

Finding Aid to the Red River Valley Fair Association Records

Red River Valley Fair Association

Red River Valley Fair Association Records, 1905-2012

23 linear feet

MSS 376

[Biography](#)

[Scope and Content](#)

[Folder List](#)

OVERVIEW

Access: The collection is open under the rules and regulations of the NDSU Archives.

Provenance: Donated by Brian Schulz, General Manager of the Red River Valley Fair Association, in 2014 (Acc. 2014-027irs).

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Citation: [Identification of item]. Red River Valley Fair Association Records (MSS 376), NDSU Archives, North Dakota State University, Fargo.

HISTORY

In 1906, the first Red River Valley Fair (RRVF) opened and included a large carnival, nightly stage shows, and races. At this time, Fargo held the state fair on even numbered years, and Grand Forks on odd numbered years. This went on until World War II in 1940, when the fair shut down for the next five years due to the foreclosure of Fair land by Fargo banks.

In the 1950s, the city of Fargo had grown to completely surround the fairgrounds, and nearby residents began complaining of the noise from the races, the smell of the barns, and the condition of the buildings. In 1963, the portion of the fairgrounds east of 10th Street were sold to the Fargo School Board. In 1964, the portion of the fairgrounds west of 10th Street were sold to the Alumni Association of North Dakota State University. The Fair board then purchased 166 acres of land west of West Fargo from Art Schollander, a retired farmer, and 78 acres to the east of the County Road from Mrs. Francis. The first buildings were the Judging Building (now Schollander Pavilion), the Livestock Barns, and accompanying service buildings.

In 1980, a new activity was added to the Fairgrounds facility. With the help of the Fair staff, the machinery people in the area organized the Big Iron annual machinery show, which has now become one of the largest machinery shows in the Midwest.

SCOPE AND CONTENT

The Red River Valley Fair Association collection contains a number of scrapbooks from 1914 to 2008, with a large gap between 1924 and 1965. These scrapbooks include newspaper articles, photographs, and brochures. Included is also the Fair's first financial ledger, as well as a book containing concessions of the fair ground and some payroll information. There are also fair booklets including premium lists from 1909 to 1973, as well as various pamphlets and booklets. There are also a number of loose newspaper articles.

The **Financial Records series** includes a booklet from 1913 consisting of concessions of the fairgrounds by blocks and lots, as well as a blueprint of the fairgrounds and a payroll list. Also included is the Fair's first financial ledger, which has information about operating expenses and incomes, as well as costs of advertising, buildings, entertainment, and more.

The **Premium Lists series** consists of Fair premium list booklets from 1908-1973, with some gaps. These lists consist of rules and regulations for entering the contests and exhibits held at the Fair.

The **Programs series** consists of various programs of Fair activities, such as races, expositions, and includes the Freiburg Passion Play.

The **Manuals series** includes a manual for the Arts and Crafts fair in 1985, as well as two manuals for exhibitors in 1996 and 1997.

The **Newspaper Clippings series** consists of various loose articles from 1918 to 1950, as well as full newspapers from The Courier, The Ulen Union, and The Fargo Forum. Included in this series is the front page of The Courier on November 11, 1918, the day that World War I ended.

The **Scrapbooks series** consists of scrapbooks from 1914 to 2008, with a gap between 1924 and 1965. These scrapbooks contain primarily newspaper clippings, along with some photographs and pamphlets.

The **Prints series** contains limited edition print artworks sold at the Big Iron silent auctions every year from 1985 to 1991.

The **Poster series** contains a few posters of the Fair and Big Iron, with large gaps, as well as various special events, such as the Red River Valley Fair Truck and Tractor Pull.

The **Ephemera series** contains various artifacts, such as a pennant from the 1912 Fair. Also included are t-shirts, a silver belt buckle, and a few plaques awarded to different fair committee members.

FOLDER LIST

Folder Content

1/1 Finding Aid

Series 1: Financial Records

1/2 Concessions of Grounds and Payroll book, 1913

2 Financial ledger, 1905-1923

Series 2: Premium Lists

1/3 Inter-State Fair Premium List, 1908

1/3 Inter-State Fair Premium List, 1909

1/3 Inter-State Fair Premium List, 1926

1/3 Inter-State Fair Premium List, 1929

1/4 Inter-State Fair Premium List, 1930

1/4 The Red River Valley State Fair Premium List, 1959

1/4 The Red River Valley State Fair Premium List, 1962

1/4 The Red River Valley State Fair Premium List, 1963

1/5 The Red River Valley State Fair Premium List, 1964

1/5 The Red River Valley State Fair Premium List, 1965

1/5 The Red River Valley State Fair Premium List, 1966

1/6 The Red River Valley State Fair Premium List, 1967

- 1/6 The Red River Valley State Fair Premium List, 1970
- 1/6 The Red River Valley State Fair Premium List, 1973

Series 3: Programs

- 1/7 Speed program, 1914
- 1/7 Daily Official Race Program and Grandstand Attractions, 1918
- 1/7 Inter-State Fair and Victory Exposition program, 1919
- 1/7 ND State Fair Official Souvenir program, 1927
- 1/7 Freiburg Passion Play program, c. 1928
- 1/7 Orestes Brownson Study Club no. 3 program, 1942

Series 4: Manuals

- 1/8 Arts and Crafts fair manual, 1985
- 1/8 RRVF Exhibitor's Manual, 1996
- 1/8 RRVF Exhibitor's Manual, 1997

Series 5: Newspaper Clippings

- 3/1 Loose articles, c. 1918-1950
- 3/2 The Courier, August 20, 1918
- 3/3 The Courier, November 11, 1918
- 3/4-5 The Courier, November 12, 1918
- 3/6 The Ulen Union, July 11, 1924
- 3/7-10 The Fargo Forum, June 4, 1950
- 3/11 Big Iron article copies, c. 1990-2000
- 3/12 Red River Valley Fair article copies, 1918-1924
- Western Newspaper Union page, c. 1915

Series 6: Scrapbooks

- 4 Scrapbook, 1914-1915
- 4 Scrapbook, 1918
- 5 Scrapbook, 1922-1924
- 6 Scrapbook, 1965
- 6 Scrapbook, 1966
- 7 Scrapbook, 1967
- 7 Scrapbook, 1968-1969
- 6 Scrapbook, 1971

6	Scrapbook, 1976
7	Scrapbook, 1976-1977
7	Scrapbook, 1978
8	Scrapbook, 1978
7	Scrapbook, 1979
8	Scrapbook, 1979-1980
7	Scrapbook, 1980
9	Scrapbook, 1983
9	Scrapbook, 1983
9	Scrapbook, 1983-1984
10	Scrapbook, 1985-1987
8	Scrapbook, 1981-1992
10	Scrapbook, 1993
11	Scrapbook, 1990-2004
11	Scrapbook, 1997-1998
12	Scrapbook, 2005-2006
12	Scrapbook, 2007
10	Scrapbook, 2008

Series 7: Prints

Map Case 10	Big Iron art print, 1985
Map Case 10	Big Iron art print, 1985
Map Case 10	Big Iron art print, 1986
Map Case 10	Big Iron art print, 1987
Map Case 10	Big Iron art print, 1988
Map Case 10	Big Iron art print, 1989
Map Case 10	Big Iron art print, 1990
Map Case 10	Big Iron art print, 1991

Series 8: Posters

14/1	Big Iron poster, 1992
13/1	Big Iron poster, 1994
13/1	Big Iron poster, 2013
13/1	Big Iron poster, undated
14/2	Red River Valley Fair poster, 1979
14/2	Red River Valley Fair poster, 1981
14/3	Red River Valley Fair poster, 1993
14/3	Red River Valley Fair poster, 1994

- 13/2 Red River Valley Fair poster, 1998
- Map Case 10 Red River Valley Fair poster, 2010
- 13/2 Red River Valley Fair poster, 2013
- 13/2 Red River Valley Fair Truck and Tractor Pull poster, undated
- 13/2 Red River Valley Speedway poster with ticket order forms, undated
- 13/2 Ticket order form, 1984
- 13/2 Fair newspaper advertisement, 1968
- 13/2 Fair newspaper advertisement, 1969

Series 9: Ephemera

- 15 State Fair pennant, 1912
- 15 Silver plate, 1966
- 15 RRVF t-shirts, 2000
- 15 Gate Admission Child ticket, undated
- 15 Horse fair towel, 2010
- 15 Silver belt buckle, undated
- 15 FM Humane Society plaque, 2009
- 15 ND Fairman's Hall of Fame plaque, 1996
- 15 Plaque RRVF Appreciation plaque, 1990
- 15 Big Iron logo, undated
- 15 Puzzle card, 1909