

Welland County Records

1961-1989

Ontario Editorial Bureau fonds

RG 75-31

Brock University Archives

- Creator:** Ontario Editorial Bureau
- Extent:** 21 cm of textual material (1 half box)
- Abstract:** This archive is part of the larger Ontario Editorial Bureau fonds (OEB) housed at Brock University. The records include material on the Welland County Fair, the Welland Festival of Arts, the Welland Optimist Club, the Welland County Hospital Campaign, the last session of the Council of the County of Welland and the unveiling of a historic plaque at Welland Mills. The bulk of the collection is correspondence and media releases.
- Materials:** Correspondence, media releases, clippings, promotional material, programs, meeting minutes and agendas, reports and speeches.
- Repository:** Brock University Archives.
- Processed by:** Chantal Cameron
- Last updated:** February 2012
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Preferred Citation: RG 75-31, Ontario Editorial Bureau, 1961-1989, Welland County, Brock University Archives, Brock University.

Acquisition Info.: This collection is part of the Ontario Editorial Bureau fonds, donated by Lou Cahill in November 1997.

Administrative History:

Welland County Fair

The origins of the Welland County Fair date back to the founding of the County of Welland in 1852. A provincial charter was issued in 1853 to create the Welland County Agricultural Society that was to operate the Fair. In 1970, the Welland County Fair became the Niagara Regional Exhibition, and the Society became known as the Niagara Regional Agriculture Society. The Society seeks to “encourage interest, promote improvements in and advance the standards of agriculture, domestic industry and rural life”.¹

¹ <http://www.nre.ca/aboutUs/history.html> (2009), retrieved: 30/01/2012

Welland Festival of Arts

The Welland Festival of Arts was developed in 1986 in order to revitalize the town's economy. An "outdoor art gallery" was created by painting murals on buildings that depicted the town's heritage, a concept successfully adopted by the town of Chemainus, B.C. The first mural was completed in the summer of 1988, and by 1991 there were a total of 28 murals around the city. The endeavour proved successful: in the years that followed the creation of the Festival, two new hotels were constructed, a third was expanded, and there was an addition to the Seaway Mall to accommodate the increased tourist traffic.

Welland Optimist Club

Optimist International is a non-profit organization that strives to "bring out the best in kids"². The first Canadian club was formed in Toronto in 1924. The Welland branch of the Optimist Club was founded in 1937.

Welland County Hospital

The first Welland County General Hospital opened in 1908. As the population increased, it became necessary to expand the existing facilities. Additions were made to the original structure with an East wing in 1930 and a children's ward in 1931. However, in the 1950's, the hospital was operating beyond optimum capacity and the need for a larger facility was clear. It was decided that a new hospital would be built, which

² <http://optimistcanada.org/index.php> , retrieved: 01/02/2012

opened in April 1960. The new hospital had 259 beds and 51 bassinets. Further additions were made in 1967 and 1978.

County of Welland

The County of Welland was formed in 1850 when it was officially separated from Lincoln County, however, the two counties continued to operate together until 1856 when a new County building and jail for Welland County were completed. That same year, the first meeting of the Council of the Corporation of Welland County took place. The final meeting of the Council took place on December 18, 1969. The following year, the County of Welland merged with Lincoln County to form the Regional Municipality of Niagara.

Welland Mills

The Welland Mills in Thorold, Ont., was built in 1846-1847 by Jacob Keefer and is thought to have been one of the largest flour mills in Upper Canada. Ownership of the mill changed several times over the years and previous owners include the Howland family, the Hedley Shaw Milling Company and the Maple Leaf Milling Company. In 1986, the building received a heritage plaque from the Ontario Heritage Foundation, an agency of the Ontario Ministry of Culture and Recreation. At this time, the mill was no longer in operation and was being used for storage by Fraser, Inc. By 2006, the dilapidated building had been redeveloped into 18 apartments and 2 floors of commercial space, while maintaining many heritage features. The building is currently known as the Welland Mills Centre.

Scope and Content:

The records include material related to various events and organizations in the County of Welland. This includes the Welland County Fair, the Welland Festival of Arts, the Welland Optimist Club, the Welland County Hospital Campaign, the last session of the Council of the County of Welland, and the unveiling of a historic plaque at Welland Mills. Records consist mostly of correspondence and media releases but also include clippings, promotional material, meeting agendas and minutes, speeches, reports, and programs. Most of the material has been kept in its original order with the exception of the promotional material, the meeting minutes and agendas, programs and speeches. These materials have been separated and filed by subject. Some of the correspondence folders include other materials such as clippings and media releases that were included as enclosures with the correspondence. Within a series, folders are arranged chronologically.

Organization:

The records were arranged into six series:

Series I: Welland County Fair, 1961-1966

Series II: Welland Arts Festival, 1987-1989

Series III: Welland Optimist Club, 1962

Series IV: County of Welland, 1969

Series V: Welland County Hospital Campaign, 1956

Series VI: Welland Mills, 1985-1986

Inventory:**Series I. Welland County Fair, 1961-1966**

- 1.1-1.6 Correspondence, 1961-1966. Also includes other materials enclosed with the correspondence, such as media releases, Fair programs, and a map of the Fairgrounds.
- 1.7-1.11 Media releases, 1961-1965

Series II. Welland Arts Festival, 1987-1989

- 1.12 Correspondence, 1987. Includes a promotional brochure enclosed with the correspondence.
- 1.13 Promotional material, 1987. Includes drafts of advertisements, and fundraising and marketing documents.
- 1.14-1.15 Correspondence, 1988. Includes other materials enclosed with the correspondence such as a proposed public relations program, lists of local foundations and companies, and news clippings.
- 1.16 Promotional material, 1988. Includes brochures and news clippings on Welland's Festival of Arts, the city of Welland and the Chemainus Festival of Murals in British Columbia.
- 1.17 Meeting minutes and agendas, 1988
- 1.18 Correspondence, 1989. Includes some news clippings enclosed with the correspondence.

Series III. Welland Optimist Club, 1962

- 1.19 Correspondence, 1962. Includes drafts of advertisements for racing meets held at the Welland Fair Grounds, sponsored by the Optimist Club.
- 1.20 Media releases, 1962

Series IV. County of Welland, 1969

- 1.21 Correspondence, 1969. Includes news clippings on the history of the County of Welland and invitations to a ceremonial session of the Welland County Council.
- 1.22 Programs and speeches regarding the final meeting of the Council of the County of Welland, 1969. Also includes documents relating to a commemorative plaque.

Series V. Welland County Hospital Campaign, 1956

- 1.23 Correspondence, including a presentation by Welland County General Hospital Trustees to the municipalities affected by the new hospital project, 1955-1956

Series VI. Welland Mills, 1985-1986

- 1.24 Correspondence, 1985-1986. Includes media releases enclosed with the correspondence concerning an Ontario Heritage Foundation plaque commemorating the historical significance of Welland Mills. Some news clippings on the history of the building are also included.
- 1.25 Programs, speeches and clippings, 1986, undated. Most of the material is related to the unveiling and dedication of a historical plaque at Welland Mills.

Related O.E.B. Collections:

RG 75-5, Maple Leaf Mills records 1955-1989 [non-inclusive]
RG 75-6, Niagara Region Municipality records 1962-1980 [non-inclusive]
RG 75-23, Niagara Region Hospital fonds 1941-2003 [non-inclusive]

Related Materials:

Gibb, Jerry. *A Festival of Canadian Art: Welland's Giant Outdoor Murals*. Welland, Ont.: Promote Welland Task Force Inc., 1991. Spcl FC 3164.45 M89 G53 1991

Welland, Ontario, 1858-1983, celebrating 125 years of Canadian Heritage. [St. Catharines, Ont. : Lincoln Graphics, 1983]
Spcl FC 3164.4 W458 1983