School of Music

http://archives.brandonu.ca/en/permalink/descriptions165

Part Of:	RG 6 Brandon University fonds
Description Level:	Sub-series
Series Number:	7.4
GMD:	multiple media
Date Range:	1928-1983; predominant 1960-1980
Physical Description:	4.6 m
History / Biographical:	

When the Department of Music was founded in 1906, it offered only conservatory-type instruction under the direction of Abbie Helmer Vining (1906-07). W.L. Wright, after four years' study in Berlin with Leopold Godowsky, took over in 1907 and remained director until 1947. During the 1920s and 1930s, the department attracted students from across Canada to work with Wright, Esther Magdalene Moore, Kathleen Moffat Fairbairn (piano), and Ruth Morgan (voice) towards graduate and post-graduate diplomas. During the Depression and the Second World War, music education at Brandon College declined as a result of financial woes facing the College and the departure of students to the war.

Under directors Peggy A. Sharpe (acting director 1947-48), and Lorne Watson (1948-1981), most instruction was given to elementary and high school students from Brandon. Through the encouragement and support of successive university presidents, the music faculty and university music credit courses were expanded to make possible a music minor within a B.A. or B.Sc. degree. By 1963, the college offered the first B.Mus. program (music education and applied) in Manitoba. In the same year, the Department of Music became the School of Music with two areas of activity: one continuing the conservatory tradition, the other leading to university degrees. Watson continued as director while Sharpe assumed the new position of supervisor of the conservatory. She was succeeded by Watson in 1981.

When Brandon attained university status, the School of Music became a member of the Western Board of Music (WBM), now Conservatory Canada. Later a B.Mus. (general) was added and, in 1980, the M.Mus. (music education and applied). In 1981, Watson was succeeded as director by Gordon Macpherson (1981-87), during whose tenure the position was re-named dean. In 1987 Lawrence Jones became dean. Jones was followed by Patrick Carrabre and Glen Carruthers.

Originally housed in Clark Hall, in 1963 the School of Music moved into a new building, officially opened by Sir Ernest MacMillan, on 28 October 1963. It housed a music library, electronic music studio, classrooms, rehearsal hall and studios. Increased enrolment in the 1970s necessitated the acquisition of three adjacent houses. On 5 October 1984, Queen Elizabeth II opened the present music building, which is named after her.

The school's reputation as a centre of string pedagogy dates from Albert Pratz' appointment to the faculty in 1964 and the engagement of the Halifax Trio (Brandon University Trio) as artists-in-residence in 1966. The Wawanesa Insurance Co. in 1964 established a string scholarship program, which has since been carried on through the Carl and Lyle Sanders Grant and the

R.D. Bell String Scholarships. A Suzuki string program was set up in 1977, directed by Alison Ryles (B.Mus. Brandon, 1978) who was followed in 1981 by Gerhard Ginader.

Besides the Brandon University Trio, school ensembles have included the Brandon University Orchestra, Concert Band, Chorale, Jazz Bands and Guitar Ensemble. The Collegium Musicum, formed in 1973 by James Mendenhall, has a collection of replicas of early instruments. The school frequently produces an opera (or musical theatre work) directed by Sylvia Richardson.

Student pursuing a major in music education have founded an active organization known as the Brandon University Student Music Educators' Association (BUSMEA), which is, in effect, a student branch of Manitoba Music Educators Association (MMEA). Annual summer schools enhance the program. In the 1960s, under the direction of Peggy A. Sharpe, recitals and workshops were given by visiting artists. In the 1980s, the emphasis was on graduate courses, including the offering of a Kodaly specialist diploma.

In the conservatory, music for children classes, the Suzuki string program, and classes in the Alexander technique are offered. The conservatory offers courses for gifted students. It also sponsored annual workshops for teachers. Clinicians have included Lawrence Jones, Lorne Watson, Gordon Macpherson, Sydney Young McInnis, Shirley Yip, Elizabeth Grant and Irma Toews.

The School of Music acts as a musical focus for southwestern Manitoba. Beginning in the 1960s, it co-sponsored (with the MMEA) an annual choral/orchestral workshop in January attracting up to 300 music educators and students from Manitoba and beyond. Rehearsals of the Brandon Community Chorus and Community Orchestra take place at the school, as do most events of the Brandon Festival of the Arts. It is also the home of the annual S.C. Eckhardt-Gramatte competition for the Performance of Canadian Music and the annual Brandon Jazz Festival. One reason for such constant activitiy is the excellence of the Queen Elizabeth II Music Building, which includes an advanced electronic studio, rehearsal halls for orchestras, bands and choirs and a 200-seat hall with recording facilities and ideal acoustics. On the occasion of Lorne Watson's 40th anniversary at Brandon that hall was named the Lorne Watson Recital Hall in his honour.

The music school's first graduate (1966) was Jack Spalding. Honourary doctorates in music have been awarded to W.L. Wright (1969), S.C. Eckhardt-Gramatte (1970), Murray Adaskin (1972), Jon Vickers (1976), Kenneth Winters (1989), the Guess Who and Tom Cochrane.

Scope and Content:

Series has been divided into three sub-series, including: (1) Dean of Music; (2) Music Faculty Council; and (3) School of Music publications.

Notes: The history/bio note was taken from the Encyclopedia of Music in Canada at http://www.collectionscanada.ca/emc/m17-119.01-e.php?uid=415&uidc=ID (January 2006). The entry was written by Lorne Watson. Peggy A. Sharpe died in 2005.

Name Access:	Lorne Watson
	Peggy A. Sharpe
	Gordon Macpherson
	Lawrence Jones
	Patrick Carrabre
	Glenn Carruthers
	S.C. Eckhardt-Gramatte
	Brandon University Trio
	Halifax Trio
Subject Access:	music
	music education
	degree program
	deans
	director
	conservatory
	kodaly
Storage Location:	RG 6 Brandon University fonds Series 7: Faculties and Schools
Related Material:	A file of miscellaneous newspaper clippings etc. assembled by Eileen McFadden for the period 1979-1985, is located in the Institutional Files in the Reading Room.