McNeese's granddaughter donates items to archives

Mrs. Keitha Squires Matter, 73, granddaughter of John McNeese, donated several items to the McNeese State University archives during her visit to the city. Mrs. Matter, daughter of L.L. Squires, former principal of Lake Charles High School, and Emma McNeese Squires, daughter of John McNeese and former Lake Charles city clerk, is visiting her stepdaughter, Beverly Wise.

According to Kathy Bordelon, MSU archivist, a photograph of McNeese at the age of 19 in the Union Aryn uniform is among the items donated. Another photograph, which shows him standing beside his pupils, is the only photograph found to show his height and build.

Mrs. Matter also brought letters from McNeese to his daughter, Emma. These letters are examples of his penmanship, which he taught in his early days in Lake Charles. They also demonstrate his affection for his family. In the letters, he talks of the growing Lake Charles, whose population has reached 10,000, and his pride in the city.

The letters and photographs will be preserved in the archives and a display is planned for sometime next year, said Bordelon.

While Mrs. Matter was on campus, she toured the archives and reviewed the historical material on the McNeese family. She also met with Dr. Robert Hebert, president of MSU, and discussed the 50th anniversary of the university.

Mrs. Matter plans to record her recollections of her early days in Lake Charles and her family. The recordings will become a permanent part of the John McNeese collection in the McNeese archives.