

# Jan de Bruyn fonds

Compiled by Christopher Hives (1998)

Revised by Erwin Wodarczak (2016, 2021)



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# Table of Contents

- **Fonds Description**
  - Title / Dates of Creation / Physical Description
  - Biographical Sketch
  - Scope and Content
  - Notes
- **File List**
- **Catalogue entry** (UBC Library catalogue)

# Fonds Description

**Jan de Bruyn fonds.** – 1951-2016.

13 cm of textual records.

2 bound volumes.

## Biographical Sketch

Jan de Bruyn was born in Abcoude, Netherlands, in 1918. He obtained his B.A. from UBC (1949), and M.A. in English from the University of London (1951). He joined UBC's Department of English as a lecturer and remained there until his retirement as associate professor in 1983. De Bruyn was the founding editor of *Prism* and edited the departmental newsletter, *The Newsense*. He also co-authored *The Canadian Writer's Handbook*, first published in 1980. After his retirement, he and his wife moved, first to Sechelt, then to South Slokan, and finally to Castlegar, B.C. In Castlegar he led the "Lifewriters", consisting of senior citizens who met regularly to tell and write stories about their lives – de Bruyn edited several published collections of their stories. He died in 2017.

## Scope and Content

Fonds consists of correspondence and reports relating to de Bruyn's duties as a member of the Department of English at UBC, as well as a selection of his CVs, and personal correspondence from Roy Daniells (including verses), Earle Birney, Margaret Laurence, Dorothy Livesay and Ethel Wilson. Also included are records from the "Lifewriters" (copies of stories, correspondence, financial records, and newspaper clippings), and two unpublished autobiographies ("C'est Moi" and "The Immigrants").

## Notes

Title based on the contents of the fonds.

File list available.

The records in Box 1 were donated to the University Archives by Jan de Bruyn in 1986. Materials in Box 2 were donated by de Bruyn and his daughter Diane Andersson in June 2016, while the contents of Box 3 were donated by Diane Andersson and brought to the Archives by Dr. Herbert Rosengarten.

# File List

BOX 1

Personal

- 1-1 Personal Correspondence - Incoming – Miscellaneous:  
Earle Birney (17 January 1940)  
Earle Birney (3 June 1940)  
Ethel Wilson (1954?)  
Margaret Laurence (20 March 1973)  
Margaret Laurence (26 March 1973)  
Margaret Laurence (21 May 1973)  
Roy Daniells (10 January 1975)  
Margaret Laurence (9 February 1984)  
Earle Birney (23 April 1984)  
Earle Birney (3 May 1984)  
Earle Birney (1984)
- 1-1b Personal Correspondence - Incoming - Condolences on the death of de Bruyn's son Frank (1961):  
Gordon Shrum (20 July 1961)  
Ethel Wilson (21 July 1961)  
Margaret and Jack Laurence (21 July 1961)  
George Woodcock (21 July 1961)  
Walter Gage (21 July 1961)  
Norman MacKenzie (24 July 1961)  
Earle Birney (30 July 1961)  
Robert Weaver (21 August 1961)  
Dorothy Livesay McNair (October 1961)  
Dorothy Somerset (n.d.)
- 1-2 Copy of verse written by Roy Daniells (4 pp.) [ca. 1949/50]

(continued)

English Department

- 1-3 Visiting Lectures - Correspondence, printed material (1973/74)

1-4 "Fire and Brimstone File"  
The file includes correspondence and a report which discuss two contentious periods (1971, 1979) in the history of the English Department.  
Correspondence (February 1971)  
"A Report on a Study of Policy and Decision-Making Processes in the Department of English" by Peter Larkin (April 1979)  
Correspondence (1979)

1-5 Correspondence Re: "The Newsense" (1969)  
Conference on B.C. Writing (1956)

1-6 Program

## BOX 2

Lifewriters (1990-2016, predominant 2004-2012)

These records document the Lifewriters' Group, established by Jan de Bruyn after his retirement in Castlegar. The group consisted of senior citizens who met regularly to tell and write stories about their lives. They published eight collections of personal stories from 2005 to 2012, with de Bruyn acting as editor.

The records include copies of Lifewriters' stories; correspondence with subscribers, Lifewriters contributors, and others; financial records and grant applications; and newspaper clippings about the Lifewriters. They have been maintained in their original order.

## BOX 3

Personal (cont.)

3-1 Letter from John Crow, de Bruyn's thesis advisor 18 July 1951

3-2 CVs and appointment forms 1952-85

3-3 "C'est Moi" 2001

3-4 "The Immigrants" 2007