

University of Manitoba Archives & Special Collections

Finding Aid - Robert Bruce fonds (Mss 346, Pc 302, El 28 (A.11-26))

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Robert Bruce fonds

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Summary information

Repository:	University of Manitoba Archives & Special Collections
Title:	Robert Bruce fonds
ID:	Mss 346, Pc 302, El 28 (A.11-26)
Date:	1932-1996 (date of creation)
Physical description:	1.63 m of textual records and graphic material.
Language:	English
Dates of creation, revision and deletion:	

Administrative history / Biographical sketch

Note

Robert Bruce was an artist and a professor at the School of Art at the University of Manitoba. Bruce worked with a variety of styles and mediums, such as, drawing, painting, printing and murals. He dealt with diverse subject matter including the military, landscapes, cityscapes and the human form. His work is distinctive for his use of exaggeration to increase the expressiveness of his subject. Shortly after Bruce's birth in 1911 in Grandview, Manitoba, his family moved to Winnipeg where he later attended the Winnipeg School of Art under L.L. FitzGerald. From 1929 to 1933 he worked as an illustrator for the T. Eaton Company display department. In 1935 he moved to England where he enrolled in the Central School of Art in London where he pursued lithography and depicted scenes of street life and sporting activity. In 1938 and 1939, Bruce studied at the Academie Grande Chaumière in Paris and studied painting in Provence and the south of France.

Upon his return to Winnipeg Bruce worked as an illustrator for the Winnipeg Free Press until 1943 when he enlisted in the Canadian Army. During the Second World War Bruce was employed in Portage la Prairie as a public relations staff artist where he designed victory bond advertisements and created award winning illustrations of Army life, some of which were showcased in an exhibition at the National Gallery of Canada in Ottawa and toured across North America. After being discharged from the Army in 1946, Bruce studied at the Art Students' League in New York, where he met fellow student, lifelong friend and future University of Manitoba art professor George Swinton. Starting in New York City, and continuing throughout his career, Bruce worked as a freelance illustrator for a number of publications including Liberty, Life, Esquire, The New York Times, Harper's, The Reporter, MacLean's, and, starting in the mid-1950s, a number of educational books. In 1949 he moved to Angola, New York where he taught at the Albright School of Art at the University of Buffalo.

In 1955, Bruce and his wife Melba Cumberland, along with their children, Katharine and Robert, moved back to Winnipeg where he worked as a disciplined, demanding and unconventional professor until his retirement in 1976. While working as a professor, Bruce continued to create an extensive amount of fine and commercial art, including several large scale public murals. Throughout his life his artistic work,

environmental activism and teaching style were celebrated, but also contentious and controversial. After his retirement Bruce divided his time between his cottage on Falcon Lake in Whiteshell Provincial Park and a home near an artists' enclave in San Miguel de Allende, Mexico. In 1980 Bruce died at his home in San Miguel de Allende. In 2004 the Winnipeg Art Gallery showcased a comprehensive exhibit which presented his multi-faceted work as a professor, environmental activist and artist in numerous mediums.

Custodial history

The fonds was donated to University of Manitoba Archives & Special Collections by Katharine Bruce and Robert C. Bruce in 2011.

Scope and content

The fonds is divided into five series. They include diaries, personal, drawings, sketchbooks and oversize drawings. The fonds consists of letters, personal records, postcards, photocopies of Bruce's published artwork, 9 notebooks, 7 photographs, 119 sketchbooks, 183 drawings, 51 prints, 109 oversize drawings and prints, 13 negatives of drawings, 3 slides of paintings, 21 colour reversal film of drawings, 42 photographs of drawings, 53 drawing reproductions, 191 news clippings of drawings, 275 oversize reproductions of drawings, 136 oversize magazine clippings of drawings, and 44 oversize reproductions, clippings and photographs of drawings.

Notes

Title notes

Immediate source of acquisition

The fonds were donated by Katharine Bruce and Robert C. Bruce, children of Robert Bruce.

Restrictions on access

Financial records are restricted. Some material is copyrighted.

Accruals

No further accruals are expected.

Other notes

- **Publication status:** published
- **Level of detail:** Partial
- **Status description:** Final
- **Institution identifier:** University of Manitoba Archives & Special Collections

Access points

- Graphic material (documentary form)
- Textual record (documentary form)
- Art (subject)
- Artists (subject)
- Winnipeg (Man.) (place)
- Manitoba (place)
- New York (State) (place)
- Winnipeg (Man.) (place)

Series descriptions

Diaries

Date: [1932 -1939, [196-?], 1976 - 1980] (date of creation)

Access points:

- Textual record (documentary form)

Publication status:

published

File / item list

Ref code	Title	Dates	Access status	Container
	File - Travel Diary: Winnipeg to New York	1932		A2011-026, Box 0001 File 0001
	File - Travel Diary-Manuscripts	ca. 1936-1937		A2011-026, Box 0001 File 0002
	File - Travel Diary: American Express-Paris	1938		A2011-026, Box 0001 File 0003
	File - Travel Diary: Automobile Club of Vancouver	[193-?]		A2011-026, Box 0001 File 0004
	File - Travel Diary: Europe	[196-?]		A2011-026, Box 0001 File 0005
	File - Notebook: Philosophy-Biology October	1976		A2011-026, Box 0001 File 0006

	File - Notebook: Philosophy-Biology	1977-1980	A2011-026, Box 0001 File 0007
	File - Autobiography-drawings	1978-1979	A2011-026, Box 0001 File 0008
	File - Notebook: Science-Technology	1979	A2011-026, Box 0001 File 0009

Personal

Date: 1936 - 1995 (date of creation)

Access points:

- Textual record (documentary form)

Publication status:

published

File / item list

Ref code	Title	Dates	Access status	Container
	File - Correspondence	1940s		A2011-026, Box 0001 File 0010
	File - Correspondence	1971-1973		A2011-026, Box 0001 File 0011
	File - Postcards	1944-1970		A2011-026, Box 0001 File 0012
	File - Correspondence: Melba Cumberland	1984-1985, 1992-1993		A2011-026, Box 0002 File 0001
	File - List of discarded pictures	[1992?]		A2011-026, Box 0002 File 0002
	File - Financial documents regarding the sale of Bruce's artwork	1950-1968, 1992	Confidential	A2011-026, Box 0002 File 0003
	File - Advertisements for art exhibitions: U of M, Grant Gallery, Queen's Art Circuit	1961-1963, 1972, 1976, 1995		A2011-026, Box 0002 File 0004
	File - News clippings-reviews	1936, 1944-1946, 1956		A2011-026, Box 0002 File 0005
	File - News clippings	1963, 1976		A2011-026, Box 0002 File 0006

Drawings

Date: 1935-1973, 1996 (date of creation)

Access points:

- Textual record (documentary form)
- Graphic material (documentary form)

Publication status:

published

File / item list

Ref code	Title	Dates	Access status	Container
	File - Photocopies of "The Reporter"	April 1949-July 1965		A2011-026, Box 0002 File 0007
	File - Collection of blank postcards	[1940-1960?]		A2011-026, Box 0003 File 0001
	File - Bruce, friends	[early 1950s?]		A2011-026, Box 0003 File 0002
	File - Service Centre Mural	[1943?]		A2011-026, Box 0003 File 0003
	File - Service Centre Mural	[1943?]		A2011-026, Box 0003 File 0004
	File - Army paintings	1946		A2011-026, Box 0003 File 0005
	File - Photographs of paintings: bathers, "Interior"	1944, 1952		A2011-026, Box 0003 File 0006
	File - Colour reversal film of paintings	n.d.		A2011-026, Box 0003 File 0007
	File - Army drawings	1945		A2011-026, Box 0003 File 0008
	File - Drawings of Army life	1945		A2011-026, Box 0003 File 0009
	File - Drawings: pencil-ink	[ca. 1936-1938]		A2011-026, Box 0003 File 0010
	File - Drawings: Ink	[1935-1955]		A2011-026, Box 0003 File 0011
	File - Drawings: pencil	[1945-1949]		A2011-026, Box 0003 File 0012
	File - Drawings: pencil-ink - "Head" [Greece?]	[1967?]		A2011-026, Box 0003 File 0013

	File - Drawings: pencil-ink	[1967?]	A2011-026, Box 0003 File 0014
	File - Drawings: pencil-ink	[1957-1965?]	A2011-026, Box 0003 File 0015
	File - "'Biff' Brian" comic strip	ca. 1938	A2011-026, Box 0003 File 0016
	File - Colour - Christmas cards	[1960-1975?]	A2011-026, Box 0003 File 0017
	File - "Art Students League News"	April 1948-May 1949	A2011-026, Box 0003 File 0018
	File - "The Reporter"	March 1949-1968	A2011-026, Box 0003 File 0019
	File - Clippings of Bruce's drawings- paintings from various publications	1953, 1947, 1996	A2011-026, Box 0003 File 0020
	File - Photocopies of various magazines	1947-1955	A2011-026, Box 0003 File 0021
	File - Drawings: colour crayon - "Macleans"- "The New Yorker"	[1958] [195-]	A2011-026, Box 0003 File 0022
	File - Photocopies of "Macleans"	October 1956- August 1960	A2011-026, Box 0003 File 0023
	File - Robert Bruce's drawings	n.d.	A2011-026, Box 0003A O/ S

Sketchbooks

Date: 1935-1979 (date of creation)

Scope and content:

Series consists of drawings

Access points:

- Textual record (documentary form)

Publication status:

published

File / item list

Ref code	Title	Dates	Access status	Container
	File - B-001 London/Bal Negre	[1938?]		A2011-026, Box 0004 File 0001

	File - B-003 Pencil- London/France	1938	A2011-026, Box 0004 File 0002
	File - B-004 France	1938	A2011-026, Box 0004 File 0003
	File - B-005 Monte Carlo	1938	A2011-026, Box 0004 File 0004
	File - B-006 France	[1939?]	A2011-026, Box 0004 File 0005
	File - B-007 France/Compositions	1939, 1944	A2011-026, Box 0004 File 0006
	File - B-009 Paris/New York	[193-?]	A2011-026, Box 0004 File 0007
	File - B-010 Kathy-Bob/farm in Angola, NY	1947	A2011-026, Box 0004 File 0008
	File - B-012 both kids	1946	A2011-026, Box 0004 File 0009
	File - B-013 [Winnipeg?]	1944	A2011-026, Box 0004 File 0010
	File - B-014 Victoria Beach [Manitoba]	July 1944	A2011-026, Box 0004 File 0011
	File - B-015 Baby Bob	1944	A2011-026, Box 0004 File 0012
	File - B- 016 Portage/park/Victoria Beach	1945	A2011-026, Box 0004 File 0013
	File - B-017 Victoria Beach	Jul-45	A2011-026, Box 0004 File 0014
	File - B-018 Assiniboine Park	Sep-44	A2011-026, Box 0005 File 0001
	File - B-019 Army figures	Nov-44	A2011-026, Box 0005 File 0002
	File - B-020 Paratroops II	[1944?]	A2011-026, Box 0005 File 0003
	File - B-021 Portage Train At Zoo	Mar-44	A2011-026, Box 0005 File 0004
	File - B-022 Portage	May-45	A2011-026, Box 0005 File 0005

	File - B-023 Park	1945	A2011-026, Box 0005 File 0006
	File - B-024 Shoveling/Shilo/Grass	[194-?]	A2011-026, Box 0005 File 0007
	File - B-025 Churchill/Air Supply/ Canteen/Landscape	[1946]	A2011-026, Box 0005 File 0008
	File - B-026 Churchill II/Air Supply/Tent camp/Landscape	[1946]	A2011-026, Box 0005 File 0009
	File - B-027 Churchill IV/Eskimos	[1946]	A2011-026, Box 0005 File 0010
	File - B-028 Churchill V/Landscape	[1946]	A2011-026, Box 0005 File 0011
	File - B-035 Nudes	Oct-47	A2011-026, Box 0005 File 0012
	File - B-037 Maine	Aug-48	A2011-026, Box 0005 File 0013
	File - B-038 57th St. NYC	[late 1940s?]	A2011-026, Box 0005 File 0014
	File - B-039 Angola [New York]	1950	A2011-026, Box 0005 File 0015
	File - B-040 Plants/Trees/Sketches C of C Mural	1955	A2011-026, Box 0006 File 0001
	File - B-045 Angola	1950-1956	A2011-026, Box 0006 File 0002
	File - B-046 Angola countryside/NY state/Plants/Leaves	1950, 1954	A2011-026, Box 0006 File 0003
	File - B-048 [Figures]	[late 1950s?]	A2011-026, Box 0006 File 0004
	File - B-049 Skiing/Bodies/Birds-loose drawings - [landscapes]	1962	A2011-026, Box 0006 File 0005
	File - B-050 Paris/Mountains/Patterns	1962	A2011-026, Box 0006 File 0006
	File - B-051 Groups/Faces/Crayon patterns	1961	A2011-026, Box 0006 File 0007
	File - B-052 Very Sketchy People	[early 1960s?]	A2011-026, Box 0006 File 0008

	File - B-053 Pen-Ink/Colour Pattern	[early 1960s?]	A2011-026, Box 0006 File 0009
	File - B-054 Sports Cars/People	[early 1960s?]	A2011-026, Box 0006 File 0010
	File - B-055 Faces/Patterns	[early 1960s?]	A2011-026, Box 0006 File 0011
	File - B-056 [Figures/Nudes/Animals]	[early 1960s?]	A2011-026, Box 0006 File 0012
	File - B-057 Climbing/Skiing/Natives/ Woods	[1963?]	A2011-026, Box 0007 File 0001
	File - B-058 [Skiing]	Apr-63	A2011-026, Box 0007 File 0002
	File - B-059 Divers/Skiing/Bodies	Dec-63	A2011-026, Box 0007 File 0003
	File - B-060 Shovel/[Groups/Landscapes]	Jul-62	A2011-026, Box 0007 File 0004
	File - B-061 [Figures]	May-64	A2011-026, Box 0007 File 0005
	File - B-062 Dead Bracken/Saseenos B.C./[Figures]	[196-]	A2011-026, Box 0007 File 0006
	File - B-063 [Figures]	Nov-64	A2011-026, Box 0007 File 0007
	File - B-064 Europe	Apr-65	A2011-026, Box 0008 File 0001
	File - B-065 Grace Hospital Mural Studies	Apr-65	A2011-026, Box 0008 File 0002
	File - B-066 [Figures]	[196-]	A2011-026, Box 0008 File 0003
	File - B-067 Tree of the [?]/Bodies/ Hands/Birds	n.d.	A2011-026, Box 0008 File 0004
	File - B-067 Grace Hospital Mural	1969	A2011-026, Box 0008 File 0005
	File - B-068 [Figures/Landscape]	1970s	A2011-026, Box 0008 File 0006
	File - B-069 [Figures/Landscapes]	[1971?]	A2011-026, Box 0008 File 0007

	File - B-070 [Figures, Birds]	1971	A2011-026, Box 0009 File 0001
	File - B-071 [Nudes]	1971, 1973	A2011-026, Box 0009 File 0002
	File - B-073 Canon de Chorro/[Mexican landscapes-figures)	1977-1979	A2011-026, Box 0009 File 0003
	File - B-074 [Figures]	[197-?]	A2011-026, Box 0009 File 0004
	File - B-078 Eskimo/Inuit people/faces/ dogs	[1946]	A2011-026, Box 0009 File 0005
	File - B-079 Gold /[Plants]	[195-]	A2011-026, Box 0009 File 0006
	File - B-080 Insects	1953	A2011-026, Box 0009 File 0007
	File - B-081 [Nature]	[1953?]	A2011-026, Box 0009 File 0008
	File - B-082 [Patterns]	before 1956	A2011-026, Box 0009 File 0009
	File - B-083 Gold/[Inca artifacts-people/ Conquistadors]	[195-]	A2011-026, Box 0009 File 0010
	File - B-084 [Figures/Landscapes]	1954-1955	A2011-026, Box 0009 File 0011
	File - B-085 [Plants]	[195-?]	A2011-026, Box 0009 File 0012
	File - B-086 [Figures/Patterns]	1956	A2011-026, Box 0009 File 0013
	File - B-089 Figures	1963	A2011-026, Box 0010 File 0001
	File - B-090 Nudes	1964	A2011-026, Box 0010 File 0002
	File - B-091 Mechanic/Soldier/ Musician /[Nudes]	1970	A2011-026, Box 0010 File 0003
	File - B-092 Recr	Nov-78	A2011-026, Box 0010 File 0004
	File - B-094 Jaime I/Cafes in Spain	1967	A2011-026, Box 0010 File 0005

	File - B-095 [Nude Women, Figures, Machines]	1961-1962	A2011-026, Box 0010 File 0006
	File - B-098 [Nudes]	[196-?]	A2011-026, Box 0010 File 0007
	File - B-099 Casada del Chorro/[Mexican marketplace]	[1977-1979?]	A2011-026, Box 0010 File 0008
	File - B-101 [Groups of People]	n.d.	A2011-026, Box 0010 File 0009
	File - B-102 [Europe/Groups]	[195-?]	A2011-026, Box 0010 File 0010
	File - B-103 Carolina Hotel, Athens/Hotel Spagna, Venezia	[195-?]	A2011-026, Box 0010 File 0011
	File - B-104 [Faces]	[195-?]	A2011-026, Box 0010 File 0012
	File - B-105 [Figures]	[195-?]	A2011-026, Box 0010 File 0013
	File - B-106 [Figures]	[195-?]	A2011-026, Box 0010 File 0014
	File - B-107 Messones 27/[Figures]	n.d.	A2011-026, Box 0010 File 0015
	File - B-108 Chris Colombo/Christophoro/[Figures]	n.d.	A2011-026, Box 0011 File 0001
	File - B-109 Mexico/[Figures]	[1954?]	A2011-026, Box 0011 File 0002
	File - B-110 Arles/Fontvieille/Cannes/Cagnes/Golfe Juan/Juan Les Pins/Menton/Ton Remo	1938	A2011-026, Box 0011 File 0003
	File - B-111 [Figures/Buildings]	1939	A2011-026, Box 0011 File 0004
	File - B-116 Troop Ship/Troop Train / Pontiac	[1943 or 1944], 1952	A2011-026, Box 0011 File 0005
	File - B-117 Reception Centre/Red Cross Packing/C.W.A.C. Kitchen	1943	A2011-026, Box 0011 File 0006
	File - B-118 M. Test/Q.M. Stores/Blood Donors/Trees/Pelicans	1944	A2011-026, Box 0011 File 0007
	File - B-119 [Figures/Nudes]	1946	A2011-026, Box 0011 File 0008

	File - B-120 [Nudes]	[late 1940s?]	A2011-026, Box 0011 File 0009
	File - B-121 [Nudes]	[late 1940s?]	A2011-026, Box 0011 File 0010
	File - B-122 [Machinery]	[194-?]	A2011-026, Box 0011 File 0011
	File - B-124 [London/France]	[late 1930s]	A2011-026, Box 0011 File 0012
	File - B-125 [Figures]	[late 1940s?]	A2011-026, Box 0011 File 0013
	File - B-126, [Faces/Figures]	[194-?]	A2011-026, Box 0011 File 0014
	File - B-127 Figures	[late 1940s]	A2011-026, Box 0011 File 0015
	File - B-128 [Figures]	1945	A2011-026, Box 0011 File 0016
	File - B-129 [Blank/Houses/Scribbles]	[late 1940s?]	A2011-026, Box 0011 File 0017
	File - B-130 [Figures/New York City]	[late 1940s]	A2011-026, Box 0012 File 0001
	File - [not numbered] Figures	[194-?]	A2011-026, Box 0012 File 0002
	File - B-131 [New York City]	[late 1940s?]	A2011-026, Box 0012 File 0003
	File - B-132 Art Students League/[New York City/Totem Poles]	1945-1949	A2011-026, Box 0012 File 0004
	File - B-134 [Figures]	after 1956	A2011-026, Box 0012 File 0005
	File - B-135 Paris	May-June 1937	A2011-026, Box 0012 File 0006
	File - B-136 London/Bristol/Bath	Jul-37	A2011-026, Box 0012 File 0007
	File - B-137 Europe	Nov-38	A2011-026, Box 0012 File 0008
	File - B-138 London	1936-1937	A2011-026, Box 0012 File 0009

	File - B-139 Paris	1938	A2011-026, Box 0012 File 0010
	File - B-141 London	1935	A2011-026, Box 0012 File 0011
	File - B-144 Goats/Kathy/Notes	1950	A2011-026, Box 0012 File 0012
	File - B-146 France	1967	A2011-026, Box 0012 File 0013
	File - B-147 [Restaurants/Blank]	n.d.	A2011-026, Box 0012 File 0014
	File - B-148 Europe	1967	A2011-026, Box 0012 File 0015
	File - B-150 Pencil, ink- Thira [Greece]	[1967?]	A2011-026, Box 0012 File 0016
	File - B-151 Sholi Kalon Technon/ Mukonos/Hermes Corfu [Greece]	[1967?]	A2011-026, Box 0012 File 0017
	File - B-152 Italy/Switzerland/Boats	[193-]	A2011-026, Box 0012 File 0018

Oversize Drawings

Date: ca. 1938-1980 (date of creation)

Access points:

- Textual record (documentary form)

Publication status:

published

File / item list

Ref code	Title	Dates	Access status	Container
	File - "Tosie of the Far North: An Eskimo Story"	1954		A2011-026, Box 0001 O/S File 0001
	File - The Story of Gold-"The First Book of the West Indies"	[1955], 1956		A2011-026, Box 0001 O/S File 0002
	File - Reproductions of Army drawings	[1943-1946]		A2011-026, Box 0001 O/S File 0003
	File - Colour reproductions of paintings of the Red River published in "Macleans"	[August 1960]		A2011-026, Box 0001 O/S File 0004

	File - Drawings: [Old Men]	n.d.	A2011-026, Box 0001 O/S File 0005
	File - Drawings: [Women/Miscellaneous numbered drawings]	n.d.	A2011-026, Box 0001 O/S File 0006
	File - Advertisement for exhibit	May-76	A2011-026, Box 0001 O/S File 0007
	File - Reproductions, news clippings,- photographs of Army drawings-victory loan advertisements mounted on paper	[1942-1946]	A2011-026, Box 0001 O/S File 0008
	File - Drawings	[1948 - 1971]	A2011-026, Box 0002 O/S File 0001
	File - Small reproductions-magazine clippings of miscellaneous drawings mounted on paper	[1937-196-]	A2011-026, Box 0002 O/S File 0002
	File - Reproductions of miscellaneous drawings mounted on paper	[1943-196-]	A2011-026, Box 0002 O/S File 0003
	File - Miscellaneous coloured drawings- prints	[1947-195-]	A2011-026, Box 0002 O/S File 0004
	File - Magazine clippings mounted on paper	[195-?]	A2011-026, Box 0003 O/S File 0001
	File - "The Reporter," children's books- other publications mounted on paper- stored in a thick cardboard sleeve	[1947-1950-?]	A2011-026, Box 0003 O/S File 0002