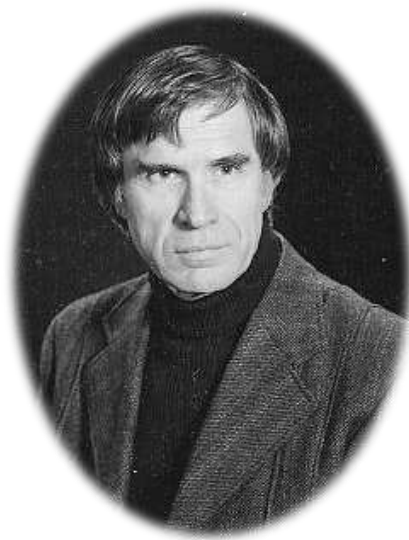


# Douglas H. Bankson fonds

Compiled by Christopher Hives (2015)



University of British Columbia Archives



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# Fonds Description

**Douglas H. Bankson fonds.** – 1944-2001.

31 cm. of textual records.

61 photographic images.

8 audio recordings.

## Biographical Sketch

Playwright, theatre director, and professor of theatre, literature and writing, Douglas Henneck Bankson (May 13, 1920 – July 14, 2015) was born in Valley, Washington. After earning a BA in journalism from the University of Washington in 1943, Bankson enlisted in the U.S. Navy and served as an officer on a sub-chaser in European and Philippine waters during World War II. While in the service he married his high school sweetheart Beverly Carson (1922-2009) of Tacoma and, following his discharge at the conclusion of the war, the family moved to Seattle.

Bankson worked on the night beat of the *Seattle Post Intelligencer* while also pursuing his PhD in Victorian literature at the University of Washington. He served as the first Research Director of the Frye Public Art Museum in Seattle (1951/52). After living for a year in Sicily where he co-wrote an unpublished novel with fellow English graduate Wallace Graves, Bankson spent two years teaching English and humanities at the University of Idaho before moving on to the University of Montana, first as assistant professor of English (1957-1959) and then as associate professor of drama, associate director theatre and resident playwright (1959-1965). He also served as director of the Masquer Summer Theatre in Missoula, Montana (1961-1965). While at Montana his colleagues in the Fine Arts Department included artists Walter Hook, Jay Rummell and Rudy Autio and this helped nurture Bankson's artistic interests. Throughout his lifetime Bankson produced wooden sculptures that have been exhibited in public museums and private galleries in the US and Canada although he preferred to create for private collectors and his own enjoyment.

In 1965, Bankson accepted an invitation to join UBC's new Department of Creative Writing where he taught drama and writing for stage and radio from 1965 to 1985. In addition to his education of students in the department Bankson also wrote prolifically and had many of his stage and radio plays produced and broadcast in Canada and the United States. While at UBC Bankson became involved in campus and community affairs. Bankson participated in the University's Festival of Contemporary Arts and also served as drama editor for *Prism International* magazine. He was also a governor for the Dominion Drama Festival. In 1970, he co-founded with Sheila Neville the New Play Centre which, based on writing techniques used by Bankson, provided a forum to develop, produce and promote original plays. The NPC fostered a number of

recognized theatre stalwarts including Sharon Pollock, Margaret Hollingsworth, Leonard Angel, Tom Cone, Sherman Snukal, Sheldon Rosen, John Lazarus and Ted Galay and it maintained a steady stream of productions for more than twenty years.

Bankson replaced Robert Harlow as head of Creative Writing Department in 1978 and remained in this position until his retirement in 1985. In recognition of his significant contributions Bankson was honoured with a Lifetime Achievement in Theatre Award by the Vancouver Professional Theatre Alliance in 1984. Following his retirement he and Beverly moved to Gig Harbour, Washington where Bankson continued to write and sculpt.

### **Scope and Content**

Fonds consists predominantly of copies of Douglas Bankson's plays, scripts and short stories. It also includes photographs from of two Bankson plays and of his artwork, as well as miscellaneous posters and recordings from miscellaneous Bankson productions.

### **Notes**

Materials transferred by the Bankson family in 2015.

Further accruals not expected.

## Series Descriptions

**Plays, Scripts and Short Stories series.** – 1994-2001.

30 cm. of textual records.

Series consists of copies of various plays, scripts and short stories written by Douglas Bankson (1994-2001).

**Photograph series.** – 1969-1992.

61 photographic images.

Series consists of one album of colour prints from the Kitsilano Theatre production of "Felicity", negatives from production of "Many Happy Returns, Pratt" (1969), as well as photographs of Bankson and various works of art he created.

**Printed Materials series.** – [n.d.].

1 cm. of printed material.

Series consists of posters and advertisements for various Bankson productions in the United States and Canada and a program from his exhibition of wood carvings at the Richmond Art Gallery in 1993.

**Audio Recordings series.** – 1963-1981.

8 audio recordings.

Series consists of audio recordings of productions of various Bankson theatrical productions.

# File List

BOX 1

## PLAYS, SCRIPTS AND SHORT-STORIES SERIES

Douglas H. Bankson writings:

- 1-1 "Eye Witness Account of the Invasion of France by Ensign Douglas H. Bankson, U.S.N.R.: A letter to his wife Beverly" (June 25, 1944)
  
- 1-2 Carbon copies of short stories written by D. Bankson that likely appeared in his 1949 University of Washington M.A. thesis, "The Copper Kettle and Other Stories"
  - "The Copper Kettle"
  - "Beneath the Surface"
  - "The Doodle-bug"
  - "Whistle from the Willows"
  - "The Sandpit"
  
- 1-3 Abstract of D. Bankson's PhD thesis "Charles Reade's Manuscript Notecards for Hard Cash" (August 1, 1954)
  
- 1-4 Other short stories written by Douglas Bankson 1949 – 1960 [Note – some of these may also have been included in his M.A. thesis]
  - "They're all the Same"
  - "Beneath the Surface"
  - "Everyone is Sleeping"
  - "It's Different Now"
  - "Gently Row Gently"
  - "The Lookout"
  - "The Waterfinder"
  - "The High Road"
  - "A Long Bus Ride Either Way"
  
- 1-5 Published short story "Lillibeth and the Lizard" The Carolina Quarterly (Fall 1957)

One-act plays, all performed in the USA and Canada:

- 1-6 "The Ball" (1962)
- 1-7 "Shootup" (1963)
- 1-8 "Nature in the Raw" (1972, 2002)
- 1-9 "The Schweinhuf Quartet" (1977, 2000)

Full length plays for the stage. All performed in the USA and/or Canada:

- 1-10 "Stonehenge" (1965)
- 1-11 "Lenore Nevermore" (1972)
- 1-12 "Felicity" – Revision of first production version (1983)
- 1-12a "Felicity" – Original of French version of first production

BOX 2

- 2-1 "Sheltercycle" (1968)

Bankson's preoccupation with Edgar Allan Poe, beginning with "Lenore Nevermore", lead to a number of related stage plays:

- 2-2 "Poe: An Opera in Two Acts" Music by S.M. Clark (1988) and Libretto by D. Bankson (1983)  
[Note – see also Box 3 for musical manuscript and score for production]
- 2-3 "Mr. Poe" (1984-86)
- 2-4 "Dying Echoes for Edgar Allen Poe" (1984)
- 2-5 "La Mystere Poe" (2001) – French adaptation of Bankson's play "Poe"

Radio Plays written for CBC Vancouver:

- 2-6 "Signore Lizard" [60 minutes]

- 2-7 "Whistle" (1975) [30 minutes]
- 2-8 Ella - Episode 1 – "Fell Clutch" [30 minutes]  
Ella – Episode 2 – "Happy Birthday" [30 minutes]  
Ella – Episode 3 – "Ella's Mountain" [30 minutes]  
Ella – Episode 4 – "Heroic Measures" [30 minutes]

Additional two radio plays which may have been incorporated into the previous four:

- 2-9 "Keepsake" (1980)
- 2-10 "Ella" – Soundstage Producer: Robert Chesterman

60 minute screenplay written for CBC:

- 2-11 "The Water Finders" (1966)

Co-authored film scripts that were not produced:

- 2-12 "Cherry Tree" [with Jacob Zilber] (1997)
- 2-13 "The Campaign of the Century" [with Jacob Zilber]

BOX 3

- 3-1 "Nell" [with Barry Shipman] (1992)
- 3-2 "Poe: An Opera in Two Acts" [Note: See 2-2]

PHOTOGRAPHS SERIES

- 3-3 "Felicity" – Photograph album with program from Kitsilano Theatre Company production [20 prints]
- 3-4 "Many Happy Returns, Pratt" (1969) includes newspaper clipping [20-35 mm. negs]



Photographic prints added to the UBC Photograph Collection:

UBC 179.1/1	Douglas Bankson, 8 x 5 cm. (n.d.) Small Print
UBC 179.1/2	Douglas Bankson, 8 x 11 cm. (n.d.) Small Print
UBC 179.1/3	Douglas Bankson, 8 x 9 cm. (March 1978) Small Print
UBC 179.1/4	Douglas Bankson, 12 x 9 cm. (April 1980) Small Print
UBC 179.1/5	Douglas Bankson, 9 x 12 cm. (n.d.) Small Print
UBC 179.1/6	Douglas Bankson, 9 x 12 cm. (1992) Small Print
UBC 179.1/7-21	Misc. photographs of Bankson's carved works of art

PRINTED MATERIAL SERIES

- 3-5 Program for Douglas Bankson's "Wood Carvings at Richmond Arts Gallery (1993)  
[For examples of Bankson's art see UBC 179.1/7 to /21.]
- 3-6 Assorted posters advertising Bankson productions [see also Oversize Box 19-4 for larger posters]

OVR Box 19-4

P.S.U. Theatre Arts – "Stone Henge"  
UBC Somerset Studio – Canadian Premier – "Many Happy Returns, Pratt"  
(March 1969)  
Kitsilano Theatre Company – "Felicity" [2 copies]  
Echoes and Richmond Gateway Theatre – "Dying Echoes" [2 copies]  
Le Theatre du Trillium – "Poe"

AUDIO RECORDINGS SERIES

Reel-to-reel and cassette tape recordings of both "Signore Lizard" and "Ella" that were produced by CBC. There are one or two additional radio plays, also recorded and produced by CBC.

UBC AT 3877	"Fallout I" First version (Act I & II), Winter 1963 [Reel-to-reel]
UBC AT 3878	"Fallout I" First version (Act III), Winter 1963 [Reel-to-reel]
UBC AT 3879	"Fallout" Revised version, Summer 1963 [Reel-to-reel]

UBC AT 3880 CBC interview with D. Bankson, Felicity, 1974 (60 minutes)  
[Cassette]

UBC AT 3881 "Signore Lizard" CBC, March 1, 1974 [Cassette]

UBC AT 3882 "Lenore Nevermore" CBC broadcast, August 17, 1976 [Cassette]

UBC AT 3883 "Whistle" CBC Playhouse, February 24, 1977 [Cassette]

UBC AT 3884 "Ella" – CBC Sunday Matinee – Produced by Robert Chesterman,  
March 1, 1981 [Cassette]