

P190- Adrienne and Ricardo de la Riva fonds

1963-2007

6.66 linear metres of textual documents, cartographic records, architectural drawings, and photographs

Biographical sketch: Adrienne Chagnon, born in Ville-Marie, QC, and Ricardo de la Riva, who travelled from Spain to complete his residency in Ottawa, ON, settled in Sudbury, ON, in 1963 after they both completed their studies at the University of Ottawa; Mrs. de la Riva studied nursing, while Ricardo de la Riva earned a degree in medicine.

From the moment they came to Sudbury, the de la Rivas became involved in their community, actively participating in cultural, social, and political life, as well as various leisure activities. Working as a general practitioner in Sudbury from 1963 onward, Mr. de la Riva opened a practice in the downtown core and was also affiliated with St. Joseph's Hospital. He kept the downtown office running until 2010. Throughout Mr. de la Riva's career, his wife worked by his side, performing various duties to support the different positions he occupied.

Mr. de la Riva was an avid soccer fan and founded Sudbury's first junior soccer league in 1965. He is a life member of the Sudbury Regional Soccer Association.

In 1972, he ran in Sudbury's municipal elections for the first time and was elected alderman for the Flour Mill and downtown area. He was re-elected for consecutive terms until 2000. He sat on the Sudbury Regional Council from 1973 until it was dissolved in 2000. Throughout his political career, he sat on numerous committees, associations, and groups. He fought very hard for many issues, including local economic development, education, culture, and heritage, while advocating for the vitality of his community and its citizens.

A strong advocate for the French language, he was among those who started the process which resulted in Sudbury officially becoming a bilingual city. In 2003, he wrote an open letter requesting that the Franco-Ontarian flag fly at Tom Davies Square. His many contributions to the Francophone community include helping establish a Francophone college in Sudbury and a Francophone daycare in the downtown area.

As City Councillor for the Flour Mill and downtown Sudbury, Ricardo de la Riva directed many efforts to maintain the quality of life of his constituents. He spearheaded initiatives to promote cultural life, building restoration, Flour Mill neighbourhood enhancement, and economic development. He was the leading advocate for bringing the Farmers' Market to downtown Sudbury, was directly involved in the renovation of the downtown public library, and supported the creation of residences and centres for the elderly. Furthermore, he worked to make the Junction Creek Waterway Park a safer area.

1976 marked the grand opening of the Flour Mill Museum, for which Mrs. de la Riva sat on the committee as Secretary-Treasurer. The museum's aim is to preserve and highlight the neighbourhood's architectural and cultural heritage. In an effort to beautify and preserve the area, the de la Rivas led a campaign to save the silos and find them a new purpose. Many initiatives were launched in conjunction with area businesses and residents. Even after he retired from active political life, Ricardo de la Riva continued to strive for the economic growth of businesses in the Flour Mill as a member of the Flour Mill Business Improvement Committee (FMBIA).

Mr. and Mrs. de la Riva's various accomplishments were recognized on several occasions: the City of Sudbury presented Adrienne de la Riva with a Certificate of Appreciation in recognition of her outstanding volunteer service in the community. Her efforts and commitment to preserving cultural heritage were also recognized by the Government of Ontario. Ricardo de la Riva also received various honours, including l'Ordre du mérite francophile from ACFO Sudbury in 2000 and the Queen's Jubilee Medal in 2002 for his outstanding and exemplary contribution to his community. In 2014, he was also inducted into the Sudbury Sports Hall of Fame as a founding member of the Sudbury junior soccer league.

Scope and content: The fonds attests to Adrienne and Ricardo de la Riva's social involvement within the community of Sudbury and highlights their numerous political and cultural accomplishments and interests.

Although the fonds contains few records from Ricardo de la Riva's medical practice, it does include some records from St. Joseph's Hospital and the General Hospital, most of which relate to on-call schedules or restructuring changes at these institutions.

Most of the records in this fonds come from city committees, associations, or groups which Mr. de la Riva was a part of as a city councillor. The records include meeting minutes, correspondence, reports, budgets, maps, and plans which shed light on positions Mr. and Mrs. de la Riva held on various committees. These records document Sudbury's political, social, and cultural evolution over the course of more than 28 years.

In addition to records on Francophone education, cultural activities, and services offered by the city, many documents deal with projects that were submitted and carried out. They concern economic development, road development, architectural and urban planning, and various services offered to citizens of the city either by the municipality or by associations, groups, and organizations.

The Flour Mill Museum records document, not only the activities of the museum and its administration, but also partnerships with other local organizations and groups involved in joint projects. There is also extensive documentation on the Flour Mill silos, their history, restoration, and use.

Files of correspondence to and from Mr. de la Riva's constituents, as well as correspondence and follow-ups with city employees, attest to the importance Mr. de la Riva placed on every letter he received.

Many reports, studies, newspaper clippings, and engineering plans document road rehabilitation in the city, especially in the downtown and Flour Mill area.

Additionally, there are different reports, architectural plans, and committee minutes that document various interventions and changes brought about regarding economic development, area revitalization, building renovations, and parking issues in the Flour Mill. Many projects, including the municipal library project, the establishment of a cultural centre, the possibility of a new arena, and a casino in the downtown core, are well documented and give information on the position taken by de la Riva during these projects.

While the meeting minutes, motions, notes, budget proposals, and other city council documents give information on council operations and bylaws which were passed, they also give information on the internal structure of the city and its relationship with various other levels of government. Several handwritten notes and opinion letters written by Mr. de la Riva give a glimpse into his vision for the city. The fonds contains a number of records from different city committees such as the zoning committee, planning and development committee, the engineering committee, as well as the Sudbury Airport Review Committee, among others. There is also extensive documentation on community improvement projects in many areas of the city, including the Junction Creek development, accompanied by environmental records from the Nickel District Conservation Authority. Other records contain information on the history of city buildings, their restoration, and heritage value.

Ricardo de la Riva's activities as part of the Junior Soccer League are also well documented.

Notes:

Immediate source of acquisition: Adrienne and Ricardo de la Riva donated the documents in 2011.

Material language: Most of the documents are in English. Some of the documents are in French.

Restriction of access: applies to some documents

Terms governing use, reproduction, and publication: Copyright Act regulations apply to these documents.

Accruals: A first accrual was received in July, 2011, and a second in December, 2012. No further accruals are expected.

Finding aid: a Preliminary list is available at the Laurentian University Archives