

TITLE: National Council of Jewish Women Calgary Section fonds

No.: NCJ

DATE RANGE: 1920-1934, 1948-1993, 2012

EXTENT: 78.5cm of textual records. – 1 CD. –2 objects

ADMINISTRATIVE HISTORY:

National Council of Jewish Women was originally founded in Chicago in 1893, and National Council of Jewish Women (NCJW) of Canada was formed in Toronto in 1897, with the motto “Faith and Humanity”. In 1920 Calgary became the third Canadian city to establish a National Council of Jewish Women section; the 15 original members elected Sarah Zemans as its president.

The early years of the Calgary Section, locally referred to as Council, were devoted to community assistance, and projects ranged from English classes to support for the Jewish needy. Members actively co-operated with the existing organizations in Calgary, and also raised considerable sums for the Jewish Old Folks Home of Western Canada (in Winnipeg) and the Winnipeg Jewish Orphanage, both of which served the entire western Canadian Jewish community. Regular meetings generally included lectures on subjects of current interest, and Council was instrumental in the founding of a Sunday School for those children not attending the Talmud Torah (Hebrew School). An annual bazaar, most often held at the Al Azhar Temple, was Council’s major fund raiser in its early days. A Junior section was added for younger women, and by the 1930s, Council had expanded its recipients to include non-Jewish projects like the Institute for the Blind, the Junior Red Cross, and a Mount Royal College Bursary fund, raising funds through concerts, teas and dances.

Council continued to support an increasingly diverse range of causes and organizations in both the Jewish and non-Jewish communities, from War Relief and mental health issues, to multiple scholarships and bursaries, the Friendship Club (for seniors) and child care programs. Affiliate organizations included the Calgary Allied Arts Council, Calgary Association for Retarded Children, Calgary Jewish Women’s Federation, Canadian Cancer Society, John Howard Society, Local Council of Women and United Nations Association. Many of Council’s programs were part of initiatives promoted through the national organization, such as the Israeli Family Counselling Association and Soviet Jewry activism. Occasionally there was a local project that became a national initiative, like *TODAY ... and maybe tomorrow: questions of Jewish survival*, a simulation exercise created for the National organization’s 1971 biennial convention. Involvement with local concerns, particularly those with wider implications such as the Alberta Government’s Committee on Tolerance and Understanding, struck in the wake of the Keegstra hate-speech trial in 1984, was generally written up in the *National Newsletter* published by National Council of Jewish Women of Canada.

In 1952, in order to supplement the funds raised through the collection of dues and its other events and activities, Council began running a thrift store, Bargain Bazaar, in rented premises on 7th Avenue South East. Donations were solicited from the larger Jewish community, and Council members sorted and priced the merchandise for sale in the shop. Annual receipts returned to the organization ranged from \$2400 – 2800 through its first decade of operation, and in 1965 the store moved to a larger location on 1st SW. In 1960 Council was involved with the establishment of the Calgary Jewish Family Service Bureau (later, Jewish Family Service Calgary), and decided to inaugurate an annual large-scale fundraiser.

Using a model established some years earlier by the Montreal NCJW section, wherein admission to a major fundraising event was ‘paid’ through donations to an established fundraising mechanism, Calgary Council

member donations of saleable items (or a cash equivalent) and of volunteer time to the Bargain Bazaar were carefully tracked, with minimum levels of both required to be able to purchase tickets to a formal evening fundraiser, the Angel's Ball. This dinner-dance became a highly-anticipated annual social event, strongly supported both within and beyond the Jewish community. Elaborate themes included 'My Blue Heaven', 'Gay Paree', 'Mythical Magic' 'Roman Holiday', and 'Diamonds and Denims'. The Angel's Ball continued until 1976.

National Council of Jewish Women Calgary Section had many branches over the years, including Mozah Zemans, Evening, Sicha, Eunice Bloom, Bertha Segall, Career Girls, Women's Issues and "Junior Councilettes". Members participated in the activities of their own branch as well as Calgary Section as a whole, especially in the operation of the Bargain Bazaar thrift store (1952- c1978) and the coordination of the Angel's Ball, as well as the operation of the Judaica and gift shop, The Glass Door, which Council ran in the Calgary Jewish Community Centre (1982-2004). Many also participated in the Council Choir, which was conducted for over 30 years by Edythe Pearlman. In addition, Calgary Council members attended and hosted regional and national conventions, and several members also served the national organization, including Jenny Belzberg, Clarice Chodak, Gert Cohos, Pauline Fox, Muriel Kovitz, Myra Paperny, Florence Switzer, Mozah Zemans.

In 1976 an unsuccessful attempt was made to restructure National Council of Jewish Women Calgary Section, replacing the traditional executive positions with a steering committee. Regular Council meetings had ceased by the late 1980s, and attempts to revive interest in the organization were unsuccessful. Volunteers continued to run the Judaica shop until 2004, using the proceeds to fund projects in the name and spirit of NCJW.

SCOPE AND CONTENT:

The fonds consists of minutes, correspondence, financial statements, annual reports, membership lists, programming material, invitations and mailings, programs and newsletters regarding the activities of National Council of Jewish Women Calgary Section.

The fonds has been arranged into the following series: Governance; Minutes & Correspondence; Financial; Annual Reports; Membership; Bargain Bazaar; Angel's Ball; NCJW Programs; Affiliations & Joint Programs; Newsletters; National / Western Region

SOURCE OF TITLE: title from content of fonds

SOURCE OF ACQUISITION: National Council of Jewish Women Calgary Section; Jenny Belzberg; Ruth Carnat; Donna Cohen; Brenda Eisenberg; Sheila Gurevitch; Riki Heilik; estate of Dorothy Katchen; Naomi Kerr; Edythe Pearlman

ARRANGEMENT: Undated material has been included at the beginning of the appropriate series or subseries.

ACCESS CONDITIONS: no restrictions on access

FINDING AIDS: Item lists available. See individual series.

ASSOCIATED RECORDS: Glenbow Museum

ACCRUALS: further accruals expected though not scheduled

RELATED GROUPS OF RECORDS: JHSA photo collection

GENERAL NOTE: Includes material from the following accessions: 2002-024; 2002-027; 2002-028; 2003-026; 2004-015; 2004-033; 2006-020; 2008-006, 2011-005

Series Title: Governance

No.: .01

Date Range: 1980

Extent: 1cm of textual records

SCOPE AND CONTENT:

The series consists of the Certificate of Incorporation and By-Laws for National Council of Jewish Women Calgary Section.

SOURCE OF TITLE: title from content of series

ACCESS CONDITIONS: no restrictions on access

Series Title: Minutes & Reports

No.: .02

Date Range: [1934], 1959-1984

Extent: 13cm of textual records

SCOPE AND CONTENT:

The series consists of minutes, agendas and reports from monthly and annual meetings of National Council of Jewish Women Calgary Section. Also included are timeline notes (1934?), organizational overviews and histories (1970s, 1982), and a history of the Calgary Jewish community compiled by Council in 1961. Some of the Annual Reports were published in booklet form, others were written for presentation to Council membership or to Alberta Child and Family Welfare.

The series has been arranged into the following sub-series: Histories; Monthly Meetings (1960, 1964-1966, 1967-1970, 1975-1984); Branch Meetings (Afternoon, Eunice Bloom, Bertha Segall, Sichá); Annual Reports (presented); Annual Reports (published).

SOURCE OF TITLE: title from content of series

ACCESS CONDITIONS: no restrictions on access

Series Title: Financial

No.: .03

Date Range: 1920- 1934, 1956, 1964-1969, 1975, 1988-1990

Extent: 4cm of textual records

SCOPE AND CONTENT:

The series consists of a financial ledger 1920-1934, proposed budgets, annual returns and a financial statement, as well as correspondence regarding scholarships awarded by National Council of Jewish Women Calgary Section.

The series has been arranged into the following sub-series: Ledger; Budgets, Statements, Annual Returns; Scholarships

SOURCE OF TITLE: title from content of series

ACCESS CONDITIONS: no restrictions on access

Series Title: Correspondence & Mailings

No.: .04

Date Range: 1962-1996, 2012; predominant 1962-1976

Extent: 2cm of textual records

SCOPE AND CONTENT:

The series consists of National Council of Jewish Women Calgary Section correspondence and mailings, as well as blank letterhead and donation cards.

SOURCE OF TITLE: title from content of series

ACCESS CONDITIONS: no restrictions on access

Series Title: Membership

No.: .05

Date Range: 1953-1988

Extent: 3.5cm of textual records

SCOPE AND CONTENT:

The series consists of correspondence, member lists and invitations to membership events for National Council of Jewish Women Calgary Section, including pages from a membership register kept between 1953-1988, and a Life Member card for Gertie Belkin, dated September 1979.

The series has been arranged into the following sub-series: Lists & Letters; Register.

SOURCE OF TITLE: title from content of series

ACCESS CONDITIONS: no restrictions on access

Series Title: Bargain Bazaar

No.: .06

Date Range: 1958-1968

Extent: 4cm of textual records.

SCOPE AND CONTENT:

The series consists of financial statements (1958-1968), lease agreements (1965-1966), mailings regarding the operations of National Council of Jewish Women Calgary Section's thrift shop, Bargain Bazaar. Also included are sample clothing price tags, showing the number used to identify the donor.

The series has been arranged into the following sub-series: Monthly Statements; Annual Statements; Lease Agreements; Mailings & Tags.

SOURCE OF TITLE: title from content of series

ACCESS CONDITIONS: no restrictions on access

Series Title: Angel's Ball

No.: .07

Date Range: 1960-1976

Extent: 14cm of textual records

SCOPE AND CONTENT:

The series consists of meeting minutes, planning and financial material, correspondence, publicity material, programs and invitations for the Angel's Ball held annually by National Council of Jewish Women Calgary Section. Material from the 1961, 1962 and 1964 events was originally received in paper scrapbooks. For preservation reasons it has been removed by the archives to file folders, and maintained in its original order.

The series has been arranged into the following sub-series: 1961; 1962; 1963; 1964; 1965; 1966; 1967; 1968; 1969; 1970; Programs (including invitations and tickets).

SOURCE OF TITLE: title from content of series

ACCESS CONDITIONS: no restrictions on access

Series Title: NCJW Programs & Projects

No.: .08

Date Range: 1948-1953, 1959-1993, predominant 1965-1985

Extent: 19.5cm of textual records. -1 CD. -2 objects

SCOPE AND CONTENT:

The series consists of correspondence, minutes, planning and publicity material relating to projects and programs undertaken by National Council of Jewish Women Calgary Section, including a CD of a performance by the Council Choir, and a Canadian centennial cloth badge and pin.

The series has been arranged into the following sub-series: 1948-1953 Scrapbook; Meeting & Event Notices and Programmes; Bar/Bat Mitzvah; Capsule of Life; Choir; Donor Luncheons; Emergency Banners; "Faith & Humanity" Archival Exhibit; Field Service; Friendship Circle; Israel Family Counselling Association; Item Sales ('kippas', Entertainment Books); Justice for Youth; National Program Committee; Overseas Program (Israeli Fund, Ship-a-Box); Prejudice in Textbooks; Project Canada; Save Sesame Street; School for Citizenship Participation; Senior Centre Committee; Soviet Jewry; Tay-Sachs Disease Testing Program; Welcoming Committee. The material from the 1948-1953 scrapbook has been removed to a file folder by the archives for reasons of preservation, and is maintained in its original order. The material from the campaign to Save Sesame Street was originally received in a paper scrapbook. It has been removed to a file folder by the archives for reasons of preservation, and maintained in its original order. A copy of the choir CD is available through the JHSSA Lending Library.

SOURCE OF TITLE: title from content of series

ACCESS CONDITIONS: no restrictions on access

Series Title: Affiliations & Joint Programs

No.: .09

Date Range: 1960-1968

Extent: 7cm of textual records

SCOPE AND CONTENT:

The series consists of correspondence between National Council of Jewish Women Calgary Section and its affiliated organizations, as well as correspondence, minutes, planning and publicity material relating to projects and programs jointly undertaken.

The series has been arranged into the following sub-series: Calgary Allied Arts Council; Calgary Association for Retarded Children; Calgary Canadian Citizenship Council; Calgary Council of Community Services; Calgary Jewish Community Council; Calgary Local Council of Women; Canadian Centenary Council; Canadian Mental Health Association; Higher Horizons / Victoria Area Project.

SOURCE OF TITLE: title from content of series

ACCESS CONDITIONS: no restrictions on access

Series Title: Newsletters

No.: .10

Date Range: 1961-1986, predominant 1967-1969

Extent: 4cm of textual records

SCOPE AND CONTENT:

The series consists of newsletters, variously called *Bulletin*, *The Bulletin*, *NCJW Newsletter and Council News*, published by National Council of Jewish Women Calgary Section.

SOURCE OF TITLE: title from content of series

FINDING AIDS: item list available.

ACCESS CONDITIONS: no restrictions on access

Series Title: Western Area

No.: .11

Date Range: 1967

Extent: 1cm of textual records

SCOPE AND CONTENT:

The series consists of schedules, speeches, program material and a Record of Proceedings from the Western Area Meeting held in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, 1967, for NCJW Calgary, Edmonton, Lethbridge, Saskatoon, Vancouver and Winnipeg sections. Also included is a list of delegates.

SOURCE OF TITLE: title from content of series

ACCESS CONDITIONS: no restrictions on access

Series Title: National / International

No.: .12

Date Range: 1958-1966, 1975-1976

Extent: 5cm of textual records. -1 object

SCOPE AND CONTENT:

The series consists of convention material, minutes, financial and annual reports from the National Council of Jewish Women, National Office, including correspondence and planning material from Muriel Kovitz' National Chairmanship of the Nation Program Committee. Also included are a National Directory and a name tag from an International Council of Jewish Women event.

The series has been arranged into the following sub-series: Governance (including resolutions and financial information); National Program Committee; Reports (including the 1976 National Directory); Conventions

SOURCE OF TITLE: title from content of series

ACCESS CONDITIONS: no restrictions on access