



MG 104 – Marguerita Spencer fonds

Dates: 1900-1987 (inclusive); 1923-1987 (predominant)

Extent: 60 cm of textual records ; 11 negatives ; 16 photographs ; 3 VHS ; 2 reel-to-reel audio tapes.

Biography: The eleventh of twelve children, Marguerita Spencer was born 28 December 1892 into the musical MacQuarrie family of Glace Bay, Nova Scotia. Her early musical education was split between Glace Bay and Halifax's Academy of Music, Lady's College. During World War I, Marguerita returned to Glace Bay where she found work improvising piano accompaniment to silent films. From 1918 to 1921 Miss MacQuarrie lived in Toronto where she trained as a nurse at the city's General Hospital. Shortly after graduation in 1921, she married R.A. Spencer who had been recently appointed Assistant Professor of Civil Engineering at the University of Saskatchewan. After moving to Saskatoon, Mrs. Spencer continued her musical education both locally under Lyell Gustin and at McGill's Department of Music where she earned a L. Mus. degree. Spencer was extremely active in the Saskatoon's music community, joining the Knox United Church Choir, playing organ for both the Westminster United and the First Baptist churches, performing with the Saskatoon Symphony and on CBC radio, and taking on students of her own. She was not only a gifted player but also a composer of music. A theme that runs through much of her work is that the prairies and its people. Mrs. Spencer has composed and published songs and suites for voice, string quartets, piano and cello. She passed away on May 5, 1993.

Scope and content: This fonds contains personal correspondence with family, colleagues, and publishers; prose and music compositions; material pertaining to provincial music associations, festivals, performances, and recitals; etc.

Arrangement: The fonds is arranged in six series:

- I. BIOGRAPHICAL
- II. PERSONAL AND FAMILY PAPERS
- III. CORRESPONDENCE
- IV. COMPOSITIONS
- V. PRINTED MATERIAL
- VI. CLIPPINGS

Restrictions: There are no restrictions on access.

Title based on provenance.

Donated to the University Archives by Henry Spencer.

Original finding aid prepared by Robert Scharf and Patrick Hayes, March 1993. Formatted by Amy Putnam, June 2017.

Box 1

I. BIOGRAPHICAL MATERIAL. - 1 cm of textual records. - 1954-1992. - 1 folder.

This series contains material relating to the life and works of Marguerita Spencer. (See also clippings)

II. PERSONAL AND FAMILY PAPERS. - 23 cm of textual records and other material. - 1923-1987, predominant 1971-1987. - 20 files.

This series contains correspondence, legal and financial documents, lists, original compositions, poetry, prose by family and friends and drawings pertaining to the private life of Marguerita Spencer and her relationships with family and friends.

- i. Correspondence - Personal. -- 1923-1987.
 - ii. Correspondence - R.A. Spencer. -- 1944.
 - iii. Personal and Household Finances. -- 1957-1987.
 - iv. Drawings and letters from grandchildren. -- [1953-1967].
 - v. Compositions - Fred L. MacQuarrie. -- n.d.
Berceuse, Intermezzo, Lament, Lullaby, Lydia (Romance) and Reverie (Tone Poem).
 - vi. Compositions - Mack Spencer. -- 1964, n.d.
String Quartet in Dm and Intermezzo.
 - vii. Ann Spencer "Art Book". -- n.d.
 - viii. Prose by Marguerita Spencer. -- n.d.
"Insomnia"
 - ix. Poetry by Henry A. Spencer. -- 1971, 1973.
"To Stand" and "Henry's Poem".
 - x. Poetry and prose by others. -- n.d.
Signed and unsigned poetry
 - xi. Health. -- n.d. - 1987.
 - xii. Rita's Trip to Oxford. - 1957.
File title supplied.
 - xiii. Photographs and Negatives. -- [ca. 1900-196 1].
Family and friends at various locations.
 - xiv. Lists. -- n.d.
Variety of lists including lists of compositions by Marguerita Spencer, sheet music and record collection.
 - xv. Miscellaneous. -- 1916-1957.
 - xvi. Memorabilia. -- [ca. 1920-1987]. - 6 folders.
Plaque, reel-to-reel audio tapes, VHS video tapes, journals, poster, slides, etc.
 - a) Audio tape.
 - b) Video tape.
 - c) Note books. *
- Box 2**
- d) Saskatchewan Music Festival Association - Canadian Composer Award. -- 1987.
 - e) Slides and compact.
 - f) Cue sheets for "Golliwog's Cakewalk".

III. CORRESPONDENCE. - 1 cm of textual records. - 1947-1987. - 4 files.

This series contains correspondence pertaining to the music career of Marguerita Spencer.

- i. General. -- 1947-1987.
- ii. Publishers. -- 1951-1986.
- iii. Recitals and performances. -- 1956-1986.
- iv. Saskatchewan Arts Board. -- 1980.

IV. MARGUERITA SPENCER COMPOSITIONS. - 15 cm of textual records. - 1937-1988. - 19 files.

This series contains music and libretto for themes, songs and suites composed by Marguerita Spencer.

- i) Preludes: A major, A minor and Ab major. -- 1971.
- ii) Preludes: B major, B minor, Bb minor and Bb major. -- 1971.
- iii) Preludes: C major, C minor, C# minor and C# major. -- 1971.
- iv) Preludes: D major and D minor. -- 1971.
- v) Preludes: E major, E minor, Eb minor and Eb major. -- 1971.
- vi) Preludes: F major, F minor, F/f minor and F# major. -- 1971.
- vii) Preludes: G major, G minor and G# minor. -- 1971.
- viii) The King of Life My Shepherd Is. -- 1964.
Music by M. Spencer words by H.W. Baker.
- ix) Quartet in D minor. -- 1940.
- x) Doll Suite. -- 1962.
- xi) Waltzes. -- 1945-1959.
Includes "Waltz in C Major: The Little Ballerina;" "Waltz in D flat Major;" "Waltz in E Major."
- xii) Prairie Suites. -- 1954-1988.
Includes "Quietude;" "The Pipe Band;" "Square Dance or Swing your Partner;" "Square Dancing;" "Fun at the X;" "The Wheat is Ripe;" "The Prairie Sunset;" "March;" "A Scottish March;" "Boy Chasing Grasshoppers;" and the published 'Prairie Suite,' including "The First Crocus;" "The Gopher;" "The Bright Sunshine;" and "The Prairie Trail." 'Prairie Suite no. 2' includes "The Pipe Band;" "Quietude;" "Square Dancing;" and "At the Exhibition."
- xiii) Vocalise No. 2 and 4. -- 1978.
- xiv) Shakespeare Songs. -- 1964.
Music by M. Spencer words by Wm. Shakespeare.
Includes "Hark, Hark the Lark;" "O Mistress Mine;" "Under the Greenwood Tree;" "When Daisies Pied;" "Then to Sylvia."
- xv) Songs. -- 1937-1971.
Miscellaneous songs with music by M. Spencer words by H.A. Spencer, Myra Smith Stillborn, Borgny Eileraas Pearson, R.R. Rashley, Christina Rossetti, K. Anderson, Robert Browning and anonymous. Spencer compositions include "Autumn Glory;" "April Music;" "A Birthday;" "Come Sing to Me;" "My Heart is a Drum Beat / The Drum Beat Song;" "Fine Knacks for Ladies;" "I can't forget;" "In a Lowly Manger;" "June Magic;" "Let Me Be Brave;" "Meadow Larks in April;" "My Valentine Song;" "A Portrait of Irene;" "Reality;" "Russian Thistle;" ["What a sky and what a sea"]; "Tea Time;" "Time Cannot

- xvi) Take;" "Wheat;" "Wild Horses;" "Who Seeketh Beauty;" "The Year's at the Spring."
Piano pieces. -- 1936-1974.
Includes "Arabesque;" "The Brilliant Sky;" "Humoresque;" various intermezzos; "Let's Play at the Slough;" "A Little Dance;" "Lullaby;" "Moods;" "Pastoral;" "Prelude;" "Reverie;" "The Soft Shoe Dancer;" "Sonatina in A major;" "Song Without Words;" "Sunday Morning;" "The Sweetest Flower;" "Sweet Suite."
- xvii) Violin, Duets and Trios. -- 1936-1972.
Includes "Arioso;" "Barcarolle;" "The Bright Sunlight;" "Intermezzo;" "Legend;" "Andante;" "Springtime;" "Melody for Stephan;" "The Sweetest Flower;" "The Temple Bells;" "Time Cannot Take;" "Tramp's Song;" "A Tune for Stephan Day;" "Venetian Barcarolle;"
- xviii) Old Stuff - Odd Pieces. -- n.d.
File title supplied.
Unidentified and incomplete hand-written manuscript.
- xix) Saskatchewan Music (ed. S.E. Moen; Saska-Music, 1980). -- 1980.
This compilation of Sask. composers contains a biography and three pieces by M. Spencer.

Box 3

V. PRINTED MATERIAL. - 17 cm of textual records. - 1924-1987. - 15 files.

- i) Programmes and leaflets. -- 1924-1976.
 - a) Saskatoon Women's Musical Club. -- 1924-1976.
 - b) Music Teachers Association. 1939-- 1986.
 - c) General. -- 1919-1988, n.d. -- 2 folders.
- ii) "CBC Program Schedule". -- 1948-1958.
Incomplete set.
- iii) "The Etude". -- 1917-1933.
Incomplete set.
- iv) "The Canadian Composer" -- 1970-1986.
Incomplete set.
- v) CNIB Information Bulletin - Saskatchewan Division. -- 1985-1986.
- vi) "The Studio Bulletin - Lyell Gustin Piano Studios" -- 1941-1946.
Originally published as "The Alumni Bulletin". Incomplete set.
- vii) "Canadiana". -- 1956, 1961.
- viii) Copy Right Act. -- 1921, 1938, 1948, n.d.
- ix) Kiwanis Music Festival - Official Syllabus. -- 1957, 1963.
- x) Western Board of Music - Syllabus. -- 1960, 1964, 1968.
- xi) "Saskatoon". -- 1952.
Words and music by Hilda E. Knutson.
- xii) Miscellaneous publications. -- 1928-1987, n.d.

VI. CLIPPINGS. - 3 cm of textual records. - 1938-1985. - 3 files.

- i) Marguerita Spencer. -- 1962-1985.
- ii) University of Saskatchewan. -- 1938-1973.
- iii) Miscellaneous. -- 1957-1987.