

COHDS Archives Holdings Overview

The following is a brief overview of the fonds and collections held within the COHDS Archives. Each fonds or collection has a brief description that may include the number of interviews held in that collection, the relevant series in the collection, restriction levels, languages used, and any other relevant information.

Gaining Access

Access to archival materials at COHDS will be granted to all once they have read, signed, and dated an "Access Agreement". Through this agreement, all users are made aware of, and commit themselves to follow, the rules and regulations of the COHDS Archives related to access, ethics, and future use of the materials being accessed.

Fonds/Collections

The following is a list of publicly accessible fonds/collections held by the COHDS Archives in order of Accession/Reference number.

COHDS-05-001 Voices of Little Burgundy

The Little Burgundy neighbourhood was founded as Sainte-Cunegonde, an independent town from the city of Montreal proper. During the Industrial Revolution it was the site of many so-called "smokestack" industries. Sainte-Cunegonde was absorbed into the larger city near the turn of the 20th century. As one of the most important sites for the nascent trans-Canadian railway industry, a great many African-American workers were brought in from the United States. Later, Caribbean blacks also moved in, leading to Little Burgundy's unique niche as the home of Montreal's working-class English-speaking black community. Today, the neighbourhood has endured several phases of gentrification. The interviews in this collection are with present and former residents of Little Burgundy whose interviews tackle questions of race, class, and discrimination.

Fonds consists of 13 open access interviews however 10 can only be viewed at COHDS facilities. Interviews are in English.

COHDS-05-002 Holy Family Parish

The Holy Family Parish is a Roman Catholic Church with a multicultural congregation. Holy Family Parish started out as a basement church in May 1926. The first pastor was Father Walsh. At first, the parish was founded in order to serve the Irish Catholic community of the Villeray district of Montreal. In the 1930s when Holy Family School was constructed, there was a natural link made between the school and the church. At the time, the school was not only attended by Irish Catholics, but also French

Canadians, and the many Italians who were immigrating to Montreal. From there, Holy Family's scope changed as it was no longer a parish for the Irish, but for all English speaking Catholics in the Villeray district. As the years went by, Holy Family went from a neighbourhood parish to a city parish. Parishioners were no longer from close by, but were coming from all parts of Montreal. The interviews in this collection are with parishioners of Holy Family Parish. They discuss the parish father, Father Baxter, the programs offered by the church, the sermons, and the congregation at large.

Fonds consists of 9 interviews, 8 are open access. Interviews are in English.

COHDS-05-003 Old Brewery Mission

The Old Brewery Mission has a rich history spanning more than a century. It was born at the end of the 19th century out of a need to respond to the problems encountered by the first wave of homelessness in Montreal. During the twentieth century, the mandate changed with the times and the Old Brewery Mission accompanied society's rejected men and adapted so as to alleviate their misery. The Mission has still adapted with the times and currently men and women from 20 to 70 year of age live in the shelter. Some of them have severe mental problems, and have been abandoned by our public institutions that can no longer accommodate them. Others are hard drug users, abuse prescription medications or inject themselves with toxic substances. The interviews in fonds are with those who work at, volunteer at, or use the Mission's services.

Fonds consists of 8 interviews; 7 must be viewed at COHDS facilities, 1 is limited access. Interviews are in English and French.

COHDS-06-001 Industrial Sunset

This collection consists of interviews that depict cultural and economic transformations due to plant shutdowns in Canada and the United States Great Lakes Region, from 1969 to 1984. These interviews provide an insightful examination of how mill and factory workers on both sides of the border made sense of their own displacement.

Fonds consists of 26 interviews.

COHDS-06-002 Sturgeon Falls Mill Closure

This collection examines place identity and attachment in the former paper mill town of Sturgeon Falls, Ontario. Sturgeon Falls was a single-industry town and like many other such towns scattered across the provincial northlands of Canada, it has had to re-invent itself in the face of catastrophic job loss. Weyerhaeuser's decision to close the Sturgeon Falls Mill in 2002, after a century of production, is therefore part of a far larger story related to the economic crisis facing forestry-dependent towns across Canada. The

interviews in this collection provide an opportunity to explore the cultural meaning of displacement from the vantage point of those most directly involved: workers themselves.

Fonds consists of 60 interviews; 52 are open access interviews, 8 are anonymous.

COHDS-07-001 Occupied St John's

The history of St. John's, Newfoundland during the Second World War is one that blurs the usual North American distinctions between "war front" and "home front." So numerous were the soldiers, airmen, and sailors from Canada and the United States, that the residents of St. John's took to calling their arrival a "friendly invasion" or "occupation." From the life of the harbour, to volunteer work, to the marriages between St. John's women and American soldiers, Occupied St. John's explores the profound effect the war years had on the city through the perspective of its residents. Lead by researcher Steven High, this anthology was sponsored by the Johnson Family Foundation and aimed at filling a void in the scholarship about the history of St. John's.

The fonds consists of 47 open access interviews however 4 can only be viewed at COHDS facilities.

COHDS-10-048 Alfie Roberts Institute fonds

The Alfonso "Alfie" Roberts Institute was an independent research, education, and community centre based in Montreal that worked primarily with communities of African and Caribbean descent. The fonds primarily consists of recorded interviews with members of the Afro and Caribbean diaspora, materials from the United Negro Improvement Association and the African Communities League, the Congress of Black Writers, and radio programs from the CBC on Alfie Roberts.

The fonds consists of 18 audio files in English.

2014-01 Montreal Life Stories

Life Stories of Montrealers Displaced by War, Genocide, and Other Human Rights Violations was an oral history project exploring Montrealers' experiences and memories of mass violence and displacement. A team of both university and community-based researchers recorded life-story interviews with nearly 500 Montreal residents over the course of five years. Interviews were conducted using the life story method.

The fonds consists of 8 series with 448 different files; a file list of the different series is available.

1. Life Stories in Education Working Group (2014-01-01) -- 87 interviews; English and French
 - a. The Life Stories in Education Working Group sought to educate youth, teachers, and the broader community about human rights, genocide, war, and displacement through life stories. The group explored the impact life stories have on the intellectual and ethical development of learners and educators in a variety of formal and informal contexts.
2. Holocaust and Other Persecutions Against Jews Working Group (2014-01-02) -- 80 interviews; English, French, and Yiddish
 - a. The Holocaust and other persecutions against Jews Working Group collected stories with Holocaust survivors, descendants of Holocaust survivors, and Montrealers of Sephardic origin impacted by the Holocaust and post-Holocaust events in North Africa.
3. Cambodia Working Group (2014-01-03) -- 75 interviews; English, French, and Khmer
 - a. The Cambodian Working Group collected the stories of Cambodians living in Montreal. Of special significance to this working group was the transmission of knowledge from one generation to the next, and the communication between Montrealers and Canadians of Cambodian and other origins.
4. Haiti Working Group (2014-01-04) -- 19 interviews; English and French
 - a. The Haitian Working Group examined the relationship between state violence experienced during the Duvalier régime and the displacement of Haitian refugees to Montreal. These interviews discuss what led individuals to leave their country and what attracted them to Montreal. Although violence has characterized Haitian society since its birth as a nation, the Duvalier period (1957 - 1994) was privileged in this study because it is this regime, in its totalitarian and systematic perpetration of violence, that resulted in massive Haitian emigration to Canadian soil.
5. Oral History and Performance Working Group (2014-01-05) -- 55 interviews; English and French
 - a. The Oral History and Performance Working Group drew inspiration from participatory action methodologies to involve participants in socially engaged and self-revelatory performances by, for, and about their respective communities. The Working Group guided the creation of performance projects in collaboration with community groups, the publication of research about the process of creating performances based on oral histories, and the development of ethical, aesthetic, and methodological guidelines. The Working Group also collected life stories

of artists living in Montreal because they were displaced from their places of origin by mass violence.

6. Rwanda Working Group (2014-01-06) -- 87 interviews; English, French, and Kinyarwanda
 - a. The life stories of Rwandan survivors living in Montreal were recorded through interviews with people from different age groups. The group ensured that 20 to 25 percent of those interviewed were young people between the ages of 18 and 30. Recruitment of interviewees took place through a variety of means. Two Life Stories partners, the Association of Parents and Friends of Genocide Victims in Rwanda (PAGE-Rwanda) and Isangano (Rwandan cultural group) were the main organizers of the outreach process.
7. Experience of Refugee Youth in Montreal Working Group -- 45 interviews; English and French
 - a. Experiences of Refugee Youth in Montreal was a collaborative media project that used personal stories and a range of media tools (video, sound walks, mapping, photograph) to better understand the experiences of youth with refugee experience in Montreal. Using participatory methods, their objective was to produce creative work that would have an impact on policy, education, art, and on the lives of the youth involved.
8. Events and Activities (2014-01-08)
 - a. This series consists of video and audio-recorded seminars, training sessions, round tables, and other events held in relation with the Life Stories of Montrealers Displaced by Genocide and Other Human Rights Violations Project.

2014-02 Montreal Holocaust Memorial Centre

This fonds consists of interviews with survivors of the Holocaust (Shoah) collected by the Montreal Holocaust Memorial Centre (MHMC) starting in the 1990s that were donated to the Centre for Oral History and Digital Storytelling.

Fonds consists of 471 interviews in English, French, and Yiddish.

2015-05 Quebec Anglophone Heritage Network

Founded in 2000, the Quebec Anglophone Heritage Network (QAHN) is a non-profit, non-partisan umbrella organization engaged with its members in promoting the preservation of the built, cultural and natural heritage of Quebec. QAHN aims to promote a greater understanding of the history of Quebec's English-speaking communities by informing, inspiring and connecting people through its activities. QAHN

has a Stories Matter database that hosts oral history interviews collected through their years of existence. Copies of these interviews are accessible in person at COHDS.

This fonds contains 374 interviews separated in 10 series. More information to come.

2016-01 COHDS Workshop fonds

Training is at the core of our mission at COHDS. As a result, we offer a wide-range of free training workshops, seminars, and roundtables for affiliates and the general public. The COHDS Workshop fonds allows those who have missed the workshops offered in 2013 and later the chance to watch and listen to the workshops.

Fonds consists of 47 workshops split into 3 series.

1. 2013 Workshops (2016-01-01) -- 6 workshops
2. 2014 Workshops (2016-01-02) -- 19 workshops
3. 2015 Workshops (2016-01-03) -- 22 workshops

2016-04-001 From Balconville to Condoville

More information to come.

For further information or to gain access to the holdings, please contact cohds.chorn.archives@gmail.com.