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McGill University, Montreal Canada
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LOUIS AND IRENE KON FONDS

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Name: Louis and Irene Kon

Fonds title: Louis and Irene Kon Fonds.

Dates: c.1881-2004.

Extent: 24 cm of textual records.

Biographical Sketch: Louis Kon was born in Russia. According to secret documents of the Office of the Canadian Trade Commissioner to Siberia, Kon's political convictions were considered suspect, and consequently, Kon was monitored by the Canadian government for much of his life. Louis Kon was associated with the Friends of the Soviet Union in Canada. Louis and his daughter, Irene, knew and corresponded with Norman Bethune. Irene Kon established the Norman Bethune Foundation.

Custodial History: Gift of Irene Kon.

Scope and Content: Fonds consists of the personal and professional papers of Louis and Irene Kon including extensive correspondence between the Kon family. Included are materials relating to the founding of the Norman Bethune Foundation and Bethune memorials; the making of Ted Allan's movie, Making of a Hero, including the conflict with Syd Gordon regarding their creative differences; a manuscript draft and notes on Larry Stephenson's manuscript, 'Two Petrels.'

Source of supplied title proper:

Language: The documents are in English.

Finding Aids: Inventory list available.

General Note:

Louis & Irene Kon Inventory
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BOX #1

Folder # 1.1 2.0cm

Photocopies of Confidential and Secret government correspondence:
Immigration Department of the Interior, 1908-1922

- One set of photocopies from the Public Archives of Canada (File #801691/reel C? or E?-10617) Includes letters to Immigration Dept. of Interior from Kon requesting employment; correspondence between Canadian governments, internally, and with the U.S. Dept. of Labor regarding Kon's whereabouts and his refusal by the U.S. for entry for work purposes.
- One set of photocopies from the Solicitor General Access to Information Division. Includes Secret and Confidential correspondence between the Royal North West Mounted Police, Department of Trade and Commerce and Dept. of militia and Defense, May 1919-Oct 1919. These papers track Kon's whereabouts, his activities and the attempts to denaturalize Kon's citizenship in Canada.
- Passports (3) Issued 1918, 1941, 1954.

File # 1.2 1.3

Louis Kon—miscellaneous business cards, passes, pamphlets, passport expired 1931.

Folder # 1.3 0.5cm

Canada West, 1909. "The Letters of Louis, by Louis Kon" (4 published letters) from (March, vol.5, No. 5., 1909).

Folder # 1.4 0.3

Personal correspondence, 1944-1956.

- Correspondence between Louis, Irene, Tanya, George Moody, misc. letters (3)
- Letter—Red Cross regarding disappearance of William, circa 1944-1956.
- Slide of front cover of *Combat* newspaper?
- Photocopy of the NY Times article, Monday Oct 7, 1924.

Folder # 1.5 0.3cm

Louis Kon—correspondence regarding death of William Kon, 1944-45.

Folder # 1.6 3 letters

Louis Kon—personal correspondence from Norman Bethune (2) and reply (1) from Louis Kon.

Folder # 1.7 0.5cm

Louis Kon—Personal correspondence from William Kon, 1931-1944 (predominately 1944).

- Program for the Graduation Ceremony and Presentation of Wings to Air Navigators and Air Bombers of the No. 9 Air Observer School, R.C.A.F., Thursday March 23rd, 1944.
- Black and white photograph
- Personal correspondence from William Kon: 1931, Sunday morning “Briefing Room, Somewhere in Ontario,” August 5, 1944, July 17, 1944, August 5, 1944, (post stamped) August 31, 1944, September 2, 1944, September 5, 1944, September 6, 1944, 19/9/44, n.d., n.d., n.d..
- Newspaper clippings (3).

Folder # 1.8 0.3cm

Personal correspondence from Mother Elza to Irene, 1958-1965.

Folder # 1.9 1.0cm

Irene Kon Research notes

- Small book with notes regarding research on Louis Kon, n.d.
- “Remembering Louis Kon” by Irene Kon, 1983.
- Letter addressed to Peter Laing of Hugessen, Mackelaier, Chisholm, Smith & Davis regarding requesting re-entry into the United States, April 22, 1959.

Folder # 1.10 12 letters

Irene Kon—personal correspondence 1939-1965.

Folder # 1.11 1.0cm

Irene Kon and China, 1980.

Miscellaneous items collected on trip to china

Folder # 1.12 0.4cm

Irene Kon, regarding negotiations for U.S. visa, expired passport.

Folder # 1.13 0.5cm

Family correspondence, Irene, Tanya, grandchildren, 1942-94.

- One letter from Louis Kon, November 17, 1953.

Folder # 1.14 0.2cm

Irene Kon, personal correspondence, 1970s.

Folder # 1.15 0.5cm

Irene Kon, personal correspondence, 1980s.

Folder # 1.16 0.2cm

Irene Kon, personal correspondence, 1990s.

Folder # 1.17 0.3cm

Irene Kon, correspondence: Urquhart family, 1960-1980.

Folder # 1.18 0.2cm

Irene Kon, personal/family correspondence: miscellaneous, n.d.

- Unidentified art? slides

Folder # 1.19 2.3cm

Louis Kon—Correspondence/political writings, c. 1942-1956. (Largely regarding Canadian Soviet Friendship Society)

- Appointment of Substitute Power of Attorney, November, 1925.
- Last Will and Testament—hand written by Louis Kon, July 1, 1954.
- Correspondence—regarding the intention to donate Louis Kon's body for research after his death to MacDonal Tobacco Company and the National Cancer Institute, circa 1954.
- Louis Kon to Prime Minister of Canada, Louis St. Laurent, May 17, 1955.
- Public address?—unspecified audience, May 27, 1956.
- Report on Political Situation in Russia and Siberia by Louis Kon, Secretary Canadian Economic Commission (Siberia), no date.
- Personal letters—Dear Poussie (Irene) May 15, 1955, July 7, 1954.
- Draft of an essay—In Memory of V.I. Lenin in Homage to J.V. Stalin and all those men and women every who, share their ideals. NOTES OF A BOLSHEVIK truth that reads like fiction by Louis Kon.
- Public Archives Records Centre Ottawa: Dept. of External Affairs—Memorandum regarding the Activities of L. Kon (Russian trade agent)
- Miscellaneous:
- Invitations and cards addressed to Louis Kon, circa 1950s.
- Menu/Programme of a dinner tendered by The Canadian-Soviet Friendship Society, Tuesday March 16yh, 1954 at the Royal York Hotel, Toronto.
- Correspondence—letters regarding the activities of The Canadian-Soviet Friendship Society.
- Newspaper article regarding “The Rasputin File” by Edvard Radzinsky, March 29, 2001.

Louis Kon Inventory
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Box #2

Folder # 2.1 2.0 cm.

The Norman Bethune Foundation, 1981-1991.

- The Norman Bethune Foundation—History of organization, n.d.
- The Norman Bethune Foundation membership list, 1987.
- Itinerary for trip to china, 1979?
- Consumer and Corporate Affairs: (copies)
- Letters Patent application to incorporate “The Bethune Foundation/La Fondation Bethune, Jan 14, 1977.
- Supplementary Letter Patent issued to “The Bethune Foundation/La Fondation Bethune, Nov 17, 1981.
- Poster—Norman Bethune: to mark the 46th year since his death, November 12, 1985.
- Poster—Royal Victoria Hospital, March 31, 1981. Dedication of Norman Bethune Plaque.
- Poster—Unemployment and People’s Health: A Public Meeting, November 13, ????.
- Poster—The Norman Bethune Foundation at Concordia Univ., Nov 12, 1987.
- President’s Report 840112
- Report on my visit to Japan, specifically the Department of Legal Medicine at the University of Osaka, Monday May 9th to Thursday 12th 1983.
- (pamphlet and letter format copies)
- Form—Donations to The Norman Bethune Foundation.
- Letter—From Squibb Canada Inc to Irene Kon, Oct 13, 1987.
- Letter—From The Embassy of the People’s Republic of China in Canada to Mrs. Kon, March 15, 1989.
- Letter—From Dr. Paul R. Barker, PhD. to Mme. Helene Joron, Secretary, April 23, 1991.
- Correspondence re: Celebrations Montreal proposal for a Bethune exhibit, 1991.
- Short essay—Bethune Foundation: Reflections from a newcomer, n.d.
- Facsimile cover page and letter—from Mrs. Kon to Dr. Pierre Delva re: proposal for exhibition “Norman Bethune – The Montreal Years 1928-1938 for Montreal Celebrations 350th Anniversary, Sept 23, 1991.
- Voting ballot—To all members of the Bethune Foundation regarding “scaling down” the operation or disbanding, Oct 12, 1992.
- Essay contest proposal—Norman Bethune Essay Contest, Montreal area schools, to commence September term 1989.
- “Two interpreters in China” by Hilary Russell, n.d..
- Minutes of the statutory meeting of the general membership held on: November 12, 1990; January 30, 1991; November 11, 1992,
- Letter (2)—From J. Tuzo Wilson to Irene Kon, Dec 23, 1992, May 19, 1992.
- Letter—from Hospital Shriners pour Enfants, Francis H. Glorieux, M.D., PhD. to Helene Joron.
- Letter—(handwritten) from Bill Gibson to “my dear friends,” May 92.

- Letter—(handwritten) from Maurice McGregor to Helene, 1/2/92.
- Letter—(handwritten) from? to Audree, 1984?
- By-Laws—The Bethune Foundation, n.d.
- Mock newspaper layout of “REDMOON,” May 1992.
- Newspaper published by The Bethune Foundation, summer 1992.
- Norman Bethune Foundation Newsletter:
 - No. 1, Summer 1983
 - No. 2, Spring 1984
 - No. 5, December 1985
 - No. 7, Fall 1986
 - No. 8, Spring 1987
 - No. 9, Fall 1987
 - No. 10, Spring 1989
- Miscellaneous magazine clipping, Nov, 1940.

Folder # 2.2 1.0cm

- Mackay Family—miscellaneous family letters and memorabilia, 1964-1991.
- Student pamphlet—Roots: a monthly publication of the young communist league at McGill, February 17 and March 16, 1966).

Folder # 2.3 0.3cm

Montreal Fashion Group, n.d.

Folder # 2.4 0.2cm

Letters regarding Irene Kon, magazine clippings

Folder # 2.5 2.0cm

Communist Party, Quebec—newsletters and pamphlets, ca. 2002.

Folder # 2.6 0.1cm

Roosevelt (Rosie) Douglas—newspaper articles and pamphlets, ca 1980s?

Folder # 2.7 0.1cm

Alfie Roberts—newspaper articles, misc, ca

Folder # 2.8 0.5cm

Jacalyn Duffrin—newspaper articles, personal letters to Irene Kon, published essays, ca. 1992-2001.

Folder # 2.9 2.5cm

Correspondence and articles regarding Bethune manuscript and movie, ca. 2001-2003.

- CV of Larry Warren Stephenson, MD.
- Correspondence between Larry Stephenson, Irene Kon, Donald Sutherland
- Stephenson’s Bethune manuscript (Two Petrels).

- Articles and essays
- Drafts of “Two Petrals” written by Stephenson regarding Bethune.

Folder # 2.10 1.0cm
Various pamphlets regarding Bethune and his legacy

- Folder # 2.11** 2.3cm
- Photocopy of letter written by Bethune, July 14, 1937 from S.S. Hamonic? Lake Superior
 - Miscellaneous
 - Newspaper clippings
 - Letters on Bethune
 - Poster—Norman Bethune College Annual Conference, March 1985.

- Folder # 2.12** 1.5cm
Bethune Memorial-Gravenhurst
- Bethune House, Gravenhurst, Ontario—unveiling of bronze statue
 - Press kit—The Norman Bethune Memorial House Opening, August 30, 1976. (inside booklet is a postcard sent to Irene Kon and a Bethune pamphlet in Chinese)
 - Newspaper articles
 - Essay contest outline in English and French
 - “Bethune: Past and Future” an essay by Larry Hannant
 - Invitation to Irene Kon from the Town of Gravenhurst for the unveiling of Bethune statue, May 12, 2000.
 - Invitation to 50th anniversary of Bethune’s death at Bethune Memorial House, March 3, 1989.
 - Poster—Bethune: his times and his Legacy, McGill University, Nov 15-18, 1976. (Film Program)
 - Map of Bethune’s Montreal
 - Letter—from Fred J Morgan to ??

- Folder # 2.13** 2.5cm
Bethune: Making of a Hero—Ted Allen
- Screen play of “The Making of a Hero.”
 - Letter—From “Syd and Rita” to Irene Kon, Nov 12, 1954.
 - Letter—From “Syd” Gordon to Louis Kon, Nov 24, 1954.
 - Letter—From Syd Gordon to Irene Kon about the screen play and the conflict regarding the content of the screenplay that ensued between Allen and Gordon, 1972. (Original and copy)
 - Various newspaper and magazine clippings regarding the making of the Bethune movie. Many clippings focus on the difficult nature of the film’s creation: technical and creative.