

## JHSSA DESCRIPTIVE LEVEL RECORD

**TITLE:** Beth Israel Congregation fonds

**No.:** BIC

**DATE RANGE:** 1948-1986

**EXTENT:** 29cm of textual records. –11 objects

### **ADMINISTRATIVE HISTORY:**

Beth Israel Congregation (sometimes referred to in early documents by its English translation, House of Israel Congregation), was organized in the 1930s, by members of the Calgary Jewish community who wanted to worship in a less Orthodox manner. The first board of officers was elected in 1935, and included A.S. Horwitz (President), H.W. Zemans (Vice-President), Harry L. Epstein (Treasurer), J.J. Wise (Financial Secretary) and William Epstein (Recording Secretary). Rabbi M. Casriel Katz was the first spiritual leader, and regular services, which included mixed seating and considerable use of English, were held in the House of Israel community building.

In 1951 Beth Israel Congregation was granted its Alberta Charter. Cecil Horwitz served as President, and Eliezer Ebner was engaged as Rabbi. Affiliated with the Conservative synagogue movement, the congregation offered classes for boys and girls of all ages as well as adult education classes. An active Sisterhood was formed with Mrs. N.I. Zemans as President, and Charter from the United Synagogue of America was granted in 1954. In 1957 a resolution was passed to undertake the construction of a synagogue building, and the decision was made to purchase land in the rapidly-growing southwest suburbs. To aid in the mortgage payments, Ralph Kalef organized a Gentlemen's Stag Dinner which would continue to be a major fundraiser for the congregation for many years. Beth Israel Synagogue was dedicated in September 1960, and the building hosted many community-wide events.

In 1986, Beth Israel Congregation amalgamated with Shaarey Tzedec Congregation to form the Beth Tzedec Congregation. The Beth Israel synagogue building underwent significant renovations to suit the needs of the new congregation.

### **SCOPE AND CONTENT:**

The fonds consists of minutes, letterhead, Honours Lists, event programs and posters, newsletters and correspondence relating to the activities of the Beth Israel Congregation, as well as personalized ceramic dishes.

The fonds has been arranged into the following series: Governance; Ritual; Minutes; Land Development; Sisterhood; Events; Newsletters; Ceramics.

**SOURCE OF TITLE:** title from content of fonds

**SOURCE OF ACQUISITION:** Delsie Dworkin, estate of Anita Goodman, Rose Hallis, Sandy Kalef, Naomi Kerr, Steve Lipton, Julius Lister, Ted Riback, Sima Veiner

**ACCESS CONDITIONS:** no restrictions on access

**ASSOCIATED RECORDS:** Glenbow Museum, Beth Tzedec Congregation fonds

**ACCRUALS:** no further accruals expected

**RELATED GROUPS OF RECORDS:** Shaarey Tzedec Congregation fonds; JHSSA photo collection

**GENERAL NOTE:** Includes material from the following accessions: 99-008, 99-014, 2001-017, 2002-012, 2002-015, 2003-023, 2004-009, 2004-010, 2007-010, 2009-006, 2011-003, 2015-006

**Series Title:** Governance

**No.:** 01

**Date Range:** 1954, [197-], 1977, 1986

**Extent:** 1cm of textual records

**SCOPE AND CONTENT:**

The series consists of a signed but unwitnessed 1954 *Application for Incorporation* for “The House of Israel Congregation”, 2 draft / incomplete *Constitution and By Law* documents, a letter announcing a meeting for the election of officers, letterhead and a blank Ethel Libin Memorial Library bookplate.

**SOURCE OF TITLE:** title from content of series

**ACCESS CONDITIONS:** no restrictions on access

**Series Title:** Ritual

**No.:** 02

**Date Range:** 1948, [196-]-1981

**Extent:** 3cm of textual records, -- 1 object

**SCOPE AND CONTENT:**

The series consists of correspondence with Cantor J. Kuczinsky and a flyer for High Holiday Services 1948, as well as annotated Honours Lists (1971-1981), a 1966 “Rosh Hashonah” schedule of services and a booklet produced by Beth Israel Synagogue entitled *Jewish Festivals in the Home*. Also included is an acrostic poem written to Canto and Mrs Lang when they left their previous congregation and came to Beth Israel.

**SOURCE OF TITLE:** title from content of series

**ACCESS CONDITIONS:** no restrictions on access

**Series Title:** Minutes

**No.:** 03

**Date Range:** 1965-1967, 1973-1977

**Extent:** 5cm of textual records

**SCOPE AND CONTENT:**

The series consists of the contents of a “Minutes” binder from Beth Tzedec Congregation, which includes minutes, committee reports, event planning notes, correspondence and membership information. For preservation reasons the material has been removed from its original binder and moved to file folders, maintaining its original order.

**SOURCE OF TITLE:** title from content of series

**ACCESS CONDITIONS:** no restrictions on access

**Series Title:** Land Development

**No.:** 04

**Date Range:** 1958-1962, 1976

**Extent:** 1cm of textual records

**SCOPE AND CONTENT:**

The series consists of correspondence, notes and Certificates of Compliance regarding the construction of the Beth Israel synagogue building, as well as correspondence, minutes and maps regarding the redesign of the 14<sup>th</sup> St / 66<sup>th</sup> Ave intersection and subsequent upgrades to Glenmore Trail.

**SOURCE OF TITLE:** title from content of series

**ACCESS CONDITIONS:** no restrictions on access

**Series Title:** Sisterhood

**No.:** 05

**Date Range:** 1960-1967

**Extent:** 1cm of textual records

**SCOPE AND CONTENT:**

The series consists of a copy of the bylaws of the Beth Israel Sisterhood, amended 1967, and an annotated 1967 membership list. Also included are 2 informational printouts from the National Women's League of the United Synagogue.

**SOURCE OF TITLE:** title from content of series

**ACCESS CONDITIONS:** no restrictions on access

**Series Title:** Events

**No.:** 06

**Date Range:** 1963-1966, 1975, 1986

**Extent:** 1cm of textual records. --4 objects

**SCOPE AND CONTENT:**

The series consists of flyers, programs and souvenir booklets from Beth Israel Congregation special services, youth programming events, dances, and fundraising dinners. Also included are a set of playing cards and a leather notepad cover from the 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Ralph Kalef Gentlemen's Stag Dinner, a name-plate, removed from an unknown item, engraved "Presented by a grateful Congregation to Dr. Alec [sic] Belkin 1958 / For Dedicated Leadership Efforts and Devotion to Jewish Life / President's Ball / December 2<sup>nd</sup> 1972 / Kislev 27, 5733", and a name-plate removed from a display case that had been "handmade by Dr Meyer Miller".

**SOURCE OF TITLE:** title from content of series

**ACCESS CONDITIONS:** no restrictions on access

**Series Title:** Newsletters

**No.:** 07

**Date Range:** 1969, 1972-1986

**Extent:** 18cm of textual records

**SCOPE AND CONTENT:**

The series consists of newsletters, variously called *The Scroll*, *Beth Israel Bulletin*, *Beth Israel Congregation*, *Beth Israel* and *Congregation Beth Israel*, produced by Beth Israel Congregation.

**SOURCE OF TITLE:** title from content of series

**ACCESS CONDITIONS:** no restrictions on access

**FINDING AIDS:** item list available

**Series Title:** Ceramics

**No.:** 08

**Date Range:** [196-]

**Extent:** 6 objects

**SCOPE AND CONTENT:**

The series consists of 2 pale pink sugar bowls (without lids), as well as a pale pink creamer, saucer, side plate and dinner plate. Each piece has a visible blue stamp that has "Beth Israel" written on a horizontal scroll; the saucer and plates have a "Hycroft Canada" stamp on the underside.

**SOURCE OF TITLE:** title from content of series

**ACCESS CONDITIONS:** no restrictions on access