

S. J. McKee Archives



Manitoba Pool Elevator Library collection

<http://archives.brandonu.ca/en/permalink/specialcollections1407>

Part Of:	RG 4 Manitoba Pool Elevator fonds
Collection:	Manitoba Pool Elevator Library collection
Description Level:	Series
Series Number:	MPE E
GMD:	textual records
Date Range:	1888-1998
Physical Description:	13.7 m
History /	
Biographical:	

The importance of knowledge and education to the Manitoba Wheat Pool is made clear in the *The Scoop Shovel*, the official organ of the Manitoba Wheat Pool and other co-operatives in Manitoba. Established in the 1920s, *The Scoop Shovel* owed its existence to a decision by the directors of the Pool to set aside small percentage of income per bushel for educational purposes. R.A. Hoey began to hold meetings to discuss the idea that the Pool was about more than just marketing grain, and in 1926 a Department of Education and Publicity was organized within the Pool. It was directed by J.T. Hull and advised by R.A. Hoey; they expanded and supervised *The Scoop Shovel*.

They also began to accumulate the educational volumes that would become the Pool library. Hull announced in November of 1926 that the library would be open by the end of the month and reported that: "We have a good representation of works on sociology... On co-operation we have about every book that we can find published in the English language. We have also a good selection of books on economics, history, science, general literature, and rural life. In a word, we have tried to make the library one of usefulness to people whose life is on the land."

He also encouraged Pool members—who were the only ones allowed to use the library at this time—to utilize the library to educate themselves, saying "Use it, for knowledge is power". Once the library was open to all Pool members, Hull wrote a regular column for *The Scoop Shovel* called "In the Library", in which he would review books and recommend reading in response to frequent questions from members. When the library gained new books, which was almost continually, he would list them and sometimes discuss them.

The library service was a mailing one; the main collection was kept at the Manitoba Wheat Pool central office in Winnipeg and members could request a catalogue of all the library holdings. If they wanted to borrow a book or books on a specific topic, they could write to Hull and the books would be mailed out to the member and returned by mail, all postage costs covered by the Pool Library.

During the crisis of the early 1930s, the library was saved because the Manitoba Co-operative Conference believed it was vital to the success of the Pools and the co-operative movement. The Conference took over administration of the Pool library in 1931, leasing the books and equipment from the Wheat Pool. The library was formally incorporated under a charter after it changed hands, the other charter members being the Co-operative Marketing Board and the United Farmers of Manitoba.

In 1935 the service was made available free of charge to all rural Manitobans with the financial support of the Co-op Marketing Board. By 1939, Manitoba Pool Elevators had begun to prosper again, and took back responsibility for the administration and housing of the library. The traveling library was also established around this time, and hundreds of boxes were distributed to all MPE points. The boxes were rotated and refreshed twice a year.

In 1942 Hull estimated that there were approximately 4,700 books in the Pool Library with an annual circulation of 4,000 to 5,000 books. Operating the library cost around two thousand dollars per year, although the cost was split between the members of the Manitoba Co-operative Conference, at least it was in theory. The Pool library ran as a free service to all rural Manitobans, regardless of whether they were members of the Pool, and the federal government census in 1941 indicates that over half of Manitoba's population (56%) still lived in rural areas. In 1948, the majority of the Pool Library's services were rendered unnecessary by an act called the "Public Libraries Act" that had been passed by the Manitoba legislature on April 22, 1948, and would go into effect July 1, 1948. The act provided for the establishing of a provincial "Public Library Advisory Board" that would be appointed by the government. Once the board had been established, the act allowed for the establishment of municipal and regional libraries that would be the administrative responsibility of the municipality or region they served and would be supported by a land tax levied on the population that would have access to the library. All employees of the central provincial library would be considered civil servants.

When the Provincial Library was being established in 1949, the Minister in charge of education—Ivan Shultz—actively sought both the advice of those who operated the Pool Library and the physical resources of the Library. In a letter to W.J. Parker, the President of Manitoba Pool Elevators, Shultz wrote that: "We find that in looking at the province as a whole that the box library service of the Manitoba Pool Elevators is the best developed and the best distributed within the province... We would feel that to a considerable extent you had pioneered in this field and we would be using your accomplishments as a springboard for a wider coverage of the province and an enlargement of the service."

He also requested that Miss E.L. Shields—the Pool Librarian—be released from Pool employment so that the Provincial Library could hire her for a year to aid in setting up the new library system.

An agreement was reached between MPE and the Provincial Library, and the bulk of the Pool Library was transferred to the province. The Pool retained the volumes it wished to keep as reference for its employees, and donated the rest of the open shelf library to the province. The traveling library service was sold at a discount to the province, with the caveat that service not be interrupted during the transfer and that the quality of service to rural Manitoba not diminish once the Library had been entirely transferred to the government. In a letter to Ivan Shultz after the agreement to sell the traveling library had been reached, W.J. Parker wrote that: "...Manitoba Pool Elevators has maintained an open shelf library for a period of some twenty years. These books have been made available to anyone in Manitoba, outside the City of Winnipeg, and the postage both ways was paid by the Pool. We feel it has served a very useful purpose, but that it is not primarily our function and if the government proposes to offer a more complete and universal service we are prepared to retire from the field and avoid what might be considered unnecessary duplication."

Scope and Content:

Series contains items once held as part of the Manitoba Pool Library. It has been divided into the following four sub-series: (1) MPE E 1 Manitoba Pool Library publications; (2) MPE E 2 The Scoop Shovel; (3) MPE E 3 The Manitoba Cooperator; and (4) MPE E 4 Pamphlet collection.

Notes:

Description by Jill Sutherland and Christy Henry



MPE A Local Association Records

<http://archives.brandonu.ca/en/permalink/descriptions8214>

Part Of: RG 4 Manitoba Pool Elevator fonds

Description Level: Series

Series Number: MPE A

GMD: textual records

Date Range: 1924-1998

Physical Description: 43 m

Scope and Content:

Series A is comprised of the records of the local co-operative elevator association as established in the period 1925 - 1968 under the Co-operative Associations Act. Until 1968 the local associations were the main administrative unit of Manitoba Pool Elevators. Subsequent to 1968 Pool Elevators became a direct membership top down organization. The central office was at the top, and the province was divided into seven administrative districts, which were in turn each divided into six sub-districts. Each sub-district would usually contain approximately five "locals". Please note that local associations were not obliged to become part of the new structure of Manitoba Pool Elevators, and as late as 1975 there were still 29 locals that did not belong to a sub-district. The records of each local within the Series may, but do not necessarily, contain the following: organizational papers, minutes of executive board, minutes of shareholders annual meeting, financial statements, correspondence, membership lists, miscellaneous. Series has been divided into 233 sub-series.

Notes: This series contains records for both local associations and for sub-districts. Item number does not correspond to sub-district number, so an item number and sub-district number may be the same and correspond to two separate records.



MPE B Central Office Records

<http://archives.brandonu.ca/en/permalink/descriptions8215>

Part Of: RG 4 Manitoba Pool Elevator fonds

Description Level: Series

Series Number: MPE B

GMD: textual records

Date Range: 1923-2001

Physical Description: 16.82 m

History /

Biographical:

The structure of the Manitoba Pool Elevators from its beginning in 1925 until its restructuring in 1968 placed importance in the principle of democracy. The company was run from the local associations, the central office acting as a hub that facilitated communication between all the locals and between the locals and the selling agencies. The central office was not powerless, but important decisions or by-laws could not be made without the consent of the majority of the locals.

After the restructuring of MPE in 1968 the central office took on more responsibilities. It became the top of the administrative structure and instead of members belonging to their local elevator, they were now direct members of MPE. This administrative structure continued until the 1998 merger with the Alberta Wheat Pool to form Agricore.

Scope and Content:

Series B consists of an artificially assembled collection of Central Office records. It has been divided into the following sub-series: (1) Central Office minute books; (2) Documents; (3) Local Association Minutes; (4) Local association financial statements; (5) District and Sub-district records; (6) Circulars; (7) Annual reports; (8) Speeches & Addresses; (9) Correspondence; (10) Broadcasts; (11) General Reports; (12) Indexes; (13) Summary of Association Operations; (14) Acquisitions; (15) Inter-provincial Committees; (16) Historical Topics.

Name Access: Manitoba Pool Elevators

Manitoba Wheat Pool

Central Office

Accruals: Miscellaneous sub-series has yet to be processed.

Storage Location: RG 4 Manitoba Pool Elevator fonds



MPE C Subsidiary Company and Co-operative Records

<http://archives.brandonu.ca/en/permalink/descriptions10487>

Part Of: RG 4 Manitoba Pool Elevator fonds

Description Level: Series

Series Number: MPE C

GMD: textual records

Date Range: 1926-1992

Physical Description: 2.04 m

History /

Biographical:

As the Manitoba Pool Elevators grew as a co-operative organizations and later a corporation, it acquired subsidiary companies and became involved with other co-operative organizations. These various companies were usually acquired or formed to either reach out to other types of producers in Manitoba or to assist Pool members. MPE was also involved with larger umbrella or subsidiary co-operative organizations.

See also fonds level description of RG 4 for history/bio of MPE

Scope and Content:

This series has been divided into nine sub-series, including: (1) Border Fertilizer Ltd., (2) Co-enerco, (3) CSP Foods, (4) Co-op Farm Implements, (5) Co-operative Life Insurance Co. & Pool Insurance Ltd., (6) Livestock Co-operative Division, (7) Poultry and Dairy Pools, (8) The Wasagaming Foundation, (9) North Cypress-Langford Weed Control Districts

Notes: Description by Jillian Sutherland (2010)

Storage Location: RG 4 Manitoba Pool Elevator fonds



MPE D Commissions, Committees and Inquiries

<http://archives.brandonu.ca/en/permalink/descriptions11230>

Part Of: RG 4 Manitoba Pool Elevator fonds

Description Level: Series

Series Number: MPE D

GMD: textual records

Date Range: 1931-1985

Physical Description: 2.83 m

History /

Biographical:

This is an artificially created series containing records retained by Manitoba Pool Elevators of official commissions, committee and inquiries that dealt directly with the organization and its interests. Subjects include commission investigation as well and committee and inquiries into government policy and bills.

See also fonds level description of RG 4 for history/bio of MPE

Scope and Content:

.This series has been divided into seven sub-series, including: (1) Royal Commission on Co-operatives, (2) Royal Commission on Manitoba Pool Elevators, (3) Transportation Commissions and Inquiries, (4) Box Car Inquiry, (5) Grain Commissions and Inquiries, (6) Agricultural Commissions and Policy, (7) Miscellaneous Committes, Commissions and Inquiries

Notes: Description by Jillian Sutherland (2010)

Subject Access: Commissions

Storage Location: RG 4 Manitoba Pool Elevator fonds