

University of British Columbia Library Rare Books and Special Collections

Finding Aid - Ron Johnson fonds (RBSC-ARC-1829)

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Ron Johnson fonds

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Summary information

Repository:	University of British Columbia Library Rare Books and Special Collections
Title:	Ron Johnson fonds
Reference code:	RBSC-ARC-1829
Date:	1956-1988 (date of creation)
Physical description:	1.12 m of textual records and other materials
Dates of creation, revision and deletion:	Finding aid produced by Catherine Hall, December 2021
Note [generalNote]:	Includes the following photographs: RBSC-ARC-1829-PH-01 to 39

Administrative history / Biographical sketch

Note

Ron Johnson was born in Vancouver, British Columbia on September 30, 1951 and grew up in Burnaby. He graduated from Burnaby Central High School in 1969 and from the B.C. Institute of Technology in 1971 with a Diploma of Technology in Broadcast Communications.

Johnson first joined the New Democratic Party (NDP) in 1968, serving as the President, New Westminster and East Burnaby Young New Democrats, and volunteering on the New Westminster Federal NDP campaign of Clive Lytle. In 1969 he volunteered on the New Westminster NDP and Burnaby-Edmonds campaigns and served as a Young New Democrats delegate to the British Columbia NDP leadership convention. In 1970, he became President of the B.C. Young New Democrats, and served as Chairman, Labour Policy Committee at the 1973 Provincial NDP convention. Johnson volunteered on numerous NDP campaigns throughout the 1960s and 1970s.

Johnson ran for election as the NDP candidate for Federal Member of Parliament in the riding of Vancouver Centre in 1972, 1974, 1979 and 1980. Although defeated each time, the 1980 race was the closest when he came in second with 31.77 percent of the vote to Progressive Conservative candidate Pat Carney's 35.77 percent. In 1986, Johnson also ran for election as the NDP Provincial candidate for the riding of Burnaby-Edmonds, losing a close race with 46.57 percent of the vote to Social Credit candidate David Mercier's 48.23 percent.

Johnson served as Communications Director for the B.C. Federation of Labour in the 1970s and for the B.C. Provincial Council of Carpenters in the 1980s. In 1984, he served as Chair, for the B.C. NDP federal campaign committee. Johnson served as a volunteer at the Socialist International Congress held in Vancouver in 1987. In the mid-1980s Johnson served as the Chair of the Federal NDP Resolutions Committee and a member of the International Affairs Committee. In 1988, he coordinated the NDP federal election campaign in British Columbia, which resulted in the election of 19 NDP Members of Parliament. In 1991, Johnson served as Communications Director for the B.C. NDP's successful provincial campaign.

In 1992, Johnson founded the NOW Communications Group as a Vancouver-based advertising agency specializing in social marketing, union and public policy advocacy, and political campaigns across Canada. His firm handled several B.C. government accounts in the 1990s, including those of the B.C. Ministry of Health, B.C. Ministry of Education and B.C. Ministry of Finance. In addition to NDP clients across Canada, NOW Communications provided services to many unions in Western Canada and Ontario, notably the B.C. Teachers' Federation, B.C. Hospital Employees Union, Manitoba Teachers' Union, Manitoba Government Employees' Union, Elementary Teachers of Ontario.

From 1990 to 2011, Johnson's campaign communications and strategy work contributed to eight NDP provincial election victories in four provinces including British Columbia Premiers Mike Harcourt and Glen Clark, Saskatchewan Premier Lorne Calvert, Manitoba Premiers Gary Doer and Greg Sellinger and Nova Scotia Premier Darrell Dexter. Johnson served as a key strategist on early campaigns for federal NDP leader Jack Layton, and was part of the Working Families campaign that helped defeat Conservative Premier Ernie Eves in Ontario. Many of the television advertisements from these campaigns won Gold "Pollie" Awards for excellence from the American Association of Political Consultants, which recognize leaders, innovators and exceptional work within the political communications and public affairs industries.

Johnson retired in 2009, but remains active as a volunteer campaign strategist and political activist having been awarded Honourary Life Membership in the B.C. NDP. From 2006 to 2014, Johnson served as Vice President of the International Association of Political Consultants. Since 2016, he has served as a volunteer sponsorship coordinator for the Vancouver South Africa Film Festival, which aims to present Vancouver audiences with feature films and documentaries that explore the culture, history and contemporary issues of South Africa.

Johnson resides in Vancouver, with his wife, Johanna den Hertog.

Scope and content

The fonds reflects Ron Johnson's involvement with the New Democratic Party (NDP) predominantly from the late 1960s to the late 1980s. Records include materials related to Johnson's service as President of the British Columbia Young New Democrats in 1970 and his own campaigns running as the NDP candidate for Federal Member of Parliament in the riding of Vancouver Centre in the 1970s. Records also include his collection of campaign and labour ephemera, predominantly from the 1960s and 1970s, and materials representing Johnson's communications and strategy work on numerous political campaigns from the 1960s through the 1980s.

The fonds is divided into four series: B.C. Young New Democrats, Vancouver Centre Campaigns, Collected Campaign and Labour Ephemera, and Communications and Strategy Work.

Records consist of newspaper clippings, minutes, agendas, press releases, convention materials, publications, policy documents, correspondence, membership lists, photographs, campaign brochures, campaign buttons, campaign ribbons, name badges, drafts of speeches, labour and politics pamphlets, campaign posters, matchbooks, a plastic canvassers kit, bumper stickers, conference materials and the like.

Notes

Title notes

- **Source of title proper:** Title based on the contents of the fonds

Immediate source of acquisition

All records were donated by Ron Johnson.

Arrangement

The fonds was arranged by the archivists generally following the creator's arrangement.

Other notes

- **Publication status:** published
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Access points

- British Columbia Young New Democrats (subject)
 - New Democratic Party (subject)
 - New Democratic Party of British Columbia (subject)
 - Children and youth (subject)
 - Politics (subject)
-

Series descriptions

B.C. Young New Democrats

Date: 1961-[1979] (date of creation)

Scope and content:

Series consists of records related to Johnson's membership in the British Columbia Young New Democrats and his service as President of the organization in 1970.

Records consist of newspaper clippings, minutes, agendas, press releases, convention materials, publications, policy documents, correspondence and membership lists.

Physical description: 20 cm of textual records

Publication status:

published				
File / item list				
Ref code	Title	Dates	Access status	Container
RBSC-ARC-1829-01-01	File - [Newspaper clippings - BC YND]	1970-1971		
RBSC-ARC-1829-01-02	File - B.C. YND Minutes & Agendas, Assorted	1969-1972		
RBSC-ARC-1829-01-03	File - [Forward - official publication of the BC YND]	[1968?] - 1970		
RBSC-ARC-1829-01-04	File - BC YND Press Releases by Ron Johnson	1969-1974		
RBSC-ARC-1829-01-05	File - Education Chairman's Important Documents	1969-1970		
RBSC-ARC-1829-01-06	File - British Columbia Young New Democrats Eighth Annual Convention	1968		
RBSC-ARC-1829-01-07	File - [B.C. Young New Democrats - Forward]	1972		
RBSC-ARC-1829-01-08	File - [UBC NDP Journal]	1970		
RBSC-ARC-1829-01-09	File - [B.C. Young New Democrats Policy - 1961 to 1970]	1961-1970		
RBSC-ARC-1829-01-10	File - [B.C. Young New Democrats Convention '74]	1974		
RBSC-ARC-1829-01-11	File - [BC YND - executive materials]	1971-1973		
RBSC-ARC-1829-01-12	File - [British Columbia Young New Democrats Convention '75]	1975		
RBSC-ARC-1829-01-13	File - Youth for New Democracy [-B.C. Young New Democrats 10th Annual Convention]	1970		
RBSC-ARC-1829-01-14	File - New West YND	1964-1970		
RBSC-ARC-1829-01-15	File - [British Columbia Young New Democrats Committee Lists]	[1970s]		
RBSC-ARC-1829-01-16	File - [Minutes of the 12th Annual Convention of the BC NYD]	1973		
RBSC-ARC-1829-01-17	File - [NDPBC Youth Quarterly Membership List]	1972		
RBSC-ARC-1829-01-18	File - YND Policy	1970		
RBSC-ARC-1829-01-19	File - [B.C. YND Materials]	1969-1973		
RBSC-ARC-1829-02-01	File - [YND Convention - 1969]	1969		
RBSC-ARC-1829-02-02	File - Ron Johnson - YND Executive	1970		
RBSC-ARC-1829-02-03	File - [B.C. Young New Democrats Policy]	1961-1973		
RBSC-ARC-1829-02-04	File - Minutes of Planning Meeting, 8 March 1973, Provincial Office	1973		
Vancouver Centre Campaigns				

Date: [1972]-1978 (date of creation)

Scope and content:

Series consists of records related to Johnson's own campaigns running as the NDP candidate for Federal Member of Parliament in the riding of Vancouver Centre. Materials in the series are predominantly related to his 1972 and 1974 campaigns.

Records consist of minutes, correspondence, photographs, campaign brochures, campaign buttons, campaign ribbons, name badges, newspaper clippings, and drafts of speeches.

Physical description: 6 cm textual records and other materials

Note:

Includes the following photographs: RBSC-ARC-1829-PH-1 to 32

Publication status:

published

Physical description:

6 cm textual records 32 photographs: b&w 4 name tags 3 campaign buttons 1 ribbon

File / item list

Ref code	Title	Dates	Access status	Container
RBSC-ARC-1829-02-05	File - Van Centre Fed. 72 & 74 (1 of 2)	[1972-1974]		
RBSC-ARC-1829-02-05-PH-01-07	Item - Contact sheets	[1972-1974]		
RBSC-ARC-1829-02-05-PH-08-25	Item - Photographs	[1972-1974]		
RBSC-ARC-1829-02-05-PH-26-31	Item - Negative strip	[1972-1974]		
RBSC-ARC-1829-02-05-AR-01	Item - Campaign button - I'm for Dennis Cocke NDP	[1972-1974]		
RBSC-ARC-1829-02-05-AR-02	Item - NDP Convention name tag with 'Committee' ribbon - Ottawa 1971 Ron Johnson, Harney Scrutineer	[1972-1974]		
RBSC-ARC-1829-02-05-AR-03	Item - Campaign button - I'm for Lorimer New Democrat	[1972-1974]		
RBSC-ARC-1829-02-05-AR-04	Item - NDP Convention name tag - Ottawa 1971 Ron Johnson, New Westminster YND Delegate No. 1065	[1972-1974]		
RBSC-ARC-1829-02-05-AR-05	Item - Campaign button - Support Party Policy Johnson	[1972-1974]		

RBSC- ARC-1829-02-05- AR-06	Item - NDP Convention name tag with 'Delegate ribbon' - Vancouver 1973 Ron Johnson, Vancouver-Centre Delegate No. 2369	[1972-1974]
RBSC- ARC-1829-02-05- AR-07	Item - Eighth Annual Convention NDP of B.C. name tag - Ron Johnson, Burnaby-Edmonds	[1972-1974]
RBSC- ARC-1829-02-06	File - Van Centre Fed. 72 & 74 (2 of 2)	[1972-1974]
RBSC- ARC-1829-02-07	File - Election File	1973-1977
RBSC- ARC-1829-02-07- AR-08	Item - Delegate' ribbon	1973-1977
RBSC- ARC-1829-02-07- PH-32	Item - Photograph	1973-1977
RBSC- ARC-1829-02-08	File - R. Johnson Burrard Nomination 1975	1975
RBSC- ARC-1829-02-09	File - [Vancouver Centre Federal Pre- Election Planning Committee meeting minutes]	1978
RBSC- ARC-1829-02-10	File - [Declaration of Principles in Seeking the Nomination of the Vancouver Centre Federal New Democratic Party]	1977

Collected Campaign and Labour Ephemera

Date: 1956-1982 (date of creation)

Scope and content:

Series consists of Johnson's collection of campaign and labour relations ephemera from the 1960s through the 1980s. Materials also include documents related to the Socialist International Congress and the International Council of Social Democratic Women, both held in Vancouver, B.C. in 1978. Records consist of campaign brochures, newspaper clippings, labour and politics pamphlets, campaign posters, name badges, matchbooks, a plastic canvassers kit, publications, policy documents, conference materials and the like.

Physical description: 31 cm textual records and other materials

Publication status:

published

Physical description:

31 cm textual records 2 campaign matchbooks 1 name tag 1 campaign sticker 1 plastic campaign canvassers kit

File / item list

Ref code	Title	Dates	Access status	Container
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RBSC-ARC-1829-02-11	File - [Campaign ephemera] (1 of 8)	1966-1980
RBSC-ARC-1829-02-12	File - [Campaign ephemera] (2 of 8)	1966-1980
RBSC-ARC-1829-02-12-AR-09	Item - Plastic canvassers kit	1966-1980
RBSC-ARC-1829-02-13	File - [Campaign ephemera] (3 of 8)	1966-1980
RBSC-ARC-1829-02-14	File - [Campaign ephemera] (4 of 8)	1966-1980
RBSC-ARC-1829-03-01	File - [Campaign ephemera] (5 of 8)	1966-1980
RBSC-ARC-1829-03-02	File - [Campaign ephemera] (6 of 8)	1966-1980
RBSC-ARC-1829-03-03	File - [Campaign ephemera] (7 of 8)	1966-1980
RBSC-ARC-1829-03-04	File - [Campaign ephemera] (8 of 8)	1966-1980
RBSC-ARC-1829-03-04-AR-10	Item - Annual Convention NDP of B.C. name tag Ron Johnson, Provincial Executive	1966-1980
RBSC-ARC-1829-03-04-AR-11	Item - Tommy Douglas campaign matchbook	1966-1980
RBSC-ARC-1829-03-04-AR-12	Item - Tommy Douglas campaign matchbook	1966-1980
RBSC-ARC-1829-03-04-AR-13	Item - Stamp Out Injunctions sticker	1966-1980
RBSC-ARC-1829-03-05	File - Prov. Byelection 1972-1976	1972-1976
RBSC-ARC-1829-03-06	File - Federal '74	1974
RBSC-ARC-1829-03-07	File - Federal '72	1972
RBSC-ARC-1829-03-08	File - Prov. '72	1972
RBSC-ARC-1829-03-09	File - Prov. '69	1969
RBSC-ARC-1829-03-10	File - TDC [Tommy Douglas] '69	1969
RBSC-ARC-1829-03-11	File - Federal '68	1968
RBSC-ARC-1829-03-12	File - Central Leaflets	1969-1974
RBSC-ARC-1829-03-13	File - Out-of-Prov.	1965-1975
RBSC-ARC-1829-03-14	File - Civic	[1970s]
RBSC-ARC-1829-03-15	File - Misc. [campaign materials]	1973-1975

RBSC-ARC-1829-03-16	File - [Campaign brochures]	1968-1980
RBSC-ARC-1829-03-17	File - [B.C .NDP Policies and Constitution]	1961-1978
RBSC-ARC-1829-03-18	File - [Labour and politics pamphlets]	1956-[1970s]
RBSC-ARC-1829-04-01	File - [Woman's rights pamphlets]	[1970s]
RBSC-ARC-1829-04-02	File - Socialist International Congress Nov. 3rd-5th 1978, Vancouver, B.C. [1 of 3]	1978
RBSC-ARC-1829-04-03	File - Socialist International Congress Nov. 3rd-5th 1978, Vancouver, B.C. [2 of 3]	1978
RBSC-ARC-1829-04-04	File - Socialist International Congress Nov. 3rd-5th 1978, Vancouver, B.C. [3 of 3]	1978
RBSC-ARC-1829-04-05	File - International Council of Social Democratic Women Oct. 31st-Nov. 1st, 1978, Vancouver, B.C.	1978
RBSC-ARC-1829-04-06	File - [Socialist Party of Austria - draft speech and pamphlets]	1982

Communications and Strategy Work

Creator: Johnson, Ron

Date: 1965-1988 (date of creation)

Scope and content:

Series consists of records related to Johnson's communications and strategy work on numerous political campaigns from the 1960s through the 1980s, including Johnson's service on the 1985-86 B.C. NDP Election Planning Committee.

Records consist of campaign brochures, bumper stickers, buttons, name badges, photographs, agendas, minutes, policy documents, newspaper clippings, drafts of speeches, press releases, correspondence, polling data and the like.

Physical description: 55 cm textual records and other materials

Note:

Includes the following photographs: RBSC-ARC-1829-PH33 to 39

Publication status:

published

Physical description:

55 cm textual records 7 photographs: b&w 5 campaign buttons 1 campaign keychain 1 ribbon

File / item list				
Ref code	Title	Dates	Access status	Container
RBSC-ARC-1829-04-07	File - [Various election materials - primarily NDP Civic - Vancouver 1972]	1972-1976		
RBSC-ARC-1829-04-08	File - [Colin] Gabelman	1975		
RBSC-ARC-1829-04-09	File - [Colin] Gabelman - North Island Nomination	1979		
RBSC-ARC-1829-04-10	File - [John] Harney	1975		
RBSC-ARC-1829-04-10-PH-33-37	Item - Photographs of John Harney	1975		
RBSC-ARC-1829-04-11	File - [Lorne Nystrom]	1975		
RBSC-ARC-1829-04-12	File - [Ed] Broadbent	1975		
RBSC-ARC-1829-05-01	File - [Rosemary] Brown	1975		
RBSC-ARC-1829-05-02	File - John Harney 1971	1970-1975, predominant 1971		
RBSC-ARC-1829-05-03	File - [NDP Ontario]	1971		
RBSC-ARC-1829-05-04	File - Frank Howard Campaign	1970		
RBSC-ARC-1829-05-05	File - [David Lewis Campaign]	1971		
RBSC-ARC-1829-05-06	File - Rolled Campaign Envelope	1971		
RBSC-ARC-1829-06-01	File - Ed Broadbent Campaign	1971		
RBSC-ARC-1829-06-02	File - John Harney Campaign	1970-1971		
RBSC-ARC-1829-06-03	File - B.C. Election 1972 - Nanaimo	1972-1974, predominantly 1972		
RBSC-ARC-1829-06-04	File - Dave Barrett B.C. Leadership 1969 & John Conway & Bob Williams	1969		
RBSC-ARC-1829-06-04-AR-14	Item - Ribbon - Barrett	1969		
RBSC-ARC-1829-06-04-AR-15	Item - Campaign button - Dave Barrett is Our Man	1969		
RBSC-ARC-1829-06-04-AR-16	Item - Keychain - Bob Williams	1969		
RBSC-ARC-1829-06-05	File - Tom Berger B.C. Leadership - 1969	1969		
RBSC-ARC-1829-06-05-AR-17	Item - Campaign button - Look ahead: Berger	1969		

RBSC-ARC-1829-06-05-AR-18	Item - Campaign button - Look ahead: Berger	1969
RBSC-ARC-1829-06-05-AR-19	Item - Campaign button - Look ahead: Berger	1969
RBSC-ARC-1829-06-05-AR-20	Item - Campaign button - Berger	1969
RBSC-ARC-1829-06-06	File - NDP BC 1972	1972
RBSC-ARC-1829-06-07	File - Johnson, Ron Poll 58 O.S. NDP New West. Clive Little June 25, 1968 Federal	1968
RBSC-ARC-1829-06-08	File - N.D.P. Federal Election 1965	1965
RBSC-ARC-1829-06-09	File - Misc. 1986 Prov EPC Material	1985-1986
RBSC-ARC-1829-06-10	File - 1985-86 B.C. NDP EPC Polling Data	1985
RBSC-ARC-1829-06-11	File - [Labour issues]	1986
RBSC-ARC-1829-07-01	File - [Credentials Presentation to the New Democratic Party of British Columbia August 1986]	1986
RBSC-ARC-1829-07-02	File - [Election Planning Committee - agendas, minutes, notes]	1986
RBSC-ARC-1829-07-03	File - 1985-86 BC NDP EPC - Communications Committee (1 of 2)	1985-1986
RBSC-ARC-1829-07-04	File - 1985-86 BC NDP EPC - Communications Committee (2 of 2)	1985-1986
RBSC-ARC-1829-07-05	File - 1985-86 BC NDP Election Planning Committee (1 of 2)	1985-1986
RBSC-ARC-1829-07-06	File - 1985-86 BC NDP Election Planning Committee (2 of 2)	1985-1986
RBSC-ARC-1829-07-07	File - [BC NDP Media Committee]	1986
RBSC-ARC-1829-07-08	File - [Trade: Securing Canada's Future]	1988
RBSC-ARC-1829-07-09	File - 1985-86 Sign/Design Group - BC NDP EPC Communications Committee	1985-1986
RBSC-ARC-1829-07-10	File - 1985-86 Candidates Support Group - BC NDP EPC Communications Committee	1985-1986
RBSC-ARC-1829-07-11	File - Photo-Ron-Campaign	[1970s]
RBSC-ARC-1829-07-11-PH-38 to 39	Item - Photographs	[1970s]