

JHSSA DESCRIPTIVE LEVEL RECORD

TITLE: I.L.Peretz Institute fonds

No.: ILP

DATE RANGE: 1910-1988, predominant 1944-1984

EXTENT: 42.5cm of textual records. –7 objects

ADMINISTRATIVE HISTORY:

The Calgary I.L. Peretz Institute, one of several Canadian Peretz Institutes established in the 1920s and named after the Yiddish writer I.L. Peretz, was an outgrowth of the activities of the Yiddishists of the Calgary Jewish Literary Society, which had been supporting Yiddish drama clubs, discussion groups, a lending library and visiting speakers since before WWI. The I.L. Peretz Institute hosted a wide range of cultural programs, largely though not exclusively Yiddish-based, for the entire Jewish community.

The I.L. Peretz Institute wasn't formally incorporated until 1939, but some of its members, frustrated when Yiddish was dropped from the curriculum of the Calgary Hebrew School (Talmud Torah) in 1927, organized the I.L. Peretz School, often referred to simply as the Peretz School (*Shul*), supported by a *Mooter Farein* (mother's club). In 1929 the school moved to its own building, referred to as both the school and the Institute, on Centre Street and 13th Avenue S. In 1956, the Institute undertook a campaign to build a new school, which operated in the south-west district of Altadore from 1959 -1987, when the school ceased independent operation. The I.L.Peretz School Association leased the building and grounds to a private school until the site was sold.

The last events held under the I.L. Peretz Institute name were a *Mooter Farein* Luncheon in 1961, and a "Gentlemen's Golden Plate Dinner" in 1971.

SCOPE AND CONTENT:

The fonds consists of event programs and publicity, books from the I.L.Peretz Institute Jewish Public Library, correspondence, school minutes, financial records, curriculum material and newsletters, and a school dedication scroll placed in a cornerstone in 1959 and retrieved in 2002.

The fonds has been arranged into the following series: Institute Correspondence, Institute Events; Jewish Public Library; I.L. Peretz School

SOURCE OF TITLE: title from content of fonds

SOURCE OF ACQUISITION: Arlein Chetner, Bertha Gold, Sam Goresht, Riki Heilik, Edythe Pearlman, Al Rubin, Carol Sahian, estate of M. David Spindel

LANGUAGE NOTE: some material in Yiddish

ACCESS CONDITIONS: no restrictions on access

FINDING AIDS: item lists available

ASSOCIATED RECORDS: Glenbow Museum

ACCRUALS: no further accruals expected

RELATED GROUPS OF RECORDS: JHSSA photo collection; Calgary Jewish Academy fonds

GENERAL NOTE: Some information for the Admin Histories is taken from *A Joyful Harvest* cJHSSA 2007, and *Land of Promise* cJHSSA 1996.

Includes material from the following accessions: 2001-009, 2002-011, 2002-030, 2003-018, 2003-026, 2004-007, 2005-004, 2006-006, 2009-007

Series Title: Institute Correspondence

No.: .01

Date Range: 1930-1957

Extent: .5cm of textual records

SCOPE AND CONTENT:

The series consists of correspondence sent and received by the I.L. Peretz Institute, as well as a recipe handwritten on a blank I.L.Peretz invoice. Also included are pre-printed (return address) envelopes for the 13th Ave location.

SOURCE OF TITLE: title from content of series

LANGUAGE NOTE: some material in Yiddish

ACCESS CONDITIONS: no restrictions on access

Series Title: Institute Events

No.: .02

Date Range: 1931-1950, 1971

Extent: 2cm of textual records. – 1 object

SCOPE AND CONTENT:

The series consists of brochures, programs and announcements regarding events hosted by the I.L. Peretz Institute. One flyer (1931) is a photocopy, date of copy unknown. Included in the series is a ceramic plate from the "I.L.Peretz Institute Gentlemen's Golden Plate Dinner, March 1971".

SOURCE OF TITLE: title from content of series

PHYSICAL CONDITION: some materials are fragile

LANGUAGE NOTE: some material in Yiddish

ACCESS CONDITIONS: no restrictions on access

Series Title: Jewish Public Library

No.: .03

Date Range: 1910-1930

Extent: 4 objects

SCOPE AND CONTENT:

For most of its existence the I.L. Peretz Institute Jewish Public Library (JPL) was maintained in the same facility as the Peretz School, but for a time it was located in the House of Israel community building on 18th Ave SW.

The series consists of 4 Yiddish books that were part of the Jewish Public Library collection. *The Memoirs of David HaReuveni* (Vilna 1927), a translation of *Cossacks*, by Leo Tolstoy (Vilna, 1930), and *In szoem fun Libshaft* [In Loving Hours], a book of poetry by former Calgarian Esther Shumiatcher (Vilna, 1930), all have *Yiddishe Folks-bibliotek Beym Y.L. Peretz institute in Kalgary* [Jewish Public Library of I.L. Peretz Institute in Calgary] embossed in Yiddish on their front covers, as well as JPL circulation envelopes and cards.

Writings Vol, 1, a collection of philosophical essays by Hillel Zeitlin (Warsaw, 1910), has a small book-shaped stamp on the flyleaf that says (in Yiddish) B. Shnay's Library, as well as the following Calgary Public Library (CPL) markings: ink stamp on the last page, embossed stamp on the title page, call number on the spine, circulation card envelope on the inside front cover. The CPL call number written on the envelope has been crossed out, and the envelope contains a Yiddish circulation card from the Jewish Public Library.

SOURCE OF TITLE: title from content of series

LANGUAGE NOTE: material is in Yiddish

ACCESS CONDITIONS: no restrictions on access

Series Title: I.L. Peretz School

No.: .04

Date Range: 1928 -1987, predominant 1944-1986

Extent: 40cm of textual records. –2 objects

SCOPE AND CONTENT:

The I.L. Peretz School was Calgary's first Jewish day school, with Yiddish language and Judaic subjects (not including Hebrew or religious studies) supplementing the provincial elementary school curriculum. The school founders included Abe and Eva Busheikin, Edythe Rosen (later Pearlman), Leo Paperny, Mr & Mrs A. Lavin, Mr & Mrs Kredentser, Charlie Switzer and several branches of the Pearlman family, who remained involved with the school through most of its existence. The school initially offered instruction from kindergarten, then an innovation, through grade 2, and from the beginning (1927), school programs were supported by a very active *Mooter Farein*, or mother's club. By 1929, when the school was incorporated, enrollment had grown to 80 students and the Peretz School moved to its own building, referred to as both the school and the Institute, on Centre Street and 13th Avenue S. Some I.L. Peretz School correspondence continued to use I.L. Peretz Institute stationery as late as the autumn of 1960.

By 1956 the Peretz School had expanded to include grade 6, and had outgrown its space. Rather than merge with the Calgary Hebrew School, a possibility which had been raised occasionally since its inception, a capital campaign was undertaken to provide for the construction of a new building on 36th Ave SW, in the district of Altadore. The curriculum was widened to include Hebrew and religious education, and in 1976 the school became an "alternative school" within the Calgary Public School system. This affiliation ended in 1984, and the I.L. Peretz School became a private school associated with the Calgary Separate School Board. During this time, faced with declining enrollment, discussion began concerning the possibility of combining Calgary's two oldest Jewish schools under one umbrella. In 1987, the merger of the I.L. Peretz School and the Charles Waterman Talmud Torah (Calgary Hebrew School) created the Calgary Jewish Academy.

The series consists of correspondence, lists of staff and students, minutes (kept by the *Mooter Farein*); financial records, event programs and publicity, curriculum material, newsletters and commemorative items.

The series has been arranged into the following sub-series: Governance; Mooter Farein; Minutes; Correspondence; Building; People; School Events; Published Material

SOURCE OF TITLE: title from content of series

LANGUAGE NOTE: some material in Yiddish; see sub-series

ACCESS CONDITIONS: no restrictions on access

Sub-series Title: School -- Governance

No.: 04 .01

Date Range: 1929, 1957-1961, 1971-1976, 1982-1983

Extent: 1cm of textual records

SCOPE AND CONTENT:

The sub-series consists of a copy of the 1929 Certificate of Incorporation of the I.L. Peretz School Association, as well as society by-laws, drafts, contracts and agreements.

SOURCE OF TITLE: title from content of series

ACCESS CONDITIONS: no restrictions on access

Sub-series Title: School -- Mooter Farein

No.: 04 .02

Date Range: 1943-1961, 1980-1985

Extent: 4cm of textual records. -1 object

SCOPE AND CONTENT:

The *Mooter Farein* was responsible for many of the I.L. Peretz School's fundraising, social and cultural activities, and in later years formed the core of the Parent's Advisory Committee, which dealt with educational matters not covered by the Calgary Board of Education. Monies were raised through a variety of projects and events, including donation cards, art shows and Gentleman's Dinners. One of their longest-running projects was the annual production of the Calgary Jewish Community Directory.

The sub-series consists of material relating to the activities of the Junior *Mooter Farein* and *Mooter Farein* of the I.L. Peretz School; minute books; pages removed from a financial ledger; Mooter Farein handbook; commemorative and publicity material.

SOURCE OF TITLE: title from content of series

LANGUAGE NOTE: some material in Yiddish

ACCESS CONDITIONS: no restrictions on access

Sub-series Title: School -- Minutes
Date Range: 1928, [c1955], 1961-1986
Extent: 15cm of textual records

No.: 04 .03

SCOPE AND CONTENT:

The sub-series consists of executive and general meeting minutes and announcements, as well financial and other reports from I.L. Peretz School. Also included are 1928 and c1955 reports discussing the relationship between the Peretz *shul* and the Calgary Hebrew School, and several later reports regarding curriculum and relocation.

The 1961-1986 minute book opens from the right, as minutes were recorded in Yiddish until August 1967. Loose items have been left as found, interfiled in the book's pages.

SOURCE OF TITLE: title from content of series

CONSERVATION NOTE: some material has been moved into file folders by the archives, maintaining its original order

LANGUAGE NOTE: some material in Yiddish

ACCESS CONDITIONS: no restrictions on access

Sub-series Title: School -- Correspondence
Date Range: 194-, 1956-1986
Extent: 10cm of textual records

No.: 04 .04

SCOPE AND CONTENT:

The sub-series consists of letters sent and received by I.L. Peretz School, including handbills and meeting announcements, as well as letterhead envelopes for both the 13th Avenue and 36th Avenue locations.

SOURCE OF TITLE: title from content of series

LANGUAGE NOTE: some material in Yiddish

ACCESS CONDITIONS: no restrictions on access

Sub-series Title: School - Building
Date Range: 1928-1929, 1955-1959, 1978-1983
Extent: 2cm of textual records

No.: 04.05

SCOPE AND CONTENT:

The sub-series consists of the 1928 Bill of Sale and floor plan (copies) of the 13rd Avenue property; correspondence, invoices and publicity material regarding the new (1959) I.L. Peretz School building (including the cornerstone document, retrieved in 2002 before the building was demolished) and its maintenance; documents and legal correspondence regarding a 1980 property purchase.

SOURCE OF TITLE: title from content of series
LANGUAGE NOTE: some material in Yiddish
ACCESS CONDITIONS: no restrictions on access

Sub-series Title: School - People
Date Range: 1930, 1935, 1943, 1965, 1973-1987
Extent: 2cm of textual records

No.: .04.06

SCOPE AND CONTENT:

The sub-series consists of student and staff lists, handbooks, registration forms and promotional material for I.L. Peretz School, including a handwritten school history, written in 1975 for publication in *Calgary Jewish News*, Centennial Edition. Also included are a 1943/44 year-end report card for Sam Goresht, as well as blank certificate and graduation forms.

The sub-series has been arranged into Staff & Students; Registration & Publicity

SOURCE OF TITLE: title from content of series
LANGUAGE NOTE: some material in Yiddish
ACCESS CONDITIONS: no restrictions on access

Sub-series Title: School -- Events
Date Range: 1934-1944, 1955-1987
Extent: 1cm of textual records. -1 object

No.: 04 .07

SCOPE AND CONTENT:

The sub-series consists of handbills and programs for I.L. Peretz School events, including concerts, dinners, art sales and graduation ceremonies. Also included is a souvenir pen stand from a 'Gentleman's Dinner'.

SOURCE OF TITLE: title from content of series
LANGUAGE NOTE: some material in Yiddish
ACCESS CONDITIONS: no restrictions on access
FINDING AIDS: item list available

Sub-series Title: School - Published Material
Date Range: 1930, 1955-1961, 1970-1985
Extent: 5cm of textual records

No.: 04.08

SCOPE AND CONTENT:

The sub-series consists of two copies (one paper-, one leather-bound) of "First Steps", a compilation of writings by the first graduating class of the I.L. Peretz School; newsletters; an educational document (written by then-Principal Shimeon Heilik) translated as "Curriculum"; two haggadas (1961, 1970) compiled for the school's annual "Third Seder".

The sub-series has been arranged into the following sub-sub-series: Bound Volumes; Newsletters; Curriculum Material.

SOURCE OF TITLE: title from content of series

LANGUAGE NOTE: some material in Yiddish.

ACCESS CONDITIONS: no restrictions on access

FINDING AIDS: item list available