

P114 Margaret (Peg) and Dennis Roberts fonds
ca. 1938-2000 (predominant: 1951-1973)
35.8 cm of textual records, 50 photographs, 6 objects, other document types

Biographical sketch: Margaret (Peg) Doran Roberts (1919-2003) and Dennis Roberts (1915-1985), both from Brandon, Manitoba, moved to Sudbury in 1950. After graduating from the University of Toronto, Dennis Roberts was hired as a psychologist at the General Hospital. He was the first psychologist for the City of Sudbury. After resigning from his position at the General Hospital, Roberts joined the Ministry of Education as the first psychologist in the Mid-Northern Regional Office, in 1968, where he worked until his retirement in 1980.

A musician-composer, Dennis composed music for some of the plays directed by his wife Peg. Upon his retirement in 1980, he enrolled at the Huntington University Conservatory of Music, where he studied for his Honours Degree. Dennis Roberts played an important role in education not only by working directly with students, but also in the training and assisting of new psychologists in the region.

Margaret (Peg) Doran, a trained nurse during WWII at Royal Victoria Hospital in Montreal, married Dennis Roberts in 1945. Her life-long passion was the theatre. In 1939, at the age of 20, she won honour's standing at the Manitoba Drama Festival for her direction of the Brandon Little Theatre production "Send Her Victorious". While in Toronto with her husband Dennis, who was pursuing his studies, she continued to do theatre work. When the Roberts moved to Sudbury in 1950, the Sudbury Little Theatre Guild was still a young theatre company (founded in 1948) and it offered further opportunities for her to become involved in an amateur theatre company. Twice elected President of the guild, she directed, acted in plays, and also served as stage manager. Roberts, who was the driving force behind many significant developments for theatre in the region, including the formation of the Quonta Region of the Dominion Drama Festivals, was rewarded on several occasions for her dedication to the arts, as well as for her talent in directing. The Sudbury Little Theatre Guild, under the direction of Peg Roberts, participated in many festivals. In 1955, she was awarded the Edgar Stone Trophee for the direction of "Antigone".

While working with the Sudbury Little Theatre Guild, she became the first high-school drama consultant for the region of Sudbury. Roberts also set up the High-School Drama Festival.

From 1966 to 1970, she was the representative for Northeastern Ontario on the Ontario Arts Council Committee on Theatre Study. It is during that time that the idea of establishing a professional theatre company in Sudbury started to develop. Peg Roberts, along with Sonja Dunn, Bill Hart, Bob Romnant and

Carolyn Fouriezo, were all instrumental in the formation of the Sudbury Theatre Center in 1971, the first professional English-language theatre company in Sudbury. Roberts was on the first Board of Directors and served as the STC's first business manager from 1971 to 1973. She left the STC once she felt confident that the company was in a financially viable position, and that its survival was assured. Peg Roberts moved to Toronto in 1998, where she lived until her death in 2003.

Scope and Content: The Margaret and Dennis Roberts fonds attest to their involvement in the Northern Ontario community, more specifically, in the areas of education and culture. The files relate chiefly to Peg Roberts' career. They attest to her dedication to the promotion of [theatre], and to the numerous roles she filled within the theatre. Peg Roberts' files consist of notes and drafts for stage settings of the productions she directed while with the Sudbury Little Theatre Guild. Text of plays, programs of the productions, photographs and some administrative and financial records of the SLTG and STC are also included. Correspondences, newspaper clippings, notes of appreciation, also document the theatre festivals in which she participated as a director or as a member of the organizing committee. The files also include certificates of the many awards she received, in recognition of her dedicated service and accomplishments in the promotion of the arts throughout Northern Ontario. Dennis Roberts' files consist of his employment records, research papers, studies and documentation related to his professional life, more specifically dealing with his interventions with children. Some of the documentation, in the form of speeches, document his role in training and assisting in education. The fonds is divided into 2 series: Dennis Roberts and Margaret (Peg) Roberts.

Note: Immediate source of acquisition: Donated by Judy, Patricia and Steven Roberts, children of Peg and Dennis Roberts, in July 2003.

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Accruals: An accrual was received in July 2022. No further accruals are expected.

Associated material: Other records created by Margaret (Peg), née Doran, are held by the Brandon University Archives.

Series 1 - Dennis Roberts
n.d.; 1951–1982
3.1 cm of textual records, 7 photographs, 2 objects.

Scope and Content: Although there are gaps, this series contains records of Dennis Roberts, the psychologist, and also of the private man. They consist of employment records, correspondence, studies, reports and photographs. The records document his professional activities in the City of Sudbury and his specialization in the field of psychology. The files attest of his role within the Ministry of Education (Northern Ontario) for the evaluation of students through psychological services in high-schools. The documentation informs us of his participation in the development of the department of psychology at Laurentian University and also of his assistance to students in social work. Photographs, correspondence and newspaper clippings are related to his personal life and offer a glimpse of the personal man. This series is divided in two subseries: Subseries A / Professional and Subseries B / Personal.

Note : *Dennis Roberts Memorial Fund* is awarded by Science North to students participating in Science Fair (Sudbury).

Subseries A / Professional
n.d.; 1954–1982
3.0 cm of textual records, 2 objects

1/A, 1 [Employment Records]
n.d.; 1954–1982
10 sheets of textual records

File contains correspondence, which consists of letters of acceptance from the Canadian Psychological Association and the Ontario Board of Examiners in Psychology. Attached is a letter of comments by D. Roberts. A letter of resignation from his position at the General Hospital and a letter of appointment as a member of the Huntington Conservatory of Music [teaching staff] are also included.

1/A, 2 [Artifacts]
n.d.; [1960?]
2 objects

It consists of 1 chain with cross pendant and of 1 pin for 10 years of service at Sudbury General Hospital.

Note : both were given to Mr. Roberts by the Sisters at General Hospital.

1/A, 3 [Sudbury General Hospital]
n.d.; 1962–1967
0.6 cm of textual records

File consists of “The Capsule” vol. 2 no 2; a 1967 annual report of the Psychiatric Unit and newspaper clippings

1/A, 4 [Psychological services in schools]
n.d.; 1972–1974
1.8 cm of textual records

File consists of D. Roberts's comments, notes and reports on psychological services in schools, models of appraisals and provincial guidelines within the Education System. The "Review Recreation", issue vol. 2, no 4, (November 1972) and a paper by students in Social Work are also included.

1/A, 5 [“An approach to evaluation in education”]
1977–1978
0.3 cm of textual records

File consists of correspondence and of a text by D. Roberts. Correspondence addresses research projects and revisions of “An Approach to Evaluation in Education”.

1/A, 6 [Psychology in Sudbury]
1951–1982
0.2 cm of textual records

File of documentation contains a text of a speech by Mr. Dixon on the Mental Health Clinic and also of a speech by Roland Farrant entitled "Tentative History of Psychology at Laurentian University and Affiliated Colleges". Two newspaper clippings on D. Roberts's work at the Mental Health Clinic are also included.

Subseries B / Personal
n.d.; 1960–1980 (Predominant dates: 1960-1963)
0.1 cm of textual records, 7 photographs

1/B, 1 [Roberts's family]
1960-1963
7 photographs

File consists of 4 black & white photographs of the Roberts family at Fairbanks Lake and of 3 colour photographs of students [daughter Judy] in Blind River when they played “Les 2 timides”.

1/B, 2 [correspondence]
n.d.; 1953-1985
10 sheets of textual records

File of correspondence and newspaper clippings contains a reply from the Minister of National Defense in regard to the construction of an armoury in Sudbury; a letter re: insurance claims after the 1970 tornado; and a letter of acknowledgment from Peter Gzowski, CBC Morningside. An open letter answering comments made on Sudburians, newspaper clippings on Dennis Roberts's participation in a tennis tournament and printed minutes of the Sudbury District Canadian Club are also included. The file also comprises a card from the District of Sudbury acknowledging the Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II (1953).

Series 2 - Margaret (Peg) Roberts
n.d.; 1938–2000 (Predominant dates: 1951–1973)
27.7 cm of textual records, 43 photographs, 2 sketches and 4 objects

Scope and content: This series consists of Peg Roberts's files and relate to her involvement and achievements in the theatre community and to her dedication and achievements in promoting the Performing Arts in the community of Sudbury, and in Northern Ontario. Records also indicate the appreciation by her peers and the community for her dedication and talent. The certificates of awards and nomination on provincial committees are testimonials to the recognition of her career in theatre. The constitutive records, financial statements, minutes, correspondence, sketches of stage settings, photographs and newspaper clippings attest of Peg Roberts's significant and multi-faceted role with the Sudbury Little Theatre Guild (SLTG), with various festivals, as well as the determinant role she played in the formation of the Sudbury Theatre Company (STC). Her activities with teachers and high-school students are also documented by correspondence, photographs and newspaper clippings. Moreover, the photographs of the plays by the local theatre companies and the textual records and newspaper clippings also document the participation of other Sudburians in the promotion and diffusion of theatre in Northern Ontario. The records of this series also provide information on the history of two important theatre companies of Sudbury. This series is divided in 5 subseries: Subseries A / Theatre

Companies; Subseries B / Festivals; Subseries C / Workshops – High-Schools; Subseries D / Prestige and Subseries E / Documentation.

Subseries A / Theatre Companies

n.d.; 1951-2000 (Predominant dates: 1951-1976)

13 cm of textual records, 28 photographs and other types of documents

Scope and content: This subseries consists of records from the amateur theatre company (Sudbury Little Theatre Guild) and professional theatre company (Sudbury Theatre Centre) of Sudbury, in which Peg Roberts was an active member in Sudbury. The files attest of Peg Roberts's involvement at different levels. The minutes, financial records, newspaper clippings, texts of plays, programs and photographs also document the beginnings of theatre productions by the people of the community and by professionals at STC. They inform us of the plays and authors "in vogue" at the time, and about the directing of these productions. Records on anniversaries attest of the recognition of Roberts's role in promoting theatre in the community. This subseries is divided in 2 sub-subseries: Sub-subseries 1 / Sudbury Little Theatre Guild (SLTG) and Sub-subseries 2 / Sudbury Theatre Centre (STC), and is arranged by chronological order.

Note: The subseries B, C and E may contain complementary information.

Sub-subseries 1 / Sudbury Little Theatre Guild (SLTG)

n.d.; 1951-1971

4.8 cm of textual records, 2 sketches and 15 photographs

2/A/1, 1

Sudbury Little Theatre Guild [Executive]

1951–1957

0.5 cm of textual records

File contains the original constitution with notations, the 1956 amended constitution, records pertaining to the nominations of President and executives. Briefs and minutes of the Executive Board and membership lists are also included.

2/A/1, 2

Sudbury Little Theatre Guild (SLTG)

1951–1965

0.1 cm of textual records

File contains leaflets of productions presented by the Sudbury Little Theatre Guild, and one booklet of the 1965–1966 season productions.

2/A/1, 3

“The Crucible”

n.d.

0.4 cm of textual records and sketches

File contains hand-written notes for stage lighting and the text of Arthur Miller’s play, with notations for the production.

2/A/1, 4

“Ali Baba and the forty thieves”

1951

0.2 cm of textual records

File consists of the leaflet for the play, texts of songs and newspaper clippings, all from the production by the Sudbury Little Theatre Guild.

2/A/1, 5

“Arsenic and Old Lace”

1953

4 sheets of textual records

File consists of a 'best wishes' telegram, a leaflet of the production and 2 newspaper clippings.

2/A/1, 6

“Glass Menagerie”

1954

0.5 cm of textual records

File contains a plan of décor, a leaflet of the production and newspaper clippings concerning the production by the Sudbury Little Theatre Guild.

2/A/1, 7

“The Barrets of Wimpole Street”

[1962?]-1963

2.6 cm of textual records and sketches

File consists of hand-written production notes, sketches of stage, text of the play, budget of the production by the Sudbury Little Theatre Guild and directed by Peg Roberts. Newspaper clippings and notes of appreciation are also included.

2/A/1, 8

“The Fantastik”

1967
0.3 cm of textual records

File consists of documents in regard to the production “The Fantastik” by the Sudbury Little Theatre Guild. It contains notes for the stage lighting, a report on the cost of the production, the program, and notes of appreciation, as well as newspaper clippings.

2/A/1, 9 “Come Blow Your Horn”
1971
9 sheets of textual records

File consists of leaflets of the production by the Gryphon Foundation of Sudbury, sponsored by the Sudbury Little Theatre Guild. Notes on the production and a budget report are also included.

2/A/1, 10 [Sudbury Little Theatre Guild, Photographs]
n.d.; 1951–1958
15 photographs

File consists of photographs of the members, actors, and of plays of the Sudbury Little Theatre Guild, such as The Blythe Spirit.

Sub-subseries 2 / Sudbury Theatre Centre (STC)

1971–2000
8,1 cm of textual records, 13 photographs and 2 objects

2/A/2, 1 [Sudbury Theatre Centre, Board]
1971–1975
1.5 cm of textual records

File contains by-laws, working documents for management of projects, minutes, notes and reports of the Board Committee and to the Board.

2/A/2, 2 Sudbury Theatre Centre (STC)
1972
0.3 cm of textual records

File consists of a Press Release and a document submitted for grants. Both records document the administrative structure of the STC, its personnel, Board members and projected budget.

- 2/A/2, 3 [Sudbury Theatre Centre, Finances]
1972–1976
1.0 cm of textual records
- File consists of notes on fund raising and subscriptions. It also includes financial statements (1972-1973) and related documents.
- 2/A/2,4 [Federal Grants]
1972–1973
1.1 cm of textual records
- File consists of grant applications and related documents.
- 2/A/2, 5 [Sudbury Theatre Centre, Productions]
1971–1998
2.7 cm of textual records
- File of 2 folders contains Peg Roberts's hand-written notes on the 1972 season, applications for grants, leaflets and programs of the season's productions or of specific plays.
- 2/A/2, 6 [Sudbury Theatre Centre, Ceremonies]
1982–1995
1.0 cm of textual records, 2 objects
- File of 2 folders, contains various documents on the ceremony for the opening of the STC's new building (1982) and for its Jubilee. It also consists of the text of the play produced at the evening ceremony. Two key holders in copper are also included.
- 2/A/2, 7 [Sudbury Theatre Centre, Photographs]
1972–1995
13 photographs
- File consists of black and white, and colour photographs of the STC's activities. Amongst the activities documented, a photograph of the opening of the new building and many of the 25th Anniversary Ceremony.
- 2/A/2, 8 [STC newspaper clippings]
1972-2000
0.6 cm of textual records

File of newspaper clippings consists of appreciations of the STC productions, and newspaper supplements on special events such as the 10th, 25th and 30th Anniversary of the STC.

Subseries B / Festivals

n.d.; 1938-1980 (Predominant dates: 1953-1960)
3.6 cm of textual records and 5 photographs

Scope and Content: This subseries consists of records documenting theatre festivals in which Peg Roberts participated as either a member of the organizing committee, director or actress with the theatre companies of Sudbury. The correspondence, programs, reports, newspaper clippings and photographs not only depict the numerous activities, but also inform us of the many theatre companies at the time for Northern Ontario as well as for the whole province. By the many nominations to the Sudbury Little Theatre Guild, and to P. Roberts for directing some of the plays at the various festivals, the documentation also attests of her and the SLTG's appreciation by peers.

This subseries is arranged in alphabetical order.

Note: The sub-subseries A/1, the Subseries C and E may contain complementary information

2/B, 1 [Central Ontario Drama, 1954 Festival]
1953–1954
0.1 cm of textual records

File consists of telegrams, programs and newspaper clippings.

2/B, 2 Dominion Drama Festival
1938-1958
0.6 cm of textual records

File contains correspondence, programs and newspaper clippings documenting and organizing participations and activities of the Festival.

2/B, 3 [Drama Festivals]
n.d.; 1953–1959
0.4 cm of textual records

File consists of correspondence, booklets, reports of different locations, such as New Liskeard; Elliot Lake; Kirkland Lake; Nova Scotia, having drama festivals and relying on Mrs. Roberts's multi-faceted participation in such ventures.

2/B, 4 Northern Ontario Drama League
n.d.; 1954–1959
0.6 cm of textual records

File contains booklets, minutes and reports of the Executive Committee.

2/B, 5 Quonta Festival
n.d.; 1958–1980
1.8 cm of textual records, 5 photographs

File contains correspondence, programs, newsletters and newspaper clippings related to the Quonta Festival organization and activities. Five photographs of the theatre company rehearsing are also included.

2/B, 6 [Quonta]
1960
5 sheets of textual records

File consists of a carbon copy of a hand-written text on the history of Sudbury Little Theatre Guild's participation in drama festivals. A thank-you note and printed newsletter are also included.

Subseries C / Workshops - High-schools
n.d.; 1955-1973
1.6 cm of textual records and 10 photographs

Scope and content: This subseries contains information on activities held for teachers and students, under the direction of Peg Roberts. Correspondence, photographs and newspaper clippings attest to the appreciation of her work by members of the Education System.

Note: The subseries: B, D and E may contain complementary information.

2/C, 1 [High-school Theatre Program]
1961–1968
0.1 cm of textual records

File contains letters of appreciation of work done by Peg Roberts. Newspaper clippings are also included.

2/C, 2 Sudbury and District Secondary School Drama Workshops
n.d.; 1959–1973
1.0 cm of textual records, 9 photographs

File consists of hand-written notes, thank-you notes, reports, documentation concerning workshops and theatre festivals for high-schools. The records attest of Peg Roberts's involvement in organizing the events and of the appreciation of the students and the School Board. Notes on the history of children's theatre are also complementary on depicting the content of the workshops for students and teachers. Nine photographs are also included.

2/C, 3 [Workshops with students]
1962
2 sheets of textual records

File contains a carbon copy of a hand-written report of the SLTG workshops with students.

2/C, 4 Tea House
1955–1965 [?]
0.5 cm of textual records, 1 photograph

File contains one congratulation note, the text of the play, and a newspaper clipping on the play performed by LaSalle Secondary School Students.

Subseries D / Prestige
n.d.; 1950-1983
8.0 cm of textual records and 2 objects

Scope and content: This subseries attests to Peg Roberts's significant role in the promotion and establishment of theatre in the region of Sudbury and of Northern Ontario. The letters of appreciation, correspondence, certificates and photographs document the recognition of her achievements by her peers and by the community. The minutes, reports and final draft of the "The Awkward Stage" written by the Arts Council of Ontario Committee on Theatre, inform us of her duties as a representative of Northern Ontario on that Committee. Moreover, they depict the state of the Performing Arts in Ontario, more specifically in Northern Ontario.

Note: the sub-subseries A/2, the subseries: B, and C may contain complementary information.

2/D, 1 [Distinctions]
1955–1989 (Predominant dates: 1984–1989)

1.7 cm of textual records

File contains documents attesting of the recognition and appreciation of Peg Roberts's work and dedication to the theatre in the Sudbury community. It consists of the Certificate of the Volunteer Service Award and a Certificate from the Northern Ontario Council of Teachers of English, in recognition of her work and contribution to Theatre Arts. Newspaper clippings on Peg Roberts and on her contribution to theatre, a letter from the STC awarding her lifetime season tickets, a letter referring to the 1955 Edgar Stone Trophee and the certificate awarded to Peg Roberts for the direction of "Antigone" are also included.

2/D, 2 Artefacts [silverware]
1957–1960
2 objects

File consists of 2 pieces of silverware with engravings. One [cigarette paper?] box: with "Peg - May, 1957" engraved on it. One ashtray "to Peg from the Company of "Come back Little Sheba March - 1960"."

2/D, 3 [letters of appreciation]
n.d.; 1955–1972
12 sheets of textual records

File contains 1 telegram and 3 letters of appreciation of Mrs. Roberts's directing work for "Antigone" and "The Browning Version". Two notes on plays signed by "Fred Hackett" are also included.

2/D, 4 [Ontario Theatre Study]
1966–1970
6.2 cm of textual records

File of 3 folders consists of records of a study from the Ontario Council for the Arts, in which Peg Roberts participated. It contains a Letter of Appointment as Member of the Planning Committee for the Ontario Theatre Study. Documents of the Council of the Arts in regard to the mandate of the Committee, its membership, minutes and reports are also included. A letter from the Council for the Arts and a copy of the study published and titled "The Awkward Stage" are also included.

Subseries E / Documentation
n.d.; 1951-1986
1.7 cm of textual records

Scope and content: This subseries consists of newspaper clippings and general publications all documenting the many activities in Sudbury and Northern Ontario in the sphere of theatre.

Note: This subseries contains complementary information to Subseries: A, B and C

2/E, 1 [Newspaper clippings]
n.d.; 1951–1986
1.7 cm of textual records

File contains 2 folders of newspaper clippings, booklets, documenting the cultural scene of Sudbury.

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