

FONDS DESCRIPTION (MBMS-65)

Clarence R. Heisler & Son Ltd. Fonds

c. 1922-2014

555 photographs

2 cm of textual records

1 videotape

The Heisler boat-building business, which was located on Gifford Island in Lunenburg County, was run by three generations of the Heisler family. The Heislars constructed all types of wooden vessels, from pleasure boats and yachts to commercial fishing boats. The business had its beginnings in 1921, when William Roy Heisler (1886-1983), son of the late Thomas and Eva (Cross) Heisler, moved from Big Tancook Island to Gifford Island with his wife, Edith Blanche (Langille) Heisler (1886-1922), and their young family and began building dories and fishing boats. In 1938, his son Clarence Roy Heisler (1911-1996), who had married Marianna Matthews in Shelburne County in 1936, took charge of the business, together with his brothers David and Harold, under the Clarence R. Heisler name. In 1954, Clarence Heisler's son Cecil joined his father's boat-building business. Accordingly, the name of the company was eventually changed to Clarence R. Heisler & Son in 1976. Cecil Heisler continued the family tradition of boat building until 2007, when he sold the Heisler property and business to Mike Kelley.

The fonds consists of photographs of the vessels built or repaired by the Heisler family as well as clippings, grey literature, and memorabilia documenting their boat-building activities. It also includes a video-tape documentary covering the history of the business.

The records were donated by Cecil Heisler in 2015 (Accession Nos. 2015.04.1-2015.04.158)