

JHSSA DESCRIPTIVE LEVEL RECORD

TITLE: B'nai Brith Calgary Lodge No. 816 fonds

No.: BBC

DATE RANGE: 1917-2017

EXTENT: 21cm of textual records. – 22 objects. –2 DVDs

ADMINISTRATIVE HISTORY:

B'nai Brith Calgary Lodge #816 (spelled B'nai B'rith until 1989), commonly referred to as B'nai Brith (BB), received its charter on June 17, 1917, with Benjamin Ginsberg serving as president. It was part of North West Canadian Council (NWCC), District 6, of the Jewish service organization B'nai Brith Canada, which is in turn part of B'nai B'rith International. NWCC and the lodges of Eastern Canada of B'nai Brith amalgamated in 1981 to form Canadian B'nai Brith District 22. The organization's primary focus has always been to strengthen and support the Jewish community, and to combat antisemitism, bigotry and racism.

Since the beginning, B'nai Brith Calgary activities have promoted social engagement as well as social action. Members have regularly participated in curling and other sporting events, attended dinners and musical revues, listened to speakers, and raised funds for the Lodge's many community-assistance programs. These have ranged from helping to furnish and equip military base lounges during WWII and providing a work-placement service for European refugees through the 1950s, to the establishment of many programs and activities for local Jewish youth, including B'nai Brith Young Men, the B'nai Brith Youth Organization and Hillel. In 1956, in cooperation with the B'nai Brith Lodge #732 in Edmonton, B'nai Brith Calgary opened Camp B'nai Brith (later renamed Camp B.B.-Riback) in central Alberta, and for many years was one of its main supporters. Over the years, the Calgary lodge has published different iterations of a newsletter, including "B.B. Topics" and "Menorah".

Funds have been raised through a range of activities including concerts and charity auctions, tennis tournaments and the organization's longest-running and most successful event, the B'nai Brith Gentlemen's Dinner. Originally simply called The Stag, this annual event has raised millions of dollars for local charities since its inception in 1950. Most of the funds raised are returned to the Jewish and general communities in the form of grants to other organizations who offer children's or seniors programming, serve the disadvantaged, ill or vulnerable, or work to sustain culture and identity. The organization also monitors and speaks out against antisemitic and other racist activity, and has often worked in collaboration with other community groups.

In 1987 there was a move to organize a second B'nai Brith chapter in Calgary, #3323.

SCOPE AND CONTENT:

The fonds consists of minutes, correspondence, programming material, event programs and memorabilia, handbills, a banner, certificates, songbooks, curling sweater crests, and curling bonspiel objects including badges, pins and a trophy.

The fonds has been arranged into the following series: Governance; Minutes; Correspondence; Membership; Social Action Activities; Curling; Events; Certificates; Memorabilia.

NOTES:

SOURCE OF TITLE: title from content of fonds

SOURCE OF ACQUISITION: B'nai Brith Calgary office; also see individual series

ACCESS CONDITIONS: no restrictions on access

FINDING AIDS: Item lists available for some series

ASSOCIATED RECORDS: Glenbow Museum

ACCRUALS: Further accruals expected though not scheduled

RELATED GROUPS OF RECORDS: Calgary BBYO; JHSSA Photo collection; BBYO; Camp BB-Riback

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

Some copies of B'nai Brith Lodge No. 816 newsletters (*BB Topics* (1955-1956), *Menorah* (1957-)) are available to researchers through the JHSSA Periodical Library. Clippings regarding antisemitic activity in Calgary and southern Alberta can be found in the JHSSA subject files.

Includes material from the following accessions: 98-014, 99-002, 99-018, 2000-001, 2000-005, 2002-012, 2002-019, 2002-030, 2003-012, 2003-019, 2004-003, 2005-003, 2005-009, 2005-013, 2005-016, 2005-020, 2006-005, 2006-014, 2008-003, 2009-001, 2009-004, 2011-004, 2014-002, 2017-01

Series Title: Governance

No.: .01

Date Range: 1917, 1944, 1955, 1989, 1998

Extent: 1cm of textual records. -1 object

SCOPE AND CONTENT:

The series consists of the 1917 Charter, 44cm x 57cm, mounted on cardboard (date of mounting unknown); a 1944 document entitled "Constitution of the Western Canadian Council of B'nai B'rith Lodges" and a 1944 "B'nai B'rith Ritual" booklet; a "B'nai B'rith Calgary Lodge, No. 816 Constitution and By-Laws Revised September, 1955" booklet, two 1989 letters regarding the installation of Lodge Officers, and a brief history written in 1998. Also included is a cloth flag for B'nai Brith Lodge #3323.

NOTES:

SOURCE OF TITLE: title from content of series

SOURCE OF ACQUISITION: B'nai Brith Calgary office; Lou Pomerance

ACCESS CONDITIONS: no restrictions on access

Series Title: Minutes

No.: .02

Date Range: 1936-1944

Extent: 4.5cm of textual records

SCOPE AND CONTENT:

The series consists of a bound volume used to record the minutes of executive and regular meetings of Calgary B'nai Brith Lodge #816 from May 1936 until January 1944, which includes lists of officers and standing committees.

NOTES:

SOURCE OF TITLE: title from content of series

ACCESS CONDITIONS: no restrictions on access

Series Title: Correspondence

No.: .03

Date Range: 1931-1958, 1986-1990

Extent: 2cm of textual records

SCOPE AND CONTENT:

The series consists of correspondence relating to the ongoing activity of B'nai Brith Calgary No. 816. The series also contains loose meeting and event notices, and a 1956 New Year's greeting card. Blank stationery has been placed by the archives at the front of the Meeting & Event Notices subseries.

The series has been arranged into the following subseries: 1944-1990; Meeting & Event Notices

NOTES:

SOURCE OF TITLE: title from content of series

SOURCE OF ACQUISITION: B'nai Brith Calgary office; Cecil Horwitz

ACCESS CONDITIONS: no restrictions on access

Series Title: Membership

No.: .04

Date Range: 1937-1958, 1986-1990

Extent: 3cm of textual records. -4 objects

SCOPE AND CONTENT:

The series consists of correspondence and memoranda regarding membership issues, blank 'appreciation of service' and 50-year membership certificates, a 1990 B'nai Brith Canada 'Membership Package', a *yortzeit* (death date) register, and member lists for B'nai Brith Calgary Lodge #816. Included in this series is a 1944 list of Western Canada Council Representatives and Officers, a 1952 Northwest Convention booklet, and a large (73cm x 93cm) illuminated list of WWII veterans, "... members of B'Nai B'Rith Calgary Lodge No 816 and the Jewish community of Calgary". Also included is a 'Gold Menorah Member' card, and 4 different membership pins.

The series has been arranged into the following subseries: 1937-1990; Northwest Canadian Council.

NOTES:

SOURCE OF TITLE: title from content of series

ACCESS CONDITIONS: no restrictions on access

Series Title: Social Action Activities

No.: .05

Date Range: 1953, 1955, 1986-1991

Extent: 1cm of textual records. –1 object.

SCOPE AND CONTENT:

The series consists of correspondence, notices and planning materials for several social action initiatives of B'nai Brith Calgary, including a film screening organized by B'nai Brith Young Men. The series also includes a pin from the "Unite Against Racism" campaign.

NOTES:

SOURCE OF TITLE: title from content of series

ACCESS CONDITIONS: no restrictions on access

FINDING AIDS: Item list available

Series Title: Curling

No.: .06

Date Range: 1958-1965

Extent: 2cm of textual records. – 9 objects

SCOPE AND CONTENT:

The series consists of a Curling Rule Book, a song book, programme and Ladies' Brunch ticket from the 1958 bonspiel, and a liquor fund log book, as well as a trophy, 5 pins and 3 crests.

NOTES:

SOURCE OF TITLE: title from content of series

SOURCE OF ACQUISITION: Rena Cohen, Allan Kerr, Mona Rosenbaum, Al Rubin.

ACCESS CONDITIONS: no restrictions on access

FINDING AIDS: Item list available

Series Title: Events

No.: .07

Date Range: 1919, 1938, 1943-1949, 1957-1975, 1986-2017

Extent: 6 cm of textual records. –2 DVDs

SCOPE AND CONTENT:

The series consists of commemorative programs and invitations from B'nai Brith Calgary events, including concerts, charity auctions, dinners, the 'Welcome Back Banquet' for returning veterans (1946) and the Annual Gentlemen's Dinner. The Gentlemen's Dinner subseries includes DVDs from the 2006 and 2008 events. The program from the 60th Annual Gentlemen's Dinner was signed by honouree, Ed Stelmach; the program from the 1949 event was signed by guest speaker, Eleanor Roosevelt. Also included is a booklet from the B'nai Brith and AZA 1938 Second Annual Conference of the Western Canadian Council.

The series has been arranged into the following subseries: 1919-2002, Gentlemen's Dinner

NOTES:

SOURCE OF TITLE: title from content of series

SOURCE OF ACQUISITION: BB Office; A.L. Barron, Manny Cohen, Aron Eichler, Bertha Gold, Curly Gurevitch, Frank Kettner, Sid Macklin, Lou Pomerance, Al Rubin, Jerry Snukal, Sheldon Smithens.

ACCESS CONDITIONS: no restrictions on access

FINDING AIDS: Item list available

Series Title: Certificates

No.: .08

Date Range: 1942-2011

Extent: 1 cm of textual records

SCOPE AND CONTENT:

The series consists of certificates issued by B'nai Brith Calgary, and a JNF Golden Book certificate received by B'nai Brith Calgary. Also included are two blank certificates (B'nai B'rith International "50 years of service"; B'nai Brith Canada "... in recognition ...")

NOTES:

SOURCE OF TITLE: title from content of series

SOURCE OF ACQUISITION: BB Office; Jeanette Manuseweiz Finkelstein

ACCESS CONDITIONS: no restrictions on access

FINDING AIDS: Item list available

Series Title: Memorabilia

No.: .09

Date Range: 1942-2011

Extent: 8 objects

SCOPE AND CONTENT:

The series consists of 3 commemorative items (ruler, acrylic paperweight, travel clock, pocketknife/money clip) from B'nai Brith Calgary events. Also included are a silver brush and mirror, given to local Jewish soldiers upon enlistment during WWII, a 1971 *Grace After Meals* booklet with a blue velveteen cover, and a woolen vest with an attached crest reading "Calgary B.B. No 816".

NOTES:

SOURCE OF TITLE: title from content of series

SOURCE OF ACQUISITION: BB Office; Dora Blitt, Jack Edelson, Allan Kerr, Sid Macklin, Mel Polsky, Mona Rosenbaum, Spindel Estate.

ACCESS CONDITIONS: no restrictions on access

FINDING AIDS: Item list available