



CLARA THOMAS ARCHIVES

**Inventory of the
George Edmonton Arctic Reid fonds**

Inventory #F0566

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F0566 - George Edmonton Arctic Reid fonds

Fonds/Collection Number: F0566**Title:** George Edmonton Arctic Reid fonds**Dates:** [ca. 1915]-2008**Extent:** 4.2 m of textual records and other material

**Biographical Sketch/
Administrative History:** George E.A. Reid (b. 8 August 1921 in Edmonton, Alberta; d. 25 February 1977 in Toronto, Ontario) was a graphic designer, artist, illustrator and musician, born to parents Reverend Edward Reid and Bessie Ellis Reid. After his birth, the Reid family moved to the Anglican Parish of Verdun in 1922. Reverend Reid served as Incumbent of North Clarendon until 1926 in Charteris, Quebec. In 1927, Reverend Reid died of cancer, leaving his wife to care for their sons. George showed his aptitude for the fine arts at a young age through scrap-booking, drawing and sketching, and by playing and creating original musical compositions. George completed high school in 1940 while living in Shawville, Quebec. His ambitions at the end of high school were to follow a career in music and become a band leader. However, once war began, George moved to Ottawa, finding a job as a clerk with the government while trying to enlist in the Royal Canadian Air Force. After being rejected due to poor vision, Reid enrolled in signalman training in Montreal from June to October, 1942, going by train the following month to Fort Nelson, British Columbia. During the war, George served as a cameraman with the Royal Canadian Air Force, making 8mm films, painting and sketching extensively until his honourable discharge as Corporal. Across the Ottawa River, Olive Reid (née Wilson), born in 1923, was the daughter of lumberman Wilbert Wilson, whose father founded the Ottawa South Lumber Company. George and Olive were married later on 15 September 1945. After briefly living in Prince Edward Island and Ottawa, George and Olive moved to Toronto in January 1946. George began working for Veterans Affairs and enrolled to study commercial art at the Ontario College of Art (OCA) that September, while Olive worked as a registered nurse. In February 1947, the couple moved to Scarborough and George found a part-time job playing trumpet in a band. In the late summer, they moved to Scotia Avenue, where they raised their children, Peter and Dianne. George soon found temporary work at Rous and Mann, a job that led to a full time position offer that convinced him to discontinue his schooling at OCA. In the 1950s, the Reid family was involved in art and music; George and Olive participated in the culture of Toronto by attending ballets, the theatre, and concerts and their children studied piano. By 1959, George had left Rous and Mann to become the art director and, later, vice president at Commercial Studios under artist Bill Burns. After the birth of George and Olive's daughter Stephanie in 1960, George began painting again, even illustrating an animated cartoon film "Life with Cecil." In 1966, George accepted a position as art director at C. F. Haughton, working with more salesmen than artists. In 1973, his position was redirected to sales, causing George to resign and move to a position at Brigdens Limited. Between 1973 and 1977, George also worked freelance and completed about thirty magic realist paintings in acrylics, in what was the last phase of his artistic career. In June 1976, George was diagnosed with cancer. He passed away on 25 February 1977.

Scope and Content: Fonds consists of textual records about the life of George E.A. Reid, including birth, baptismal, and death certificates, high school yearbooks, personal correspondence, and personal papers from throughout adolescence and adult life, as well as material relevant to his professional working life. The records also include information about his family, including the diary writings of his mother, Bessie Ellis Reid, and his wife, Olive Reid. Fonds also consists of correspondence sent between family members and received by family members. Also included are 12 large scrapbooks containing cards, photographs, newspaper clippings, and other material created by, collected and arranged by George E.A. Reid and family. Also included in the fonds are Reid's personal and family photographs and various forms of Reid's artwork and music, including drawings, sketches, paintings, graphic print artwork, and some original musical compositions. The fonds also contains 35mm and large-format colour transparencies taken by George E.A. Reid of the family and flower gardens, as

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well as a binder containing original animation cells from "Life with Cecil" (1960), a short film animated by Reid, and other artwork including hand-painted cartoon movie title stills, sketches on tracing paper, and other hand-drawn cartoons. Also, there are 18 8mm film reels of home movies and family trips, as well as 2 audio cassettes that include Dianne Reid's interview with George's older brother Ted, and a recorded musical collaboration between George E.A. Reid and his youngest daughter, Stephanie.

A book and pamphlet collected by George E. A. Reid through his schooling and work and donated with the fonds have been added to Special Collections, and are accessible through York University Libraries' catalogue.

S00526	Personal, academic, professional and family life
S00527	Design, artwork and photography
S00528	Audiovisual material
S00529	Scrapbooks
S00576	Photographs

Custodial History: The fonds contains the papers, artwork and photographs of George E.A. Reid, as well as material belonging to other members of the Reid family, collected and arranged by George's daughter, Dianne, after George's death in 1977.

Restrictions on Access and Use: No restrictions on access.

Finding Aid: File list is available.

URL of Finding Aid: <http://archivesfa.library.yorku.ca/submissions/fonds/ON00370-f0000566.htm>

Accruals: The fonds comprises the following accessions: 2009-057. Further accruals may be expected.

Associated Material: Five films made by George Reid during World War II, as well as his short film, "Life with Cecil," are available at Library and Archives Canada as the George Edmonton Arctic fonds.

Physical Condition: Scrapbooks and photo albums are very fragile, and must be handled with care.

Provenance Access Points: Reid, George Edmonton Arctic, 1921-1977

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