

Archival records are critically important to individuals and to society in general. They are the basis for individual and societal human rights, provide transparency of action and accountability for governments, and support enriching cultural activities that basically make life worth living, such as the creation of films and documentaries, the writing of books and histories, and the tracing of personal family genealogies. There are many examples of records which have supported these important activities, but just a few from the University of Manitoba Archives & Special Collections include the following:

the provision of records relating to forced relocation of indigenous communities from the Walter Rudnicki fonds

photographs and architectural drawings of the old water tower formerly on the campus of the University of Manitoba. A patient of the St. Amant centre for developmental disabilities spent years staring at the tower from his room and was very sad when it was torn. The records were an important reminder for him and he carefully worked out a monthly payment schedule that would allow him to buy poster sized images for his new apartment when he moved.

an elderly woman was reduced to tears when we provided her with not only a single photo of her grandson with Prime Minister Trudeau from the *Winnipeg Tribune* fonds but a series of photos created from an entire strip of negatives of photos taken of him that were never actually used in the newspaper. Her grandson had recently committed suicide and she wanted to be reminded of a happier time.

Records from *Winnipeg Tribune* have supported a film on the life of the newspaper, a documentary on the closing of the newspaper in 1980, a book capturing the best photographs from *Tribune* photographers, as well as literally thousands of school papers, community histories, genealogies, and personal interest projects

Archives from the Hamilton family séance collection which recorded experiences of the Hamilton family investigating life after death in Winnipeg from 1920 to 1945 have been used in such diverse ways as the basis for a play, a novel, many documentaries and films, several television episodes, many art exhibitions, oral histories, theses and dissertations, and 3-D photography experimentation to name a few

Whether you are an individual searching for documentation to prove you attended an Indian Residential School for example or you are someone who wants to write the history of your gardening group in Winnipeg, archival records are critically important to the realization of your goals. In turn, the realization of these goals have ramifications for others, hence the widening sphere of influence of archival records. Modern, democratic society would not be able to function properly without archives and it would be a lot poorer society without the cultural enrichment that comes from the communal ownership of such records.

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