

Robert Kerr fonds

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The Library

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Fonds Description

Robert Kerr fonds. – 1923-1992.

46 cm of textual records.

22 photographs.

1 audio tape.

Biographical Sketch

Born on August 20, 1908, Robert Bews Kerr was raised in Hamilton, Ontario. He obtained his MD from the University of Toronto in 1933. Kerr's training in Internal Medicine was taken in Toronto and London, England where he undertook fundamental research in diabetes with Sir Charles Best and Sir Harold Hinsworth. Kerr served in the Canadian Army from 1941 to 1945 in England, Belgium, and Germany and was awarded the Order of the British Empire in 1944 for his successful treatment of an outbreak of diphtheria involving 430 cases. After returning to Canada, Kerr served as head of therapeutics at the University of Toronto until 1950 when he moved to the University of British Columbia where he became the founding head of the Department of Medicine. Kerr was a role-model as a teacher and a clinician to UBC medical students from 1950 to 1974. He retired from UBC in 1974 but continued in private practice well into the 1980s. In addition to his teaching and medical practice, Kerr was also active in the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons in Canada and served on the Board of that organization as a Councillor and President in 1966-1968. He was a long time resident of the University Hill community and was active in community affairs throughout his life in Vancouver. Kerr died on December 19, 1997.

Scope and Content

The fonds consist of several small series including biographical material, correspondence, publications/reports and lectures, scrapbooks, journal, appointment books, miscellaneous collected material, photographs and an audio tape.

Selected photographs have been digitized and included in UBC Archives' [Historical Photograph Database \(UBC 53.1\)](#).

File List

BOX 1

BIOGRAPHICAL MATERIAL

- 1-1 RBK CV and other biographical material
- 1-2 Hand-written autobiographical notes (n.d.)
- 1-3 Kerr family tree / genealogical information (n.d.)
- 1-4 Kerr Family - Obituary for George Kerr (father) and copies of wills (1947, 1959)
- 1-5 RBK's Medical Council of Canada certificate of registration (1933)
- 1-6 Photocopy of Award of Officer of the Order of the British Empire to Lieutenant-Colonel RBK (n.d.)
Photocopy of appointment as an Additional Officer (1945)
- 1-7 RBK's certificate of good standing with the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario (1946)
- 1-8 RBK's License to Operate a Radio Receiving Equipment (1923, 1924)
- 1-9 Western Rehabilitation Society certificate to RBK (September 1987)
- 1-10 UBC Alumni Association - Honorary Life Membership (April 22, 1988)
- 1-11 RBK obituaries, eulogies and memorial service (December 1997)

CORRESPONDENCE

- 1-12 RBK's outgoing correspondence to Mother (1941-1945)
- 1-13 Correspondence re: Appointment to UBC (1950)
- 1-14 Correspondence re: History of the Medical Council of Canada (1979-1980)
- 1-15 Misc. Correspondence (1950/51, 1968-1990)

PUBLICATIONS/REPORTS/LECTURES

- 1-16 RBK's Pathology thesis - "Tuberculous Arthritis" (n.d.)
- 1-17 Copies of articles by RBK (1934-1940)
- 1-18 Book - The History of the Medical Council of Canada (1979)
- 1-19 Book - Duncan Graham: Medical Reformer and Educator by RBK and Douglas Waugh (1989)
- 1-20 Report of RBK Sir Arthur Sims Commonwealth Travelling Professor of Medicine (1959)

- 1-21 Greater Vancouver Regional Hospital District - "Report of the Committee on Respiratory Services" (January 1974) [RBK chair]
- 1-22 "Review of the History of the Medical Council of Canada in MCC Annual Report (1987)
- 1-23 "The Challenges to and the Challenges of Medicine" The Osler Lecture of the Vancouver Medical Association (1966)
- 1-24 "Hospital - Today and Tomorrow" (April 25, 1973)
- 1-25 University Hill Congregation speech - Handwritten copies (August 14, 1988, January 1, 1989, June 16, 1991)
- 1-26 "Ray Fletcher Farquharson" - Typescript and handwritten copy (1989)
- 1-27 Typescript text for "Contemporary Medicine in Canada" (n.d.)
- 1-28 Typescript notes for unidentified talk (n.d.)

BOX 2

SCRAPBOOKS

- 2-1 Scrapbook 1 - "Toronto" - Photographs, clippings, printed material (1933-1974)
- 2-2 Scrapbook 2 - "Royal College" - Photographs, correspondence, printed material (1966-1968)
- 2-3 Scrapbook 3 - "Retirement" - Clippings, correspondence, photographs (1974)

JOURNAL

- 2-4/5 "Record of Tour: Sir Arthur Sims Commonwealth Travelling Professor -- Dr. Robert B. Kerr and Mrs. Kerr" - 333 page typescript copy of journal kept by Lois Kerr during trip to Africa (May 2-September 3, 1959)

BOX 3

APPOINTMENT BOOKS

- 3-1 1953-1957, 1968, 1974-1977, 1979-1992

MISCELLANEOUS MATERIAL COLLECTED BY RBK

- 3-2 "The History of Canadian Medical Schools - The Medical School of British Columbia" by Lawrence Ranta (1951)
- 3-3 UBC Graduating Medical Class - Printed copy of Valedictory Speech (1954)
- 3-4 "Informal Biographical Information on UBC's First Graduating Class in the Faculty of Medicine for their 25th Anniversary Reunion" (1979)
- 3-5 Memorial Service Programs
 - George F. Strong (1957)
 - Margaret R. MacKenzie (1987)
- 3-6 "Thomas Roddick: 1846-1923" by J.B, Firstbrook (n.d.)
- 3-7 Information re: John Johnston Kirkness (1985)
- 3-8 Medical Council of Canada - 75th Anniversary Dinner - Program (1987)
- 3-9 University of Toronto Medical Alumni Association - Dinner (1983)
- 3-10 University of Toronto Medical Alumni Association - Newsletter (1988)
- 3-11 Copy of article "40th Annual Meeting of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons (1971) - Group photographs include RBK.

PHOTOGRAPHS

*Removed and filed with UBC Archives' [Historical Photograph Database \(UBC 53.1\)](#).

- 53.1/1 RBK receiving Goodfellow award at Vancouver Medical Association dinner (n.d.)
- 53.1/2 RBK speaking at unidentified event (n.d.)
- 53.1/3 RBK at unidentified social event (n.d.)
- 53.1/4 Colour photograph of RBK with members of UBC Medical Class of 1958 at reunion (n.d.)
- 53.1/5 Group photograph including RBK taken at Place des Arts, Montreal (January 20, 1970)
- 53.1/6 Group photograph of members of the Medical Council of Canada (1987?)
- 53.1/7 RBK at unidentified social event (n.d.)
- 53.1/8 Group shot of Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons past presidents (September 1988)
- 53.1/9 RBK (n.d.)
- 53.1/10 RBK (n.d.)
- 53.1/11 Group shot of Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons past presidents (September 1987)
- 53.1/12 RBK (n.d.)

- 53.1/13 RBK in World War II uniform (194-)
- 53.1/14 Group shot of Class of 3T3 50th class reunion (June 1983)
- 53.1/15 Group shot of Class of '57 Medicine re-union (May 1987)
- 53.1/16 Group shot of Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons past presidents (n.d.)
- 53.1/17 Group shot of Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons past presidents (1983)
- 53.1/18 RBK (n.d.)
- 53.1/19 Group shot of Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons past presidents (September 1985)
- 53.1/20 RBK (n.d.)
- 53.1/21 Group shot of Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons past presidents (1997)

AUDIO TAPE

- AT 2568 Recording of RBK's retirement dinner (March 15, 1974)