

University of British Columbia Library Rare Books and Special Collections

Finding Aid - Peggy Lee fonds (RBSC-ARC-1835)

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Peggy Lee fonds

Table of contents

Summary information	3
Administrative history / Biographical sketch	3
Scope and content	4
Arrangement	5
Notes	5
Access points	5
Series descriptions	6
, Entrepreneurship, investing, and business, 1941-2010	6
, Military service, 1942 - 2020	8
, Community and political activity, 1946 - 2015	9
, Personal records, 1946 - 2017	10
, Photographs, 1939 - 2020	11

Summary information

Repository:	University of British Columbia Library Rare Books and Special Collections
Title:	Peggy Lee fonds
Reference code:	RBSC-ARC-1835
Date:	1939-2020 (date of creation)
Physical description:	73.5 cm of textual records 90 cm of photographs and albums 5 plaques 3 medals 1 pin 1 audio reel 3 VHS tapes
Dates of creation, revision and deletion:	Finding aid created by Mya Ballin, April 2022.

Administrative history / Biographical sketch

Note

Peggy Lee (nee Wong) was born in 1923 in Prince Rupert, British Columbia. She was one of fourteen children of Chew and Lee Sze Wong. The family moved from Guangdong to Canada and Chew Wong was initially a railway worker before opening a grocery store in Prince George.

At fifteen, Lee moved to Vancouver to attend the Moler Hairdressing School. Two years later in 1941, she opened the Paris Beauty Salon in the Holden Building on East Hastings Street. This would be the first of a number of salons that Lee would own and operate.

In 1942, Lee joined the St. John's Women's Ambulance Corps, with whom she served until the end of World War II. Her platoon was comprised completely of Chinese Canadian women, of whom Lee was the youngest. Activities that Lee engaged in as part of her service included acting as a stretcher-bearer and assisting with planned precautionary blackouts of all city lights in Vancouver.

In 1951, Lee married William Henry Rees Lee. The couple raised four children, including a set of triplets. In the 1960s, Lee went into a partnership with a couple with whom she co-owned the Prince Eugene Salon, which eventually relocated to the Hotel Vancouver. Following her partners' departure from the area, Lee retained the location and opened the Peggy Lee Beauty Centre, which operated between 1972 and 1985. As part of her career, Lee was highly involved in the hairdressing community both locally and internationally. She served as an examiner and judge at various conventions and beauty pageants in the 70s and 80s and was a board member and Inspector for the Hairdressers Association of British Columbia (later the Cosmetologists' Association of British Columbia) in the 1990s. Lee officially retired in 2011.

Lee has been an avid investor in a variety of ventures throughout her life. Projects have included inventions such as a hovercraft boat and a glass-washing device, a hotel in Toronto and a nightclub in Las Vegas, a film, and several beauty product lines.

Lee has been an active member of the Chinese Canadian and veterans' communities in Vancouver, in particular through involvement with the Chinese Canadian Military Museum Society. She also was a founding member of the Vancouver Chinese Canadian Activity Centre (VCCAC). Lee also acted as a long-time board member for the VCCAC offshoot, the Chishaun Housing Society, which for many years operated the subsidized senior living facility Oakridge House in partnership with Shaughnessy Heights United Church. For her service to these communities, Lee has been the recipient of multiple awards and nominated for a British Columbia multicultural award in 2015.

In addition to community work, Lee was also actively involved in politics and served as a delegate for the Social Credit Party. She held a close relationship with Grace McCarthy and communicated with other politicians including William Bennett and William Van Der Zalm and Brian Mulroney.

Peggy Lee passed away in Vancouver, April 13, 2023 at the age of 99.

Scope and content

Fonds reflects Lee's professional career, investment ventures, engagement with political and social communities, and life with friends and family. It offers particular insight into the social aspects of Lee's life, as she kept many of the invitations, programs, and other ephemera relating to events that she attended because of her community involvement and philanthropy across all aspects of her life. In addition to a variety of textual records relating to her business ventures, volunteering, and military service, the fonds contains a significant number of photographs that were taken or otherwise collected by Lee and reflect the full range of her life's facets.

The fonds is divided into five series: Entrepreneurship, investing, and business; Military service; Community and political activity; Personal records; and Photographs.

The entrepreneurship, investing, and business records series relates to Lee's activities as a businesswoman and investor. Records in this series include financial and legal records, marketing materials, and certificates of recognition.

The military service records series relates to Lee's time in the ambulance corps and subsequent involvement with initiatives in support of veterans. Records include a limited number of original materials from Lee's period of service; correspondence and other records including meeting minutes and ephemera documenting Lee's involvement veterans' advocacy and recognition efforts.

The community and political activity records series relate to Lee's involvement in Chinese Canadian community projects and the Social Credit and Conservative parties of Canada. Records in this series include ephemera, correspondence, and meeting minutes that document her involvement with these groups.

The personal records series relates to Lee's travels as well as her life outside of her work and volunteer efforts. Records include correspondence, ephemera, and certificates.

The photographs series relates to a large number of photo albums and loose photographs that reflect all aspects of Lee's life.

Notes

Title notes

Immediate source of acquisition

Materials were donated by Lee's daughter, Deborah Rees Lee.

Arrangement

The records arrived in thematic groupings without original order, and have been arranged and described to reflect the intellectual order reflected in the above series, which in part preserved the themes proposed at the time of arrival. Where present, file names—some provided by Lee's daughter, Deborah—have been preserved. In order to retain original file titles, some files include a supplied title to accurately describe contents. Original order of the records within the files, if present, is retained. Due to the extensive number of photos in the fonds, in order to make the materials accessible, photographic material has been minimally processed.

Accruals

An additional accrual is expected.

Other notes

- **Publication status:** published

Access points

- Textual record (documentary form)
- Photographic material (documentary form)
- Business and commerce (subject)
- Chinese Canadian history (subject)
- Cultural groups (subject)
- Chinese (subject)
- Family and personal life (subject)
- Military (subject)
- Politics (subject)
- Women (subject)

Series descriptions

Entrepreneurship, investing, and business

Date: 1941-2010 (date of creation)

Scope and content:

This series consists of records that were created and received across Lee's life as a result of her business ventures and investments.

A significant portion of the records relate to her ownership the Paris Beauty and Peggy Lee Beauty Centre salons and her and partial ownership of the Prince Eugene salon. Records as well as her involvement with the Hairdressers Association of British Columbia, including when she served as a Board Member and Inspector between 1992 and 1998. In addition, there is also documentation of a variety of Lee's investments, including a detailed account of the financials for the beauty supply company King Island Clay.

Records consist of financial and legal records relating to Lee's investments; marketing and publicity materials for the Peggy Lee Beauty Centre and earlier salons; agendas, minutes, and correspondence relating to Lee's involvement with the Hairdressers Association of British Columbia as well as several competitions and pageants; and several awards and certificates of recognition that Lee received for her work.

Physical description: 38.5cm textual records

- 2 plaques
- 2 medals
- 1 audio reel
- 3 VHS tapes

Publication status:

published

File / item list

Ref code	Title	Dates	Access status	Container
RBSC-ARC-1835-01-01	File - Paris Beauty Salon [Ledger]	1941-1946		
RBSC-ARC-1835-01-02	File - [Beauty shops - marketing and correspondence]	1948-1981		
RBSC-ARC-1835-01-03	File - [Hairdressers Association of B.C.]	1948-2006		
RBSC-ARC-1835-01-04	File - [Hairdressing Certifications]	1966-2005		
RBSC-ARC-1835-01-05	File - [COPE Seminar on Salon Management]	1981		
RBSC-ARC-1835-01-06	File - [B.C. Board of Examiners in Hairdressing]	1985-1992		

RBSC-ARC-1835-01-07	File - [Hairdressing advocacy and service]	1988-1997
RBSC-ARC-1835-01-08	File - Hairdresser's Association of B.C. Recognition Plaque	1991
RBSC-ARC-1835-01-09	File - Hairdresser's Association of B.C. Recognition Plaque	1998
RBSC-ARC-1835-02-01	File - [Hair arts and sciences master judges awards]	1997-2001
RBSC-ARC-1835-02-01-AR-01	Item - Medal	1997-2001
RBSC-ARC-1835-02-01-AR-02	Item - Medal	1997-2001
RBSC-ARC-1835-02-02	File - [Hairdressing inspiration and newsclippings]	[before 2006]
RBSC-ARC-1835-08-01	File - [Photographs from Hairdressing inspiration and newsclippings]	[before 2006]
RBSC-ARC-1835-02-03	File - [State board exam materials]	[before 2006]
RBSC-ARC-1835-02-04	File - Pussy Cat a Go Go Night Club [Press Clippings]	1964-1965
RBSC-ARC-1835-02-05	File - Pussy Cat a Go Go Night Club [Accounts & Legal Records]	1964-1965
RBSC-ARC-1835-02-06	File - Hovercraft Venture	1969-1970
RBSC-ARC-1835-02-07	File - [London Lines]	1971-1973
RBSC-ARC-1835-02-08	File - Goodco Int'l LTD	1973-1986
RBSC-ARC-1835-02-08-SPSR-01	Item - Audio Reel	1973-1986
RBSC-ARC-1835-02-09	File - [Goodman 10 report and other venture notes]	1974-1982
RBSC-ARC-1835-02-10	File - Roanoake Mine Investment?	1978-1986
RBSC-ARC-1835-03-01	File - [Pro-pulse Mineral Jig financing proposal]	1986
RBSC-ARC-1835-03-02	File - [King Island Clay records]	1986-1988
RBSC-ARC-1835-03-03	File - [King Island Clay sales pitch materials]	ca. 1985
RBSC-ARC-1835-07-02	File - [King Island Clay scrapbook]	ca. 1985
RBSC-ARC-1835-03-05	File - King Island Clay extended trial balance - rough!	1986-1987
RBSC-ARC-1835-07-03	File - [King Island Clay cash book]	1986-1987
RBSC-ARC-1835-03-07	File - King Island Clay balance sheets	1987
RBSC-ARC-1835-03-08	File - King Island Clay Inc. month end accounting file	1987

RBSC-ARC-1835-03-09	File - King Island Clay accounting file	1987
RBSC-ARC-1835-03-10	File - [Mafia Fragrances business investment proposal]	1989
RBSC-ARC-1835-03-11	File - [Dragon's Bride Business Plan]	1992
RBSC-ARC-1835-03-12	File - Golden-Lotus Films Inc. presents	ca. 1994
RBSC-ARC-1835-08-05	File - [Photograph from Golden-Lotus Films Inc. presents]	ca. 1994
RBSC-ARC-1835-03-13	File - [Dragon's Bride Manuscript]	1995
RBSC-ARC-1835-03-14	File - Kelp Supplements and Skincare	2001-2007
RBSC-ARC-1835-08-06	File - [Photographs from Kelp Supplements and Skincare]	[between 2001 and 2007]
RBSC-ARC-1835-03-15	File - Megakelp Advertising Materials	[200-?]
RBSC-ARC-1835-03-15-SPVT-02	Item - VHS	[200-?]
RBSC-ARC-1835-03-15-SPVT-03	Item - VHS	[200-?]
RBSC-ARC-1835-03-16	File - Other inventions/investments	1987-2007

Military service

Date: 1942 - 2020 (date of creation)

Scope and content:

This series consists of records that were created and received throughout Lee's life that relate to her service in the St. John's Women's Ambulance Corps.

Records include original materials from Lee's period of service such as her registration card and her copy of the elementary drill manual. The majority of this series is records relating to the commemoration and recognition of World War II and its veterans and Lee's involvement in organizing to make such events happen. These records include correspondence and ephemera relating to her participation in Canada's Memory Project; meeting minutes and ephemera documenting Lee's involvement with the ANAVETS Pacific unit 280 and Chinese Canadian Military Museum Society groups; and several awards and certificates of recognition that Lee received for her service.

Physical description: 10cm of textual records

1 plaque

1 pin

Publication status:

published

File / item list				
Ref code	Title	Dates	Access status	Container
RBSC-ARC-1835-04-01	File - [Women's ambulance corps appointment certification card]	1942		
RBSC-ARC-1835-04-02	File - [Elementary Drill Manual]	1942		
RBSC-ARC-1835-04-03	File - Memory project	1942-2015		
RBSC-ARC-1835-04-04	File - [ANAVETS Pacific unit 280 and Chinese Canadian Military Museum Society Records]	1988-2016 [2000-2016 predominant]		
RBSC-ARC-1835-04-05	File - [Chinese Canadian Military Museum Society Ephemera]	2000-2018		
RBSC-ARC-1835-04-06	File - ANAVETS Pacific unit 280 and Chinese Canadian Military Museum Society Service Plaque	2013		
RBSC-ARC-1835-04-07	File - WWII Commemorative Events, Ephemera, Clippings	1994-2015		
RBSC-ARC-1835-04-08	File - [Military Service Recognitions]	2007-2020		
RBSC-ARC-1835-04-08-AR-03	Item - Pin	2007-2020		

Community and political activity

Date: 1946 - 2015 (date of creation)

Scope and content:

This series consists of records that were created and received predominantly after the late 1970s that reflect Lee's involvement with the Social Credit and Conservative parties of Canada as well as her work to organize as part of the Chinese Canadian community in Vancouver.

Records in this series include ephemera collected by Lee from events that she was invited to and attended as a result of her political and community involvement; correspondence between Lee and the politicians that she volunteered for and lobbied; meeting minutes and correspondence from her work with the Vancouver Chinese Canadian Activity Centre and its subsidiary groups, the Chishaun Housing Society and Plum Blossom Childcare Society; and several awards and certificates of recognition that Lee received for her contributions.

Physical description: 12cm of textual records

2 plaques

Publication status:

published

File / item list				
Ref code	Title	Dates	Access status	Container
RBSC-ARC-1835-04-09	File - [Vancouver Chinese Canadian Activity Centre records]	1979-2010		

RBSC-ARC-1835-04-10	File - Chinese Activity Centre	2008-2010
RBSC-ARC-1835-04-11	File - Chinese Canadian Activity Centre Testimonial Plaque	1984
RBSC-ARC-1835-05-01	File - Raymond Rogers - University College [Chishaun Housing Society]	1984-1986
RBSC-ARC-1835-05-02	File - Plum Blossom [Child Care Society]	1984-1989
RBSC-ARC-1835-05-03	File - Chinese Canadian Community Service Association Historical Contribution Award	2017
RBSC-ARC-1835-05-04	File - [Chinese Canadian history - commemorative events ephemera, clippings]	1978-2013
RBSC-ARC-1835-05-05	File - [Politicians - Correspondence, invitations, ephemera]	1978-2015
RBSC-ARC-1835-05-06	File - [William R. Bennett]	1976-1986
RBSC-ARC-1835-05-07	File - [Grace McCarthy]	1978-2017
RBSC-ARC-1835-05-08	File - [William Van Der Zalm]	1984-2010
RBSC-ARC-1835-05-09	File - [Brian Mulroney]	1985-1987
RBSC-ARC-1835-05-10	File - [Political Involvement and Recognitions]	1985-2015
RBSC-ARC-1835-05-11	File - [International Electrical Engineers Annual Convention]	1985
RBSC-ARC-1835-05-12	File - Queen of the Americas Pageants	1988
RBSC-ARC-1835-05-13	File - [Philanthropic and social events - ephemera]	1946-1998

Personal records

Date: 1946 - 2017 (date of creation)

Scope and content:

Series consists of records related to Lee's personal life outside of work and advocacy.

Many of the records pertain to trips that Lee took later in life, including a return trip to Prince Rupert in 2000 and a trip to Beijing as part of the First International Chongyang Festival, which was an event to celebrate the lives of seniors from across the world, in 2009. In addition to these materials, records also include correspondence and ephemera from family and friends; records of personal financial commitments; and excerpts from diaries or accounts penned by Lee in various periods of her life, including her early life in Prince Rupert and the medical history of her triplets in the year after they were born.

Physical description: 13cm textual records

Publication status:

published

File / item list				
Ref code	Title	Dates	Access status	Container
RBSC-ARC-1835-05-14	File - [Donation and Sponsorship certificates]	1984-2016		
RBSC-ARC-1835-06-01	File - [Account of early experiences (1923-1929)]	2003		
RBSC-ARC-1835-06-02	File - Mom's diary of triplets medical history	1955-1956		
RBSC-ARC-1835-06-03	File - [Landmark Projects Correspondence]	1977		
RBSC-ARC-1835-06-04	File - [Prince Rupert - clippings, correspondence, return trip]	1998-2000		
RBSC-ARC-1835-06-05	File - [Travel correspondence, ephemera]	before 2000		
RBSC-ARC-1835-06-06	File - Postcard collection	1948-2010		
RBSC-ARC-1835-06-07	File - [Travel - First International Chongyang Festival]	2009		
RBSC-ARC-1835-06-07-AR-04	Item - Medal	2009		
RBSC-ARC-1835-06-08	File - Re: Mom's 90th birthday at RVYC	2013		
RBSC-ARC-1835-06-09	File - [Lifetime recognitions]	2014-2015		
RBSC-ARC-1835-06-10	File - [Saved quotes, correspondence, and magazines]	[before 2020]		

Photographs

Date: 1939 - 2020 (date of creation)

Scope and content:

This series collects albums that created by Lee throughout her life. The albums are primarily thematic in nature and reflect Lee's connections to political and community groups, her hairdressing career, and her personal life with her family and friends.

In addition to photos of Lee herself, there are many photographs that feature her triplets; politicians and celebrities that Lee encountered throughout her life including Grace McCarthy, Bill Van Der Zalm, and their families; and members of the Chinese Canadian Military Museum Society and Vancouver Chinese Canadian Activity Centre groups.

Physical description: 90cm of photographs and albums

Publication status:

published

File / item list				
Ref code	Title	Dates	Access status	Container
RBSC-ARC-1835-08-14	File - [Wong family portraits]	[before 1940]		

RBSC-ARC-1835-08-15	File - Peggy at 16 [early portrait photos]	1939
RBSC-ARC-1835-08-16	File - [Vancouver Sun Women's Press Club Dinner - Photographs]	June 22, 1949
RBSC-ARC-1835-08-17	File - Emma + John + Me [Photos]	[before 1950]
RBSC-ARC-1835-08-18	File - Mom - very early b&w photos	[before 1950]
RBSC-ARC-1835-08-19	File - [Peggy and William Portrait Session]	[195-?]
RBSC-ARC-1835-07-04	File - Our Wedding [Photo Album]	November 1951
RBSC-ARC-1835-07-05	File - [Additional Wedding Photos]	November 1951
RBSC-ARC-1835-08-20	File - [Music of the Nations album page]	1952
RBSC-ARC-1835-07-06	File - Our Baby's [scrapbook]	[ca. 1955]
RBSC-ARC-1835-08-21	File - [Kids foldout portrait sleeve]	[ca. 1956]
RBSC-ARC-1835-08-22	File - Old B/W photos of Mom's sisters, brothers, friends	[before 1960?]
RBSC-ARC-1835-09-01	File - Early New York trip w aunt Betty	[before 1960?]
RBSC-ARC-1835-07-07	File - [Large kids portrait]	[before 1960?]
RBSC-ARC-1835-09-02	File - [Chinese opera performance and Moon festival parade photos]	1959-1960
RBSC-ARC-1835-09-03	File - Mom's friends, as bridesmaid, etc. [Photographs]	1940-1960
RBSC-ARC-1835-09-04	File - [Polaroid albums of kids]	1955-1961
RBSC-ARC-1835-09-05	File - Colin baby photos	[before 1962]
RBSC-ARC-1835-09-06	File - Mom's around the world trip with Lila Chen & Sister [Photo Album]	1967
RBSC-ARC-1835-09-07	File - [Kids' school photographs]	1960-1968
RBSC-ARC-1835-09-08	File - [Kids portrait album]	[196-]
RBSC-ARC-1835-09-09	File - [1960s Family photo album]	[196-]
RBSC-ARC-1835-09-10	File - [Family trip polaroids]	[196-]
RBSC-ARC-1835-09-11	File - [Family Polaroid album]	before 1970
RBSC-ARC-1835-09-12	File - [Photos with Grace McCarthy, politicians]	[after 1970]
RBSC-ARC-1835-09-13	File - [Fishing trips]	ca. 1973
RBSC-ARC-1835-09-14	File - [Loose photo album page - social events]	ca. 1974
RBSC-ARC-1835-10-01	File - [Triplets press coverage album]	[before 1975]

RBSC-ARC-1835-10-02	File - [Celebrity Headshots, autographs]	[before 1980]
RBSC-ARC-1835-10-03	File - [Mining project photographs and album sheets]	ca. 1982
RBSC-ARC-1835-10-04	File - [Grace McCarthy, Bill Van Der Zalm Album]	1971-1987
RBSC-ARC-1835-10-05	File - [Travel, social, and political events album]	1982-1987
RBSC-ARC-1835-10-06	File - [Tinie Dueck photos and correspondence]	1976-1988
RBSC-ARC-1835-10-07	File - Chi Lin Palace [photos]	[198-?]
RBSC-ARC-1835-10-08	File - All Destinations [photos]	[198-?]
RBSC-ARC-1835-10-09	File - Hairdressing photos [album]	1972-1992
RBSC-ARC-1835-10-10	File - Going away party [photos]	[ca. 1997]
RBSC-ARC-1835-10-11	File - [???] and Pegs trip by car	1997
RBSC-ARC-1835-10-12	File - [Rudi and Faye Weber [photos and correspondence]	1961-1997
RBSC-ARC-1835-11-01	File - Mom's beauty center [album]	1977-1998
RBSC-ARC-1835-11-02	File - Re beauty business etc. [Photographs]	1991-1999
RBSC-ARC-1835-11-03	File - [Souvenir travel photo album]	before 2000
RBSC-ARC-1835-11-04	File - Rupert Homecoming [Photographs]	2000
RBSC-ARC-1835-11-05	File - [Hairdressing and pageants album]	1965-2001
RBSC-ARC-1835-11-06	File - [Las Vegas Trip Photos]	[ca. 2001]
RBSC-ARC-1835-11-07	File - Peter + Daniel + Friends [photos]	2002
RBSC-ARC-1835-11-08	File - [Album of family, friends, kids]	1992-2003
RBSC-ARC-1835-11-09	File - [Kerri and family photos, correspondence]	1995-2003
RBSC-ARC-1835-11-10	File - Pegs BBQ [photos]	[2003?]
RBSC-ARC-1835-11-11	File - Grace McCarthy + Politicians [Album]	1977-2005
RBSC-ARC-1835-12-01	File - [Timothy and Brian photos and correspondence]	2000-2006
RBSC-ARC-1835-12-02	File - [Oakridge House event photos]	2003-2008
RBSC-ARC-1835-12-03	File - [Chinese Canadian community events, fundraisers album]	1992-2009
RBSC-ARC-1835-12-04	File - [First International Chongyang Festival photo album]	2009
RBSC-ARC-1835-13-01	File - Military museum, etc. WWII Veteran events/photos	2001-2013

RBSC- ARC-1835-13-02	File - [Photos with family, friends]	[before 2014]
RBSC- ARC-1835-13-03	File - [Unidentified charity event photographs]	[after 2000?]
RBSC- ARC-1835-13-04	File - [Negatives, slides, single photographs]	[before 2000?]
RBSC- ARC-1835-14-01	File - [First International Chongyang Festival Group Photo]	2009