

University of British Columbia Library Rare Books and Special Collections

Finding Aid - Joan Ford fonds (RBSC-ARC-1827)

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Joan Ford fonds

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Summary information

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| Repository: | University of British Columbia Library Rare Books and Special Collections |
| Title: | Joan Ford fonds |
| Reference code: | RBSC-ARC-1827 |
| Date: | 1948-2005 (date of creation) |
| Physical description: | 39 cm of textual records and other materials |
| Dates of creation, revision and deletion: | Fonds arranged and described by Allison Gale in December 2021. |

Administrative history / Biographical sketch

Note

Dr. Joan Ford was born in Newcastle, England on November 4, 1925 and began her medical training during World War II. She graduated from Sheffield University in 1948 with a Bachelor of Medicine and a Bachelor of Surgery degrees. In 1950, she received a Diploma in Obstetrics from the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists. In 1953, she also received a Diploma in Child Health. She worked at various hospitals in England until emigrating to Canada in 1953.

From 1954-1989, she practiced at her own general medicine office in Burnaby, where she would see upwards of 25 patients per day and even made house calls to remote northern communities for patients. Her practice became so busy that she eventually added three partners to keep up with demand. She also worked at the Royal Columbian Hospital in New Westminster for 40 years and was the first (and only for a period of time) female physician.

She dedicated over 20 years of her life to the Tibetan Refugee Aid Society (TRAS), later renamed to the Trans-Himalayan Aid Society. In 1979, through her work at Save the Children, she met Sir Edmund Hillary where she offered her medical services to the remote Kunde Hospital in Nepal should there be a need. The following July in 1980, Hillary would reach out to Dr. Ford to see if she would be able to temporarily fill a vacancy for eight weeks between October-December 1980. She gladly accepted the opportunity then began the arduous trek from Burnaby to Kunde, a journey that would involve several plane rides, and up to eight days of hiking up 3,840 metres (12,500 feet) above sea level to the small hospital she would run under the support of the Sir Edmund Hillary Foundation. At the Kunde Hospital she provided basic to advanced medical care to the local villagers and trekkers of Mount Everest from all over the world. Dr. Ford would return to Nepal six more times from 1980-1989 for various stays at Kunde Hospital to care for the Sherpa peoples. Dr. Ford was Director of TRAS from 1986 until she served as President in 1991. Dr. Ford was also the Director of the Sir Edmund Hillary Foundation from 1988-1991; she is currently a Honourary Life Member.

In addition to her work in Nepal, Dr. Ford has spent time volunteering her medical expertise in two other international countries, Dominica and Bangladesh. Dr. Ford worked on the West Indies island of Dominica in 1967 and 1969 as part of a joint plan between Canadian Overseas Medical Aid, Canadian

Executive Service Overseas, and the Canadian Medical Association. There she treated children afflicted with skin diseases, protein deficiencies, and other severe medical problems. In 1991, Dr. Ford was a member of the emergency medical team sponsored by the Christian Children's Fund and spent a month in Bangladesh following a devastating cyclone caring for the Moslem people.

Dr. Ford has been a member in various capacities at numerous professional organizations throughout her career. She was a member of the Save the Children fund for over 35 years and has twice served as President of the B.C. Save the Children Fund board. She was the Director of this chapter from 1960-1990. Dr. Ford has served as the B.C. Branch President of the Federation of Medical Women of Canada and was the National President in 1973 where she fought for equal pay for female physicians.

Throughout her lifetime, she has received numerous awards and recognitions for her work in and outside of the medical field. The highest honour she received was in 1991 when she was appointed as an officer in the Order of Canada for her work in the global health community. She has also been honoured with the David Bachop Gold Medal presented by the B.C. Medical Association in 1991.

Dr. Ford died peacefully on October 31, 2021 in Vancouver.

Custodial history

Records were in the custody of Dr. Ford's niece, Cicely Bryce, prior to their transfer to Rare Books and Special Collections.

Scope and content

The fonds consists records relating to Dr. Joan Ford's medical career and personal life, with records including handwritten notes, letters and correspondence, newspapers, photographs, official degrees and awards, administrative reports, and a coin. Files often contain multiple record types within them. Dr. Ford dedicated her medical career to helping those in need, including traveling to Nepal, Dominica, and Bangladesh all while managing her own medical practice in Burnaby. She has served in various capacities on numerous boards and professional organizations including the Federation of Medical Women of Canada, Save the Children, the Sir Edmund Hillary Foundation, and the Trans-Himalayan Aid Society. She has received numerous awards and recognitions in her lifetime, but for her dedication to the global health community, she was appointed as an officer in the Order of Canada. Her personal interests included her family, Canadian history, and nature.

Notes

Title notes

Arrangement

No original order, records arranged by archivist

Accruals

Further accruals of personal journals from Dr. Ford are expected at a later date.

Other notes

- **Publication status:** published
 - **Physical description:** Includes 21 photographs, 1 coin
-

Access points

- Trans-Himalayan Aid Society
 - Textual record (documentary form)
 - Photographic material (documentary form)
 - Object (documentary form)
 - Children and youth (subject)
 - South Asian (subject)
 - Family and personal life (subject)
 - Health and social services (subject)
 - Land, settlement and immigration (subject)
 - Women (subject)
 - British Columbia (place)
 - Burnaby (B.C.) (place)
-

Series descriptions

Nepal

Date: 1980-2005 (date of creation)

Scope and content:

Series consists of records relating to Dr. Ford's time spent working at Kunde hospital in Nepal as well as the ascent of Mount Everest. File includes letters and correspondence primarily from 1980-1992 regarding the day-to-day activities and status of Kunde hospital between Dr. Ford and her team at Kunde hospital and the administrators/stakeholders of the Trans-Himalayan Aid Society. File also includes newspapers surrounding the ascent of Mount Everest, a topic of personal interest to Dr. Ford. Records include a trekking permit, letters and correspondence, administrative reports, newspaper and magazine clippings, and photographs. See the "Medical Practice" series for all non-Nepal related medical work.

Physical description: 8cm of textual records

1 photograph: b&w

9 photographs: color

| 1 large print: color | | | | |
|---------------------------------|--|---------------------------------|---------------|-----------|
| <u>Publication status:</u> | | | | |
| published | | | | |
| File / item list | | | | |
| Ref code | Title | Dates | Access status | Container |
| RBSC-ARC-1827-01-01 | File - [Trekking Permit] | 23-26 Oct. 1980 | | |
| RBSC-ARC-1827-01-01-PH-01 | Item - [Trekking Permit - Photograph] | 23-26 Oct. 1980 | | |
| RBSC-ARC-1827-01-02 | File - Kunde Letters 1980-1984 | 22 July 1980 - 16 Nov. 1984 | | |
| RBSC-ARC-1827-01-03 | File - Kunde Letters 1985 | 10 Feb. 1985 - 24 Dec. 1985 | | |
| RBSC-ARC-1827-01-04 | File - Kunde Letters 1986 | 03 Feb. 1986 - 05 Dec. 1986 | | |
| RBSC-ARC-1827-01-05 | File - Kunde Letters 1987 | 06 Jan. 1987 - 29 Dec. 1987 | | |
| RBSC-ARC-1827-01-06 | File - Kunde Letters 1988 | 26 Jan. 1988 - 31 Dec. 1988 | | |
| RBSC-ARC-1827-01-07 | File - Kunde Letters 1989 | 27 Feb. 1989 - 02 Dec. 1989 | | |
| RBSC-ARC-1827-01-08 | File - Kunde Letters 1990 | 03 Jan. 1990 - 24 Sept. 1990 | | |
| RBSC-ARC-1827-01-09 | File - Kunde Letters 1991-1992 | 16 Mar. 1991 - 23 Dec. 1992 | | |
| RBSC-ARC-1827-01-10 | File - [Kunde Letters 1997 and 2005] | 11 Sept. 1997 - 26 June 2005 | | |
| RBSC-ARC-1827-01-11 | File - [Nepal and Kunde Writings] | [198-] | | |
| RBSC-ARC-1827-01-12 | File - [Kunde Hospital Annual Reports and Meeting Minutes] | 01 Aug. 1985 - June 1989 | | |
| RBSC-ARC-1827-01-13 | File - [Kunde Patients] | 01 Aug. 1985 - Feb. 1989 | | |
| RBSC-ARC-1827-01-14 | File - [Sir Edmund Hillary Foundation] | [1976-2015] | | |
| RBSC-ARC-1827-01-15 | File - [Kunde Newspaper Clippings] | 15 April 1983 - 09 Feb. 1997 | | |
| RBSC-ARC-1827-01-16 | File - [Ascent of Mount Everest Newspaper Clippings] | 02 June 1953 - 14 May 2003 | | |
| RBSC-ARC-1827-01-17 | File - [Kunde Photographs] | [1980-1992] | | |
| RBSC-ARC-1827-01-17-PH-02 to 11 | Item - [Kunde Photographs] | [1980-1992] | | |
| RBSC-ARC-1827-03-01 | File - [Kunde Newspaper Clippings] | 15 April 1983 - 09 Feb. 1997 | | |
| RBSC-ARC-1827-03-02 | File - [Ascent of Mount Everest Newspaper Clippings] | 02 June 1953 - 14 May 2003 | | |

Medical Practice

Date: 1959-1992 (date of creation)

Scope and content:

Series consists of records relating to Dr. Ford's medical practice in Burnaby, volunteer time spent in the Mountain Rescue Group, Dominica, and Bangladesh, as well as memberships to the Federation of Medical Women of Canada and other professional organizations. Dr. Ford opened her own medical practice in Burnaby in 1954 and eventually added three partners to keep up with the high demand. Dr. Ford also spent her time volunteering with the Mountain Rescue Group, rescuing stranded hikers in BC wilderness. In addition, she volunteered her time in Dominica in 1967 and 1969 caring for children; in 1991 she also went to Bangladesh to aid victims of a devastating natural disaster. Records also relate to her service as the B.C. Branch President of the Federation of Medical Women of Canada and also as the National President in 1973. For all Nepal-related medical work see the "Nepal" series.

Physical description: 10cm of textual records

2 photographs: b&w

1 photograph: color

Publication status:

published

File / item list

| Ref code | Title | Dates | Access status | Container |
|---------------------------|---|-----------------------------|---------------|-----------|
| RBSC-ARC-1827-01-18 | File - [Burnaby Medical Practice] | 1959 - 08 April 1992 | | |
| RBSC-ARC-1827-01-19 | File - [Mountain Rescue Group] | 27 Feb. 1964 | | |
| RBSC-ARC-1827-01-19-PH-12 | Item - [Mountain Rescue Group - Photograph] | 27 Feb. 1964 | | |
| RBSC-ARC-1827-01-20 | File - [Dominica] | [1967-1969] | | |
| RBSC-ARC-1827-01-21 | File - [Federation of Medical Women of Canada - Correspondence] | 1972-1991 | | |
| RBSC-ARC-1827-01-22 | File - [Federation of Medical Women of Canada - Organization Information] | 13 June 1972 - April 1992 | | |
| RBSC-ARC-1827-01-23 | File - [Federation of Medical Women of Canada - Newspaper Clippings] | July 1969 - 09 Mar 1982 | | |
| RBSC-ARC-1827-01-24 | File - [Federation of Medical Women of Canada - Photograph] | [July 1972] | | |
| RBSC-ARC-1827-01-24-PH-13 | Item - [Federation of Medical Women of Canada - Photograph] | [July 1972] | | |
| RBSC-ARC-1827-01-25 | File - [Professional Development] | 15 June 1972 - 29 Jan 1992] | | |
| RBSC-ARC-1827-03-03 | File - [Mountain Rescue Group] | 27 Feb. 1964 | | |

| | | |
|---------------------|--|-------------------------|
| RBSC-ARC-1827-03-04 | File - [Dominica] | [1967-1969] |
| RBSC-ARC-1827-03-05 | File - [Federation of Medical Women of Canada - Newspaper Clippings] | July 1969 - 09 Mar 1982 |

Awards and Degrees

Date: 1948-2002 (date of creation)

Scope and content:

Series consists of records relating to Dr. Ford's medical and non-medical accomplishments. Records include all of her medical degrees, diplomas, and certificates documenting her medical progression from 1948-1979; her degrees include a Bachelor of Medicine, a Bachelor of Surgery, a Diploma in Obstetrics, and a Diploma in Child Health. She has been honoured with many awards and recognitions over the years, most prominently her appointment as a Member of the Order of Canada in 1991. Series also includes her non-medical accomplishments in various certificates and awards.

Physical description: 14cm of textual records

Publication status:

published

File / item list

| Ref code | Title | Dates | Access status | Container |
|---------------------------------|--|-----------------------------|---------------|-----------|
| RBSC-ARC-1827-02-01 | File - [Medical Degrees and Certificates] | 23 Mar 1948 - 26 Jan 1979 | | |
| RBSC-ARC-1827-02-02 | File - [Appointment as Member of the Order of Canada] | 29 April 1991 - 08 Dec 1992 | | |
| RBSC-ARC-1827-02-02-PH-14 | Item - [Appointment as Member of the Order of Canada - Photograph] | 1991 | | |
| RBSC-ARC-1827-02-03 | File - [Medical Awards and Membership Associations] | 06 April 1955 - 2002 | | |
| RBSC-ARC-1827-02-03-PH-15 to 16 | Item - [Medical Awards and Membership Associations - Photographs] | 1991-1992 | | |
| RBSC-ARC-1827-02-04 | File - [Non-Medical Certificates] | 15 Feb 1974 - 1999 | | |
| RBSC-ARC-1827-03-06 | File - [Medical Degrees and Certificates] | 23 Mar 1948 - 26 Jan 1979 | | |
| RBSC-ARC-1827-03-07 | File - [Medical Awards and Membership Associations] | 06 April 1955 - 2002 | | |

Personal Interests and Family History

Date: 1953-2000 (date of creation)

Scope and content:

Series consists of Dr. Ford's non-medical, personal interests and family history. Records relate to her immigration to BC via the Canadian Pacific Railroad in 1953, primarily being menus from the meals she ate aboard. Dr. Ford also has numerous newspaper clippings related to the accomplishments of

her own family; most notably that of Marguerite Ford, her sister-in-law, who ran in Vancouver City Council political elections for Alderman and fought for the rights of disabled peoples. Records also relate to Dr. Ford's participation as a judge in a citizenship ceremony in Surrey in 2000 as well as her reaffirmation of her own Canadian citizenship. Records relating to Dr. Ford's interest in nature include handwritten reflections and programming for the Canadian Nature Tours in 1991. Dr. Ford's interests also include Canadian history, including a Klondike dollar coin from 1950 as well as many newspapers surrounding the centennial of BC as a province, the new millennium in 2000, and Pierre Elliot Trudeau.

Physical description: 7cm of textual records

3 photographs: b&w

2 photograph: color

1 coin

Publication status:

published

File / item list

| Ref code | Title | Dates | Access status | Container |
|---------------------------------|--|-------------------------------|---------------|-----------|
| RBSC-ARC-1827-02-05 | File - Canadian Pacific Menus | 1953 | | |
| RBSC-ARC-1827-02-06 | File - Family Press Cuttings and Wedding Invites | 10 Feb 1959 - 06 June 1987 | | |
| RBSC-ARC-1827-02-06-PH-17 to 18 | Item - Family Press Cuttings and Wedding Invites [Photographs] | 10 Feb 1959 - 06 June 1987 | | |
| RBSC-ARC-1827-02-07 | File - Canadian Nature Tours | 1983-1991 | | |
| RBSC-ARC-1827-02-08 | File - [Citizenship] | 2000 | | |
| RBSC-ARC-1827-02-09 | File - [Canadian History] | 1950 - 29 Sept 2000 | | |
| RBSC-ARC-1827-02-10 | File - [Photographs of Dr. Ford] | [1970-2000] | | |
| RBSC-ARC-1827-02-10-PH-19 to 21 | Item - [Photographs of Dr. Ford] | [1970-2000] | | |
| RBSC-ARC-1827-03-08 | File - Family Press Cuttings and Wedding Invites | 10 Feb 1959 - 06 June 1987 | | |
| RBSC-ARC-1827-03-09 | File - [Canadian History] | 1950 - 29 Sept 2000 | | |