



MG 425 - Jean Ruryk Shepherd Collection

Dates: 1936-1944.

Extent: 3 cm textual records, 5 photographs.

Biography: Jean Shepherd (nee Ruryk) was associated with the Emma Lake Art Camp and while there, met artists Ernie Lindner, Wynona (Nonie) Mulcaster, Eva Mendel, Bob Porter, Norm Caplin, 'Doc' Palsson, and McGregor Hone. Likely during the early years of the 1940s, Jean moved to Montreal; and many of the artists mentioned were involved to some extent in war service, including Mac Hone, who was a welder in the Vancouver shipyards. This collection contains several illustrated letters from Mac Hone to Jean Ruryk, as well as photographs of Ernie, Bodil and Degner Linder.

For at least some period of time, Jean Shepherd ran a flea market in Montreal, where she met Thomas Kramer. Kramer assisted her with selling some paintings by Ernie Linder, and then gave Kramer the Hone letters and Linder photographs to sell. They determined the letters might be considered too personal; and they remained in the possession of Kramer until Shepherd's death in the late 1990s.

Scope and content: This collection contains the letters written by Mac Hone to Jean Ruryk from ca. 1939-1944, together with photographs primarily of the Lindner family. The letters discuss news of mutual friends from the Emma Lake Art Camp; theatre, music, ballet, movies and books; Mac's war work (welding); etc.

Custodial history: Donated to the University of Saskatchewan Archives by Thomas Kramer in November 2011.

Related fonds at the University of Saskatchewan include the Emma Lake scrapbooks and the Mac and Beth Hone fonds. Another related collection, the Ernest Lindner fonds, is held by the Saskatchewan Archives Board.

Restrictions: There are no restrictions on access.

Guide prepared by Cheryl Avery, University Archives & Special Collections, 2011

A. Correspondence

1. Undated letter; written (and illustrated) by Mac; Les [McGrath? Saunders?]; and Nonie [Mulcaster].
2. Undated letter; typewritten. Mac writes about expecting to be called up for service; cartooning and caricaturing; sending material to Robert Ayers; watercolours of the Dundurn camp; Bob Porter, Norm Caplin, Ernie and Bodil Linder.
3. Single page undated (post script only); illustrated (“Harris says hello”); refers to Jean’s “new job” and references the censorship at the wartime shipyards (“sketching mostly verboten here”).
4. 9 November 1942; handwritten. Mac describes his work in the shipyards; music concerts; movies (The Moon and Sixpence); Norm [Caplin], Bob [Porter], Dorothy [?]; painting (Jean to send hers collect; Mac feels his own current work is ‘wishy washy’).
5. 15 November [1942]; handwritten. Sir Thomas Beecham conducting at an afternoon symphony concert; working the graveyard shift; books recently read; reference to letter from Jean and Eva [Mendel]; illustration references possibility of Mac being ‘called up’ for active service.
6. 22 November [1942]; handwritten. Mac writes that his parents have arrived and he is helping them find a place to stay “in an already overcrowded city.” Pages may be from other letters; notes that Les Saunders wrote about Bodil Lindner expecting to give birth soon; some sense that there could be a ‘tragedy.’
7. [December 1942 / January 1943]; typewritten. Reference to poem at top of letter from 9 Nov 42; reference to Jean’s IQ (note letter of 9 Nov 42, where he indicates he didn’t mean to cast aspersions on her IQ); poem about a gold-digger.
8. [ca. 1943]; handwritten. Refers to photographs sent by Jean; asks after Eva [Mendel]; refers to drinking with Doc Palsson.
9. [ca. 1943]; handwritten. Reference to birth of Lindner’s baby; Porter overseas; Norm and selective service; refers to lectures by Quance; mentions a date “two weeks ago” with Beth Springer.

10. 29 January [1943]; typewritten. Refers to the typewritten letter with the 'gold digger' poem; wonders if Jean received it; reference to Lindner's becoming parents; refers to Norm Caplin and Bob Porter.

11. 18 March [1943]; handwritten. Refers to being called up on Dec 7th or 9th, but given a sufficiently low medical category "that I'm still here." Refers to mss from Jean expected; books; etc. One page missing.

12. September [1943?]; handwritten change of address.

13. 7-8 September 1943; handwritten. Writes about communism, apparently in response to question from Jean; again, apparently in response, indicates won't live in Montreal ("the place is lousy with artists, good & bad") and suggests he is a "better welder than artist."

14. 1944; handwritten. "Surprise!...no I am not dead." Indicates still welding; not married "but I'm working on that;" "some painting done but not much and not very good – that is, most of it;" "congratulations on your success in the designing field."

B. Photographs

1. Bodil, Ernie, and Degen Lindner, December 1943.

2. "The Morgue;" nd.

3. Ernie Lindner sketching Degen Lindner, who is held by Bodil Lindner; [December 1943].

4. Portrait of Ernie Lindner, 1936.

5. Les Saunders, Ernie Lindner, and Eva Miller at Emma Lake.