial Exhibition was one of the leading summer exhibitions in Western Canada. Unfortunately, 1929 was also the beginning of a decade-long Depression throughout Canada and the United States. The exhibition continued though, although at a less grandiose level. The exhibition was the site of some work relief programs throughout the thirties, but the grants were generally small.

It was also during the 1930s that people began wanting a change in the management of the Board. For many years, almost since the inception of the fair, the Board had been run by the same group of men who took turns in the various positions. In 1933, there were several men brought forward to run against the Directors at the annual general meeting. A total of forty four nominations went up for the twenty positions. After the dust had settled, seven new faces took seats around the Directors table.

During World War Two, the Provincial Exhibition managed to continue. The Board made an agreement with the military that while their buildings could be used by the military during the war, the fair would be able to take control of the buildings for fair week. While the fair remained open, its exhibits were hampered by the war. In 1942, for example, the Wartime Prices and Trades Board declared that farm machinery could not be exhibited for the duration. This was one of the fair's bigger draws, and its absence was felt greatly. As another concession to the war, the livestock show had to be reduced from five days to three, although this decision was met by protest from many of the directors. Despite these impediments, the entries into the agricultural exhibits continued to increase. Horse racing, long a bone of contention among members of the Board was almost eliminated in 1942, but a compromise was made and the Directors allowed one day of racing at the 1943 fair.

After the war, the prize money increased by up to twenty-five percent in an effort to increase the number of exhibitors. Many new events were added to the fair roster, including an annual 4-H show and farm camps for children. A Trade Show was added in 1952 and became a large success. The fair always enjoyed support from the City of Brandon, although there were the occasional tensions between the two. In 1955 the Board approved a proposal by R.A. Hodges to sponsor a Dream Home contest. While the attraction was a big success, the Directors evidently did not receive the cut of the proceeds that Hodges had promised them. The fair Board ended up fifty-five hundred dollars in debt.

In 1958 an attempt was made to break the all male hold on the directorate. While no women were elected to the Board itself, a Women's Advisory Committee was created to provide input into fair activities. The original committee was made up of Mrs. D. Elviss, Mrs. D. Graham, Mrs. G. McRae, and Mrs. F. Heeney.

It was also during this time that the Board began to face more direct competition from Winnipeg. The Red River Exhibition had been operating for several years, and its Board of Directors wanted their exhibition to be admitted into the Western Canadian Association of Exhibition. This would not have been particularly good for the Brandon Provincial Exhibition. Partly due to the Brandon Board's vigorous protests, Winnipeg was only granted an associate membership.

By the end of 1958, the Brandon fair was once again facing financial difficulties. The Provincial Exhibition was at its peak at the end of the 1950s. By 1961 the fair recorded a net loss of sixty-five hundred dollars. Because of financial problems, the fair Board had to mortgage its property for \$50 000. As well, the Royal American Shows left Brandon for Winnipeg in 1966, leaving the Directors scrambling to find another midway. It took several years and several different companies before the Directors settled on the Conklin Brothers Shows. To make matters worse, the grandstand was condemned in 1974, leaving the fair without a place to hold its grandstand show. This show was replaced by the Western Canada Rodeo Circuit, in an attempt to regain patrons.

By 1966 both the summer and winter fair Boards had decided that one facility could be used to house both the summer and winter fairs. Both financially and practically, it became an increasingly good idea to merge the two fairs together. In 1969, the Provincial Exhibition of Manitoba and the Manitoba Winter Fair were amalgamated to become the Manitoba Exhibition Association. Ground was broken a few years later on the summer fair grounds, and by 1972, the Keystone Centre was open for business. The official opening was at the 1973 Winter Fair. From then on, the Provincial Exhibition, Royal Manitoba Winter Fair and, later, AgEx, were housed in the same building, and run by the same board of directors.

#### Custodial History:

These files were housed with the WAAA, the PEM, 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 from the Provincial Exhibition of Manitoba. The textual records include prize lists, programs, minutes, financial, contracts, by laws, administrative files, original results, news releases, scrapbooks and tickets. The photographs include animal shows and events, dignitaries, entertainment, attractions, ceremonies, buildings and other events.

It 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  
RG2SF1 Provincial Exhibition of Manitoba



## Provincial exhibition of Manitoba documents

<http://archives.brandonu.ca/en/permalink/descriptions4353>

Part Of: RG 2 Provincial Exhibition of Manitoba Association fonds

Description Level: Series

Fonds Number: RG2SF1

Series Number: 1.1

GMD: textual records

Date Range: 1910-1972

Physical Description: 25 cm

History /

Biographical:

These documents were created between 1910 and 1972 by the administration of the Provincial Exhibition of Manitoba.

Custodial History:

See sous-fonds RG2SF1 for custodial history.

Scope and Content:

This series includes various contracts and agreements between the Provincial Exhibition of Manitoba and companies hired for the fair. These companies include musicians, entertainment, stage hands, concessions and more. The series also includes inventories, by laws, the 1920 Act of Incorporation. Most of the documents are from 1957 to 1962.

Notes: 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



## 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



## Provincial exhibition of Manitoba photographs

<http://archives.brandonu.ca/en/permalink/descriptions4361>

Part Of: RG 2 Provincial Exhibition of Manitoba Association fonds

Creator:

Known creators of the records include:

#### PHOTOGRAPHERS AND PHOTO SERVICES

Ayers Photographs  
Bob Evans  
Donald Huskins  
Earl Kennedy Specialized Photographic Services, Winnipeg, Manitoba  
Ernie Tayler, Brandon, Manitoba  
Frank Gowen, Brandon, Manitoba  
H. M. Salisbury, Brandon, Manitoba  
H. R. Hoffman Ltd., Brandon, Manitoba  
Harold K. White  
Hildebrand  
Hungry I. Agency  
Jerrett's Photo  
Lawrence Stuckey, Brandon, Manitoba  
Mid-Co.  
Pugh Mfg. Co. Ltd., Toronto, Ontario  
R. M. Coleman, Brandon, Manitoba  
Smith K. C. Mo.  
Stovel Co.  
Turofsky, Toronto, Ontario  
Western Engravings  
Wilkinson Photography, Newmarket, Ontario

#### NEWSPAPERS

Brandon Sun, Brandon, Manitoba  
Winnipeg Free Press, Winnipeg, Manitoba

#### PRINTING SERVICES

Leech Printing Ltd., Brandon, Manitoba  
Crawford Drug Store, Brandon, Manitoba

#### GOVERNMENT

Department of Industry and Commerce, Manitoba  
Frank Royal of the National Film Board

|                       |                                             |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| Description Level:    | Series                                      |
| Fonds Number:         | RG2SF1                                      |
| Series Number:        | 1.9                                         |
| GMD:                  | graphic                                     |
| Date Range:           | 1885-1988                                   |
| Physical Description: | 793 photographs and other graphic materials |

## History /

### Biographical:

Many of these records were donated to the Board by exhibitors and participants in the fairs. Some are advertisements sent to the Provincial Exhibition Board by businesses such as Conklin Shows. Professional photographers, who were likely hired by the Board, generated others. As well, Brandon Sun photographers took a large number of the photos throughout the century. In the 1980s, the Sun photos were reprinted and then the reprints were added to the Exhibition's collection. Privately owned photos were also reprinted and added. Publishing houses generated some photographs, probably as services to participants and organizers of the fairs. Finally, the Canadian and Manitoba governments created a few of the photos.

### Custodial History:

Exhibitors and participants in activities at the summer fair donated many of these records to the Provincial Exhibition Board. The Manitoba Provincial Archives in Winnipeg housed other records, of which the McKee Archives acquired copies. Most of the records were stored in the offices of the Provincial Exhibition Association of Manitoba until they were brought to the McKee Archives ca. 1986.

### Scope and Content:

Series consists primarily of black and white photographs pertaining to the Provincial Exhibition. Subjects of the records vary over the century, but overall subjects included are buildings and grounds, horses, livestock, exhibits, youth activities, entertainment, and dignitaries. Almost all of the materials are in excellent condition.

## BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS

The graphics that depict the buildings and grounds of the summer fair are both ground and aerial photos. From the records generated between 1900 and 1930, there are pictures of the Crystal Palace, the Wheat City Arena, the Experimental Farm, the horse barns, the racetrack, and the grandstand. The pictures dating from the forties through the sixties are of the racetrack, the grandstand, the Provincial Display Building, the Trade Fair Building, and the Main Gate. The records from the 1970s and the 1980s feature the Keystone Centre, cattle buildings, and horse stables.

## HORSES

Graphics from the 1890s through the 1980s feature various light and heavy horses, from single horses to eight-horse teams. Pictures dating from the first fifty years of the fair are of stallion and purebred shows. Also depicted are racing events such as chuck wagon, bike, and single rider races. Graphics of equestrian events like jumping and hackney classes date from World War II until the 1980s. Dating from the fifties to the seventies are photos of children's events like costume classes and pony competitions. Finally, pictures of barrel racing and horse pulling competitions date from the 1970s and 1980s.

## LIVESTOCK

Livestock photos, which date throughout the twentieth century, are mostly of cattle and swine, but there are a few pictures of buffalo and sheep. Cattle photos depict purebreds such as Holstein, Jersey, Hereford, and Angus. Swine pictures are of Yorkshire sows and boars, as well as of market hogs.

## POULTRY AND EGGS

Graphics depicting poultry and egg shows date between 1950 and 1985.

## EXHIBITS

Photos of exhibits taken throughout the century feature home craft displays such as clothes

Photos or exhibits taken throughout the century feature home-craft displays such as clothes and quilts. Tack rooms, farm implement shows, and club displays, like those of the Brandon Lion's Club, are also consistent throughout the period. Other graphics of exhibits are particular to certain years: in the late 1940s through the 1950s auto shows are featured; and from the fifties to the eighties commercial exhibits are prominent.

#### YOUTH ACTIVITIES

Graphics of children and teens' activities form a large part of MG 1. From the 1920s and 1930s, there are pictures of boys and teens who attended the Farm Boys' Camp. Photos taken at the Agricultural and Homemaking School in the late 1940s and early 1950s depict male teens learning about mechanics, welding, and electricity. Photos of female teens at the camp depict weaving, sewing, and cooking classes. In the records dating from 1957 to the 1980s, photos feature both pig and calf scrambles. As well, some pictures are of male teens participating in seed, poultry, and judging courses. Photos of female teens during these years show them participating in such activities as clothes-making, 4-H Queen contests, and fashion shows.

#### ENTERTAINMENT

Entertainment pictures include graphics of the midway, the carnival and travelling acts, parades, and miscellaneous events. Pictures of the midway are both aerial and ground photos, and date from 1913 to the 1970s. Ferris wheels and carousels are the main rides featured until the 1960s, after which many motorized rides like the Wild Mouse and the Tidal Wave are prominent.

Carnival pictures throughout the century include shots of aisles along which several attractions are set up. Photos of clowns and other costumed people are numerous. Graphics of travelling acts depict parachutists (1920s), follies (1950s), exotic dancers (1950s), trained animals (1950s-1970s), singers and bands (1970s-1980s), and trapeze artists (1970s).

Parade photos date throughout the century, and feature pipers, horses pulling carriages, people riding horses, clowns, soldiers, floats, and members of various clubs.

Miscellaneous events graphics include pictures of horseshoe throwing competitions, square dancing shows (1950s), fiddling contests (1970s), smash-up derbies (1980s), and tractor pulls (1980s).

#### FIRST NATIONS PEOPLE

There are seven photos of First Nations people at the summer fair. In all but one of the pictures, they are in traditional costume. Depicted are pow-wows, parades, a female teen sewing a mukluk, and tee-pees. These records date from 1914 to 1969.

#### DIGNITARIES

Pictures of dignitaries are of members of the Provincial Exhibition committees and boards; federal, provincial, and municipal politicians who attended the summer fair; and various business, medical, and judicial representatives. Especially notable are the group photos of the Board of Directors for the years 1894, 1900, 1941, 1949, 1951, 1952, and 1968.

The graphic materials of RG2SF1 are useful for many purposes. For one, they offer a rich visual history of the fair. Agricultural historians will find poultry, horse, livestock, horticultural, and farm implement images informative. Such images describe how farming has changed through the last century. The records offer many clues into the cultural history of Brandon and surrounding area. The nature of the carnival, for instance, changes. At the turn of the century, attractions of various booths were not advertised overtly; one had to pay before they were



given hints as to what they were going to view. By the Second World War, however, attractions' exteriors were more garish. Because the carnival was more open in its advertisements, one can determine that the boundaries between the private and public shifted in the first forty years of the twentieth century.

The pictorial history of the exhibits at the fair reveals much about the city's culture. The pictures from the post-World War II era, for example, are indicative of the period's climate of consumerism: a commercial display building was built and commercial exhibits were added to the displays of the fair. Also signified in the postwar photos is the emphasis upon family values that pervaded the fifties; for instance displays of home-crafts became prominent in these years.

Social historians will find in these records a vibrant portrait of the social composition of twentieth-century Brandon. The community's leaders, for example, are represented in the pictures of the Boards of Directors. From these photos, one can ascertain the social characteristics of Board members: white, male, and middle class. Parade photos are also indicative of social composition, as organizations from all classes of society participated in parades. Agricultural clubs, unions, women's organizations, and church groups are just a few of the entries featured in the parade pictures.

Historians of gender will find that throughout the fairs' years definitions of femininity changed. In the early fairs, women are shown in their booths at home shows, demonstrating their association with the private sphere. During the Second World War, some photos start to appear of women doing secretarial work. After World War II, however, gender norms constricted. Pictures of female teens taking classes at the Agricultural and Homemaking School depict them learning about how to run a well maintained home: they learn about sewing, cooking, and weaving. In the seventies, gender boundaries again shifted: for example, female teens began to participate in the previously male-only calf scramble events.

Finally, these records are useful for any historian of Brandon and area history. There are thousands of people from the region featured in these records. Different places and buildings in Brandon are also a prominent part of the collection. Together, the pictures of RG2SF1 offer a vivid history of both Brandon and the Provincial Exhibition.

|                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|-------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Storage Location: | RG 2 Provincial Exhibition of Manitoba Association fonds<br>RG2SF1 Provincial Exhibition of Manitoba                                                                                                                  |
| Related Material: | Pictures of the Provincial Exhibition may also be found on the National Archives of Canada website. The Western Canadian Pictorial Index in Winnipeg, Manitoba, houses additional graphic records of the summer fair. |

#### Arrangement:

Item-level descriptions of the graphics of RG2SF1 through RG2SF4 are located on a searchable database. This database is entitled "Brandon Photographs" and can be read using Microsoft Access. "Brandon Photographs" is located on a 3½ floppy disk entitled "Provincial Exhibition Association of Manitoba fonds Series 9" included in this finding aid. The description of each photograph on this database includes the following information: accession number, title, date, place, physical description, scope and content, notes, creator, and copyright. By searching the database, individual photographs can be located easily. See the printed finding aid for instructions on how to use the photograph database.

Graphics for RG2SF1 through RG2SF4 are located in boxes. Graphics larger than 24 x 35 cm are located in the image mapcase, which is located in the reading room. The graphics are filed chronologically by accession number. The arrangement is as follows:

Provincial Exhibition of Manitoba Association fonds; RG2SF1-RG2SF4, Series 9  
Boxes 1 through 15, as follows:

Box 1 EX0001 to EX0125  
Box 2 EX0157 to EX0263  
Box 3 EX0265 to EX0399  
Box 4 EX0400 to EX0499  
Box 5 EX0500 to EX0599  
Box 6 EX0600 to EX0699  
Box 7 EX0700 to EX0799  
Box 8 EX0800 to EX0899  
Box 9 EX0900 to EX0921  
Box 10 EX1000 to EX1099  
Box 11 EX1100 to EX1199  
Box 12 EX1200 to EX1299  
Box 13 EX1300 to EX1399  
Box 14 EX1400 to EX1499  
Box 15 EX1549 to EX1859



## Provincial exhibition of Manitoba scrapbooks

<http://archives.brandonu.ca/en/permalink/descriptions4362>

Part Of: RG 2 Provincial Exhibition of Manitoba Association fonds

Description Level: Series

Fonds Number: RG2SF1

Series Number: 1.10

GMD: textual records

Date Range: 1968, 1969, 1971, 1972, 1975

Physical Description: 8 cm

History /

Biographical:

The records were created by a member of the administrative staff of the Provincial Exhibition of Manitoba.

Custodial History:

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

Scope and Content:

The scrapbooks mainly contain newspaper clippings that deal with the Provincial Exhibitions of various years. Most pictures and articles that appeared in various newspapers during this time are included in the scrapbooks.

Notes: Part of RG2SF1. Inventory of the 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



## Provincial exhibition of Manitoba miscellaneous

<http://archives.brandonu.ca/en/permalink/descriptions4363>

Part Of: RG 2 Provincial Exhibition of Manitoba Association fonds

Description Level: Series

Fonds Number: RG2SF1

Series Number: 1.11

GMD: textual records

Date Range: 1920, 1966-1980

Physical Description: 6.5 cm

History /

Biographical:

See Administrative History RG2SF1 Provincial Exhibition of Manitoba.

Custodial History:

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

Scope and Content:

The file consists of various records that in some way involve the Provincial Exhibition of Manitoba, but do not belong to a specific series. There are newspaper clippings, a cartoon, a file believed to have originated with the Schidlof family, and some letters.

Notes: Inventory of the 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



## Provincial exhibition of Manitoba financial records

<http://archives.brandonu.ca/en/permalink/descriptions4355>

Part Of: RG 2 Provincial Exhibition of Manitoba Association fonds

Description Level: Series

Fonds Number: RG2SF1

Series Number: 1.3

GMD: textual records

Date Range: 1903-1939, 1963-1969

Physical Description: 9 cm

History /

Biographical:

See Administrative History for RG2SF1 Provincial Exhibition of Manitoba.

Custodial History:

See sous-fonds RG2SF1 for custodial history.

Scope and Content:

The series consists of the financial records, transfer ledgers and prize money lists created by the Provincial Exhibition.

Notes: 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



## Provincial exhibition of Manitoba administrative files

<http://archives.brandonu.ca/en/permalink/descriptions4356>

Part Of: RG 2 Provincial Exhibition of Manitoba Association fonds

Description Level: Series

Fonds Number: RG2SF1

Series Number: 1.4

GMD: textual records

Date Range: 1980, 1982

Physical Description: 71 cm

History /

Biographical:

See Administrative History for RG2SF1 Provincial Exhibition of Manitoba.

Custodial History:

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

Scope and Content:

The series include various files from the Provincial Exhibition from 1980 and 1982. The contents include staff meetings, mailing lists, insurance, contracts, tenders, trophies and ribbons, animal events and shows, exhibits, results, etc.

Notes: 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



## Provincial exhibition of Manitoba news releases

<http://archives.brandonu.ca/en/permalink/descriptions4358>

Part Of: RG 2 Provincial Exhibition of Manitoba Association fonds

Description Level: Series

Fonds Number: RG2SF1

Series Number: 1.6

GMD: textual records

Date Range: 1984-1990

Physical Description: 13.5 cm

History /

Biographical:

This series is a product of the Publicity committee of the Board of Directors. The collection has minutes from this committee from 1903, when it was known as the Advertising and Printing committee, until approximately 1979. The name change occurred in the 1920s.

Custodial History:

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

Scope and Content:

The series contains copies of the news releases that went out to various forms of media before, during, and after the Provincial Exhibitions from 1984 to 1990.

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



## Provincial exhibition of Manitoba original results

<http://archives.brandonu.ca/en/permalink/descriptions4359>

Part Of: RG 2 Provincial Exhibition of Manitoba Association fonds

Description Level: Series

Fonds Number: RG2SF1

Series Number: 1.7

GMD: textual records

Date Range: 1935-1949, 1984, 1985

Physical Description: 13 cm

History /

Biographical:

See Administrative History RG2SF1 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:

This series contains records from the horse races from 1935 to 1949. These ledgers contain information regarding the horse, the horse's owner, who entered the horse, who is riding or driving the horse, where the horse is from, the color, sex, gait and age of the horse, what race he is entered in, and what prize money is to be won. As well, the series contains the original results files from 1984 and 1985. These files include the results of several different events and competitions, and include information on the exhibitor and exhibit, as well as the prize money to be collected.

Notes: 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





## Provincial exhibition of Manitoba prize lists and programs

<http://archives.brandonu.ca/en/permalink/descriptions4357>

Part Of: RG 2 Provincial Exhibition of Manitoba Association fonds

Description Level: Series

Fonds Number: RG2SF1

Series Number: 1.5

GMD: textual records

Date Range: 1910-1991

Physical Description: 62.5 cm

History /

Biographical:

The Prize Lists and Programs are products of the Prize List Committees and the Programs Committees respectively. The committees were attached to the Board of Directors. The history of the committees can be traced from 1903 to 1979 by using Appendix 1 in the printed finding aid.

Custodial History:

See sous-fonds RG2SF1 for custodial history.

Scope and Content:

The series consists of five boxes containing the prize lists and programs from the summer fairs. The prize lists and programs encompass virtually all events held at the summer fair. The programs include daily programs, as well as the programs for specific events and competitions. The competitors for each class are also listed. The prize lists include all classes and list the amount of prize money or the prize to be won in each class.

Notes: 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

relatively small turnout. The following year was much improved. There were 700 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 it's 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<br>Provincial Exhibition of Manitoba<br>Royal Manitoba Winter Fair<br>Agricultural Exhibition<br>Brandon Manitoba<br>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

## Manitoba winter fair minutes

<http://archives.brandonu.ca/en/permalink/descriptions4366>



|                       |                                                          |
|-----------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| Part Of:              | RG 2 Provincial Exhibition of Manitoba Association fonds |
| Description Level:    | Series                                                   |
| Fonds Number:         | RG2SF2                                                   |
| Series Number:        | 2.2                                                      |
| GMD:                  | textual records                                          |
| Date Range:           | 1908-1932                                                |
| Physical Description: | 6.5 cm                                                   |

## History /

### Biographical:

These minutes were created by the Board of Directors and the Shareholders at the meetings that they held from 1908 to 1932. The Board of Directors was created in 1908. While the collection currently houses minutes from 1908 to 1932, it is evident from Prize Lists and Programs that the Board of Directors structure evolved in the following way.

The structure of the winter fair was quite different from the summer fair. Instead of having a committee structure, the winter fair had both committees and representatives from various agricultural associations. The representatives were part of the Board of Directors. In 1908 these representatives included men from the Horse Breeders' Association, the Cattle Breeders' Association, the Sheep Breeders' Association, the Swine Breeders' Association, the Poultry Breeders' Association, the Brandon Winter Fair and Fat Stock Association, and the Manitoba Agricultural College. With the addition of representatives from the Manitoba Clydesdale Association, and the Manitoba Seed Growers' Association, these committees continued virtually without change until 1930.

By the 1930s, several more representatives joined the Board of Directors including the Winnipeg Livestock Exchange, the Manitoba Percheron Association, the Canadian Shorthorn Association, and the Hereford Association. By 1935 there were also representatives from the Prairie Thoroughbred and Racing Association, the Manitoba Boards of Trade, the Western Manitoba Board of Trade, the Aberdeen Angus Association, and the Canadian Percheron Association. The Canadian Clydesdale Association joined the Board by 1940.

By 1950, several more agricultural associations had joined the Board of Directors. They included the Brandon Light Horse Society, the Brandon Chamber of Commerce, the Manitoba Veterinary Association, the Minister of Agriculture, the Deputy Minister of Agriculture, and the Canadian Red Poll Association. By 1955, a representative from the City of Brandon rounded out the representatives on the Board of Directors.

The first committees of the Board of Directors began in 1908 with the formation of the Brandon Winter Fair and Fat Stock Association. The committees included an Executive, Horse, Livestock, Cattle, Sheep, Swine, Poultry and Seed. By 1915 there were also Program, Prize/Accounts, Carcass, Exhibits/Public Comfort, Building, and Provincial Government committees. Most of these later committees were not long lived, or were not mentioned much past 1915. A Judging Competition Committee was added in 1925 and lasted until sometime in the 1940s. In 1950 an official Finance committee was formed, as well as a Gates/Tickets committee. By 1955, three more committees had been added including 4-H/Junior Activities, Light Horse and Heavy Horse.

By the 1960s, a Publicity committee was also added. In 1965 there were several committees formed including Police/Traffic/Parking, Concessions, Calf/Pig Scrambles, Baby Fair, Flower Show and the Fall Feeder Show and Sale. A Fashion Show committee was added by 1970. In 1975 a Property committee is also mentioned.

The 1980s appear to have been a time of great growth for the winter fair, as there was a large increase in the number of committees. By 1985 the following committees had been formed: Dance, Hitching Ring, Steer Show, Bull Sale, Western Breakfast, Egg Show, Entertainment, Exhibitor's Lounge, VIP, Cattle Parade, Calcutta, Winter Fair Sponsors, Casino and Royal Manitoba Winter Fair. These committees continued for the most part through into the 1990s.

### Custodial History:

See sous-fonds RG2SF2 for custodial history.



#### Scope and Content:

The series includes the minutes from meetings held from 1908 to 1932. An interesting aspect to these records is that they include the first meetings held by the newly formed winter fair Board of Directors. The early minutes are an interesting look into the formation of an organization.

Notes: 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



## Miscellaneous minutes

<http://archives.brandonu.ca/en/permalink/descriptions4384>

Part Of: RG 2 Provincial Exhibition of Manitoba Association fonds

Description Level: Series

Fonds Number: RG2SF4

Series Number: 4.2

GMD: textual records

Date Range: 1973

Physical Description: 6.5 cm

#### History /

#### Biographical:

The minutes were created by a committee formed by the Provincial Exhibition of Manitoba Association on the occasion of the opening of the Keystone Centre in 1973.

#### Custodial History:

The records were held by the MEA until c1986 when they were transferred to the S.J. McKee Archives located at Brandon University.

#### Scope and Content:

The minutes include a meeting of the Keystone Centre Opening Committee on 24 Jan 1973.

Notes: Part of RG2SF4. Inventory of documents in the series is available in the printed finding aid.

Storage Location: RG 2 Provincial Exhibition of Manitoba Association fonds  
RG2SF4 Miscellaneous



## 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 documents

<http://archives.brandonu.ca/en/permalink/descriptions4365>

Part Of: RG 2 Provincial Exhibition of Manitoba Association fonds

Description Level: Series

Fonds Number: RG2SF2

Series Number: 2.1

GMD: textual records

Date Range: 1908-1968

Physical Description: 6.5 cm

History /

Biographical:

The documents were created by members of the Board of Directors, and others involved with the management of the winter fair.

Custodial History:

See sous-fonds RG2SF2 for custodial history.

Scope and Content:

The series includes several copies of the MWF Constitution, a 1908 constitution, 1909 MWFFSA shares belonging to John Bradley, a 1968 agreement for the non-military use of property, and several agreements between the MWF and several other companies spanning the dates 1934 to 1963.

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



## 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



## Manitoba winter fair photographs

<http://archives.brandonu.ca/en/permalink/descriptions4373>

Part Of: RG 2 Provincial Exhibition of Manitoba Association fonds

Creator:

Known creators of the records include:

PHOTOGRAPHERS AND PHOTO SERVICES

Aberdeen-Angus Cattle Society  
Allen Photo  
Avalanche Photographics  
Benny Mighall  
Canada Pictures Ltd., Toronto, Ontario  
CKX-TV, Brandon, Manitoba  
Ernie Tayler  
Fred's Photo Finishing, Brandon, Manitoba  
Gilbert A. Milne Photography  
H. M. Salisbury, Brandon, Manitoba  
H. W. Doleman, Brandon, Manitoba  
Harold K. White, Winnipeg, Manitoba  
Holstein-Friesian Journal  
Jack Hiebert  
Jerrett's Photo, Brandon, Manitoba  
Jim Rose, Livestock Photographer, Toronto, Ontario  
Ken Bullock, Brandon, Manitoba  
Leech Printing Ltd., Brandon, Manitoba  
Novelty Manufacturing  
Photo Studios of Bulman Brothers, Ltd., Winnipeg, Manitoba  
R. M. Coleman, Free Lance Photographer, Brandon, Manitoba  
R. M. McNaught, Hamilton, Ontario  
Rabinsky  
Sargent, Memphis, Tennessee  
Singer Studio, Britton, South Dakota  
Strohmeyer  
Verna Allison, Beechy, Saskatchewan  
Wilkinson's Photography, Newmarket, Ontario

NEWSPAPERS AND PRINTING SERVICES

Winnipeg Free Press, Winnipeg, Manitoba  
Brandon Sun, Brandon, Manitoba  
Leech Printing Ltd., Brandon, Manitoba

GOVERNMENT

Frank Royal for the National Film Board of Canada

Description Level:

Series

Fonds Number:

RG2SF2

Series Number:

2.9

GMD:

graphic

Date Range:

1902-1984

Physical Description:

780 photographs and other graphic materials

## History /

### Biographical:

Exhibitors and participants in the fairs donated many of these records to the Winter Fair Board. Professional photographers, hired by the Board, generated others. As well, Brandon Sun photographers took a large number of photos throughout the twentieth century. In the 1980s, the Board reprinted them and then added the reproductions to their own photograph collection. Publishing houses generated some photographs, probably as services to participants and organizers of the fairs. Finally, the Canadian government created a few of the photos.

### Custodial History:

Exhibitors and participants in activities at the winter fair donated many of these records to the Winter Fair Board. The Manitoba Provincial Archives housed other records and later transferred them to the McKee Archives. Most of the records were stored in the offices of the Provincial Exhibition Association of Manitoba until they were brought to the McKee Archives ca. 1986.

### Scope and Content:

Series consists primarily of black and white photographs either taken at the Winter Fair or owned by the Winter Fair Board. Subjects included are buildings and grounds, horses, livestock, poultry and eggs, exhibits, youth activities, entertainment, and dignitaries. Almost all of the materials have been excellently preserved.

## BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS

Several of the pictures of the buildings and grounds are aerial photos; these date from 1949 through the 1980s. Photos taken between 1908 and 1952 depict the winter fair building, the livestock arena, the Wheat City Arena, the horse barns, and the swine barn. Photos taken from the 1960s to the early 1980s show horse barns, the Keystone Centre, and quonsets.

## HORSES

Photos of horses and horse events comprise the largest number of the graphics of RG2SF2. Unlike other winter fair pictures, types of horse photos do not change throughout the twentieth century. There are many pictures of heavy horses, including Clydesdales, Belgians, and Percherons. They are usually in harness and in teams of two, four, six, and eight. They pull wagons, landaus, and carts. Heavy horses appear in photos of shows, sales, parades, ceremonies, and draft horse competitions.

Light horse photos are also numerous. There are many photos of owners and drivers with award-winning horses. Depictions of races form a prominent part of the light horse pictures; these include portrayals of chuck wagon, chariot, bike, and barrel races. Also featured are competitions like cutting, jumping, pole bending, western riding, musical chairs, hackney, costume, unicorn, and fault and out. Finally, there are many photos of ponies, including hackney, harness, and pleasure ponies.

## LIVESTOCK

There are three types of livestock shown in the photos of RG2SF2: cattle, swine, and sheep. Depicted are both sales and shows of these animals. As well, there are pictures of these animals' carcasses.

In the first forty years of the fair, people took few pictures of cattle, but after World War II, pictures of cattle became a prominent part of the Winter Fair Board's graphic records. Featured are purebred cattle such as Angus, Hereford, Shorthorn, and Simmental. Dairy cows like Jersey and Holstein-Friesian are also notable. Some pictures depict people grooming their cattle.

Photos of swine date from 1927 through the 1980s, and include Yorkshire sows and boars, as well as market hogs. Sheep are depicted throughout the twentieth century. While most sheep photos are of shows and sales, there are some photos of sheep-shearing contests taken in the 1950s.

#### POULTRY AND EGGS

Poultry photos date between the 1950s and the 1970s. Featured are both chickens and game birds. Pictures of egg shows and competitions date from 1966 through the 1980s.

#### EXHIBITS

There are four types of exhibit photos: commercial, award, seed, and Baby Fair. Commercial exhibits date from the 1940s through the 1980s. They feature agricultural implements made by Ford, John Deere, Massey Ferguson, and Case. Photos dating from the 1970s depict commercial booths owned by such companies as Badger and Sprayer Monitor.

Award exhibits date throughout the twentieth century, and feature ribbons, plaques, and trophies. Placed on tables, these awards are mostly for winners in horse and livestock competitions.

Seed exhibits date from the 1950s through the 1970s. Included in the seed exhibit pictures are prize-winning wheat, potato, and canola seed pictures.

Baby Fair, or petting zoo, photos comprise a large portion of the graphic records of MG 2. Dating primarily from the 1970s, Baby Fair pictures depict chicks, pups, lambs, piglets, and other baby animals.

#### YOUTH ACTIVITIES

Most of the youth activities' photos are of calf and pig scrambles, and date from the 1950s through the 1980s. 4-H Club activities are prominent, and include pictures of boys and male teens learning how to show and judge livestock and seed. Depicted also are fashion shows put on by female 4-H members. Finally, pictures of a hula-hoop competition dating from the 1950s are notable.

#### ENTERTAINMENT

Entertainment graphics date from the 1950s through the 1980s, and include ceremonies, rodeos, parades, and contests. Pictures of ceremonies depict the opening and closing ceremonies of the Winter Fair. Featured in these photos are winners of horse events, pipe and drum bands, and dignitaries giving speeches.

Rodeo pictures date only from the 1970s. Featured are men riding bucking broncos and cattle round-ups.

Parade photos, which date throughout the twentieth century, depict floats, six-horse teams pulling wagons, people riding horses, club entries—such as the Lions' Club and the Neat and Nifty Sewing Club, and marching bands.

Contest pictures include fiddling competitions and dog shows. The Winter Fair Board sponsored fiddling contests sporadically, and photos of such contests date from the 1950s through the 1970s. Dog show pictures also appear intermittently in the records, such as the Mutt Show photos of the 1950s.

#### DIGNITARIES



Photos of dignitaries, which date throughout the twentieth century, are mostly of men. Depicted both individually and severally are members of Winter Fair Boards, municipal and provincial politicians, and local professional and business representatives. In these pictures they are usually giving speeches, signing documents, and holding meetings. Notable are the pictures of members of associations that held meetings at the winter fairs, including the Cattle Breeders Association (1960s).

The graphic materials of RG2SF2 are useful for many purposes. For one, they offer a rich visual history of the Winter Fair. From these pictures, one can ascertain the ways in which the fair has changed and expanded throughout the twentieth century. By viewing the photos of newly built buildings, for instance, one can determine that the fair expanded in size over the years.

Also valuable is the history of western Canadian agriculture that is contained in these pictures. Over the years, the types of exhibits changed at the winter fair, thus indicating the changing nature of farming. Photos of cattle, for example, reflect the changes in types of breeds raised in the west. Exotics like Simmental only appear after the late 1960s, thus indicating that this breed began to flourish in western Canada only in the second half of the twentieth century.

The number of people contained in these pictures is formidable, and the pictures of people are valuable in many ways. By studying the pictures of dignitaries associated with the fair, one can determine who the leading agricultural personalities were over the twentieth century in Brandon. As well, the photos of exhibitors offer a wide cross section of the rural residents of southwestern Manitoba and southeastern Saskatchewan. From the pictures of exhibitors, one can establish who were the farmers and ranchers of this region, where they lived, and in what field they specialized.

The photographs of the Winter Fair, then, are valuable for many researchers. Not only do they offer a rich history of the fair, but they also offer a vivid history of the people and agriculture of southeastern Saskatchewan and southwestern Manitoba.

|                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|-------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Notes:            | Item-level descriptions of the graphics of RG2SF1 through RG2SF4 are located on a searchable database. This database is entitled "Brandon Photographs" and can be read using Microsoft Access. "Brandon Photographs" is located on a 3½ floppy disk entitled "Provincial Exhibition Association of Manitoba fonds Series 9" included in this finding aid. The description of each photograph on this database includes the following information: accession number, title, date, place, physical description, scope and content, notes, creator, and copyright. By searching the database, individual photographs can be located easily. Detailed instructions on how to use the database are located in the printed finding aid. |
| Storage Location: | RG 2 Provincial Exhibition of Manitoba Association fonds<br>RG2SF2 Manitoba Winter Fair                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Related Material: | Pictures of the Winter Fair may also be found on the National Archives of Canada website. The Western Canadian Pictorial Index in Winnipeg, Manitoba, houses additional graphic records of the Winter Fair.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |

Arrangement:

Graphics for RG2SF1 through RG2SF4 are located in boxes. Graphics larger than 24 x 35 cm are located in the image mapcase, which is located in the reading room. The graphics are filed chronologically by accession number. The arrangement is as follows:

Provincial Exhibition of Manitoba Association fonds; RG2SF1-RG2SF4; Series 9  
Boxes 1 through 15, as follows:

Box 1 EX0001 to EX0125  
Box 2 EX0157 to EX0263  
Box 3 EX0265 to EX0399  
Box 4 EX0400 to EX0499  
Box 5 EX0500 to EX0599  
Box 6 EX0600 to EX0699  
Box 7 EX0700 to EX0799  
Box 8 EX0800 to EX0899  
Box 9 EX0900 to EX0921  
Box 10 EX1000 to EX1099  
Box 11 EX1100 to EX1199  
Box 12 EX1200 to EX1299  
Box 13 EX1300 to EX1399  
Box 14 EX1400 to EX1499  
Box 15 EX1549 to EX1859



## Manitoba winter fair scrapbooks

<http://archives.brandonu.ca/en/permalink/descriptions4374>

Part Of: RG 2 Provincial Exhibition of Manitoba Association fonds

Description Level: Series

Fonds Number: RG2SF2

Series Number: 2.10

GMD: textual records

Date Range: 1966-1971, 1975

Physical Description: 6 cm

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 contains scrapbooks from 1966 to 1971, and 1975. The scrapbooks are mainly newspaper clippings pertaining to the winter fair.

Notes: Part of RG2SF2. Inventory of 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



## Manitoba winter fair miscellaneous

<http://archives.brandonu.ca/en/permalink/descriptions4375>

Part Of: RG 2 Provincial Exhibition of Manitoba Association fonds

Description Level: Series

Fonds Number: RG2SF2

Series Number: 2.11

GMD: textual records

Date Range: 1920, 1926, 1955, 1971

Physical Description: 6.5 cm

History /

Biographical:

See Administrative History for RG2SF2 Royal Manitoba Winter Fair.

Custodial History:

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

Scope and Content:

The series contains records that did not fit into any other series. Some of these records include, notices of meetings, a donation sheet, sketches for a RMWF logo, a speech, and an article about Robert John Wright.

Notes: Inventory of 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