



MG 381 – A.L. Karras fonds

Dates: 1937-1997

Extent: 40.64 cm of textual records, 16 photographs.

Biography: In 1932, aged 18, Art Karras and his older brother Ab sought adventure – and their livelihood by trapping – in Northern Saskatchewan. Raised on a farm on the prairie, neither had been in a canoe and both were almost completely unfamiliar with the lifestyle they had chosen.

Years later, Art wrote about the seven years they spent in the north. That book, North to Cree Lake, became a bestseller – largely through word-of-mouth and through Art's promotion – and is now in its 5th printing. Many consider it a classic of Saskatchewan literature. Karras' second book, Face the North Wind, told the story of two other trappers, Fred Darbyshire and Ed Theriau; and his third book, Northern Rover, is the story of Olaf Hanson (for whom Hanson Lake, and road, was named).

Art Karras was born in 1914 in Rosthern and was raised in Yellow Grass. He worked as a trapper, grain buyer, town administrator, and school administrator at various locations throughout Saskatchewan. He died in Nipawin on 29 April 1999.

Scope and Content: This fonds contains materials relating to Art Karras' three books, including correspondence with publishers; with fans; with trappers; drafts and typescripts.

Arrangement: This fonds has been arranged into 6 series:

1. Personal
2. Publications – General
3. Publications – Correspondence
4. Publications – Manuscripts and Drafts
5. Reference Material
6. Short stories/Articles

Donated to the University of Saskatchewan Archives by Effie Karras, 2008.

Restrictions: Files marked as **RESTRICTED** require vetting by an archivist prior to release. All restrictions are applied as per privacy legislation. Copyright restrictions also apply.

Guide prepared by Cheryl Avery, University Archives, 2008.

Reformatted to 2017 style guide by Lisa Carpenter and Amy Putnam (2019).

1. Personal.

- a. Correspondence – 1952, 1955, 1972, 1997.
Includes Vol. 1 no.5 issue of Wildlife Crusader, 1955.
- b. Diary – 1937-1938.
Describes daily tasks as at Cree Lake as a trapper.
- c. Photographs. – 8 negatives, 8 prints.
Negatives of: moose; A.L. & A.B. Karras portaging; AL or AB standing beside canoe; AL & AB Karras in front of cabin; with dogs; AB or AL in front of tent; dog team moving canoe; AB or AL Karras in bush near lake; [?] by cabin;
Prints of: dog team; trappers Petch, Brustad, Fisher and Art Karras; AL & AB Karras canoeing on Beaver River; Art Karras canoeing, Cree Lake; [Art] Karras with fish; Mick Lydster in bush; dog team by float plane; Olaf Hanson by plaque.
- d. Scrapbook. – see oversize.

2. Publications – General.

- a. Correspondence and Draft Chapter – Northern Rover. – 1978-1981.
Correspondence with Olaf Hanson; handwritten copy of chapter 11 (“At the Rainbow’s End”); clipping on Hanson Lake Road.
- b. Promotional.
- c. Publishers – Correspondence. – nd, 1952-1957.
See also below.
- d. Royalty Statements. – 1977-1996.

3. Publications - Correspondence.

This series contains correspondence with fans, publishers, and publicity events. The material was stored in three separate document boxes. Although there was some cross-over in terms of content, the boxes were roughly sorted by book. The following organization reflects the material as found in each of the three document boxes. The final files contain materials

[Donor document box 1]

- a. Correspondence – Fan Mail & Orders – (Predominantly North to Cree Lake). – nd, 1970-1983. – 3 folders.

b. Correspondence – Publishers (Predominantly North to Cree Lake). – nd, 1968-1981.

[Donor document box 2]

c. Correspondence – Fan Mail & Orders – (Predominantly Face the North Wind). – nd, 1972-1983. – 2 folders.

e. Correspondence – Fred Darbyshire. – 1971-1976.

f. Correspondence – Publishers - (Predominantly Face the North Wind). – 1973-1979.

[Donor document box 3]

g. Correspondence – Fan Mail & Orders – (both books). – nd, 1971-1993. – 2 folders. – **RESTRICTED.**

h. Correspondence – Publishers – (both books). – 1975-1978.

4. Publications – Manuscripts and Drafts

a. North to Cree Lake – (Reprint) – Bluelines.

b. North to Cree Lake – Chapter 20 Draft.

c. North to Cree Lake – Manuscript.

See also below, “Notes from Saskatchewan’s Northland,” for a copy of the introduction.

Box 2

d. North to Cree Lake – Proofs.

e. Face the North Wind – Typescript. – 2 folders.
Folder 1 includes annotated version.

f. Northern Rover – Manuscript.

g. Northern Rover – Typescript.

h. Northern Rover – Typescript.

5. Reference Material

- a. Cree Lake Portion of Report D on the Country Between Lake Athabasca and Churchill River.
Extract from JB Tyrrell and DB Dowling report, 1895.
- b. Maps.
- c. Miscellaneous.

6. Short Stories / Articles

- a. Country Elevator Agent / The Elevator Agent.
- b. Honkers Among the Swaths. – 1954.
- c. Hunting Alone. – 1957.
- d. Miscellaneous. – nd, 1968.
Includes two book reviews by Karras; a short humorous piece; a newspaper article.
- e. No Authenticated Case.
- f. Notes from Saskatchewan's Northland. – 1969.
Introduction to North to Cree Lake.
- g. To Write a Book. – 1972.
- h. Victim of Curiosity.
- i. What a Farmer Can Do to Improve Wildlife Habitat on his Farm. – 1957.