

Title: Maria A. Romanko fonds

Standard Number: 2011.19

Dates: 1980 - 2007

Physical Description: 6 cm of textual and other material

Biographical Sketch:

Maria Alina Łukaszewicz was born in 1925 in the village of Haciszcz Wielkie in Poland. Her parents were Antonina and Władysław Łukaszewicz. She was taken away to a camp in Siberia called Poldniewica with her family in February of 1940. At this camp in Siberia, Maria Łukaszewicz met her future husband Aleksander Romanko. After several years in an isolated forced labor camp, Łukaszewicz joined an exodus of Polish civilians through the southern USSR (including another stop of several months of forced labor in Uzbekistan) into Persia and southern Africa, where she lived in a Polish refugee camp in Rhodesia for several years, and the United Kingdom. In 1948 in the United Kingdom, she was reunited with Aleksander Romanko and they were married on April 30, 1949. In 1951, her first son was born, Bogumił, and in 1954 her second son was born, Lech Julian. She arrived in Canada in 1955 and the family lived at a friend's place and rented a farm at Mystery Lake, Alberta. The family later moved to Edmonton where Maria Romanko studied education at the University of Alberta. In 1957, Maria Romanko was given a position as schoolteacher at Father Jan School in St. Albert, Alberta and she later taught at Vital Grandin School, St. Albert, Alberta. In 1960, she gave birth to a third son, Marek and in this same year, the family moved from Edmonton to St. Albert. While teaching, Romanko pursued a Bachelor of Education part-time and she earned the degree in 1968. In 1980, Romanko left Vital Grandin School and began teaching at Albert Lacombe School, St. Albert, Alberta. She retired in 1985.

Maria Romanko and her husband were actively involved in Polish Canadian community organizations. Some of the organizations in which Romanko participated included the Edmonton Polish Students Club, Polish Culture Society, Polish Academic Club, Polish Women's Federation, St. Teresa Mission Circle, Sodality, and the Polish Combatants Association. The Romanko's also played a key role in the development of a Polish Bilingual Program in Edmonton. During her teaching career, she would include Polish heritage in her students' studies. To assist in her teachings on Polish heritage, Romanko wrote and published *Polish Heritage in Alberta* as well as an accompanying workbook. She had a unit on Polish heritage accepted as a Social Studies unit for Alberta Public Schools. In 1989, Romanko volunteered in the archives for the Polish community of Edmonton. After working on the archives for three years, she wrote an article in 1991 entitled "Opening of the Canadian Polish Congress Archives", published in *Heritage Links*. In 1993, she worked in the archives for the Polish Holy Rosary Parish.

Custodial History: The material was donated to the Musée Héritage Museum's archives directly from Maria Romanko.

Scope and Content: The fonds consists of one published and one unpublished book Maria Romanko wrote as well as photographs which document her teaching as well as Polish community activities.

Physical Description Note: Includes 11 colour photographic prints.

Accruals: No further accruals anticipated.

Series: Photographs

Dates: 1980 – 2007

Physical Description: 11 colour photographs

Scope and Content: Series consists of photographs representing Maria Romanko's teaching activities, her family as well as Polish community activities.

Title Source: Based on content of the series.

File: Family

Dates: 1980 - 2007

Physical Description: 2 colour photographs

Scope and content: File consists of photographs of Maria Romanko and her family.

2011.19.01: Maria Romanko

Date: 1980

Physical Description: 1 colour photograph ; 18 x 12.5 cm

Scope and Content: This photograph was taken as a school photograph as Maria Romanko was a grade 6 teacher at Albert Lacombe school.

2011.19.02: Romanko family

Date: [198-]

Physical Description: 1 colour photograph ; 13 x 9 cm

Scope and Content: Standing, left to right: Lech Julian Romanko, Adam Romanko, Bogumił Romanko, Ferdynand Romanko, Marek-Marian Romanko. Seated, left to right: Trish Romanko, Aleksander Romanko and Maria Romanko.

2011.19.03: Maria and Aleksander Romanko and family

Date: 2007

Physical Description: 1 colour photograph ; 15 x 10 cm

File: Polish community

Dates: [1981 – 199-]

Physical Description: 3 colour photographs

Scope and Content: Photographs depict events and visits by officials at the Polish community.

2011.19.04: Aleksander Romanko, president of the Polish Canadian Congress-Alberta in conversation with Anita Ratchinsky, the mayor of St. Albert, and her husband, Dec. 1981.

Physical Description: 1 colour photograph ; 14.5 x 10 cm

2011.19.05: Aleksander Romanko receiving honour, [199- - 200-].

Physical Description: 1 colour photograph ; 10 x 10 cm

2011.19.06: Maria and Aleksander Romanko at Łozynki, [199- - 200-]

Physical Description: 15 x 10 cm

File: Education

Dates: 1980 – 1984

Physical Description: 5 colour photographs

Scope and Content: Photographs depict Maria Romanko's classes as well as a Polish Heritage display in her classroom.

2011.19.07: Albert Lacombe School, St. Albert, class 3A, 1980 – 1981.

Physical Description: 1 colour photograph ; 17.5 x 12.5 cm

2011.19.08: Albert Lacombe School, St. Albert, class 3B, 1981 – 1982.

Physical Description: 1 colour photograph ; 17.5 x 12.5 cm

2011.19.09: Multicultural Polish Heritage Day at Albert Lacombe School, St. Albert, 1984.

Physical Description: 1 colour photograph ; 11 x 9 cm

Scope and Content: This grade three class is dressed in costume for Multicultural Polish Heritage Day.

2011.19.10: Polish Heritage display, 1984.

Physical Description: 1 colour photograph ; 12.5 x 9 cm

2011.19.11: Polish Heritage display, 1984.

Physical Description: 1 colour photograph ; 12.5 x 9 cm

Series: Books

Dates: 1984 and 2003

Physical extent: 2.5 cm of textual material

Scope and Content: The series consists of two books that Maria Romanko wrote.

Standard Number: 2011.19.12

Title: Polish heritage in Alberta / Maria A. Romanko

Dates: St. Albert, Alta., 1982: St. Albert School District #3 [publisher]

Physical Description: 1 book

Standard Number: 2011.19.13

Title: From Russian gulag to Alberta prairies : The story of Maria A. and Aleksander Romanko / Maria A. Romanko

Dates: 2003

Physical Description: 1 book