Administrative history
The first YMCA—the Young Men’s Christian Association—was founded in London, England in 1844 by George Williams, age 23. It was a religious (Evangelical Protestant) movement for young men who had left their families and migrated from outlying areas to jobs in London. Its goal was their character development. It provided fellowship and opportunities for constructive use of leisure time.

At the world’s fair that took place in London in 1851, YMCA pamphlets were distributed to visitors from all over the world, including a number of Montrealers who judged that it would fulfill a need in their city.

An inaugural meeting of the Montreal YMCA took place at St. Helen Street Baptist Church in November 1851. The Montreal YMCA can claim to be the first in North America, although YMCAs started up in Boston, New York, Toronto, and other North American cities about the same time.

The North American YMCAs formed a confederation in 1854. The World Alliance of YMCAs was formed in 1855.

In 1853, the Montreal YMCA hired its first paid employee, Samuel Massey. He worked as a missionary to young men in Montreal. As an adjunct to its religious mission, in the 1850s the Montreal YMCA created a social centre in rented quarters where young men could gather. It included a library and reading room. The Y began offering lectures, an employment service, and charitable relief to the indigent.

The first Montreal YMCA building was erected in 1873 on Victoria Square.

That year, the first evening educational courses were held, in French and shorthand. Services were added for younger boys and immigrants. Sports were added in the late 1880s. War work—services to military personnel—was first undertaken during the Boer War. Foreign service—outreach to other countries—became important early in the twentieth century.

Expansion was rapid, and in 1892 the Montreal YMCA created new quarters on Dominion Square, where the Sun Life building now stands. In the Dominion Square Y building there were meeting rooms, a reading room and a library, club and class rooms, an auditorium, a gymnasium, locker and shower rooms, a swimming pool, a bowling alley, and a dining room.

In 1894, a boys’ summer camp was opened in the Laurentians north of Montreal. Outdoor programs have been part of the Association’s programming ever since.
In 1912, the Central/Downtown Branch of the Montreal Association moved to new quarters on Drummond Street. That year, the Association opened the Westmount Branch and the North Branch (now YMCA du Parc). Other branches and various satellite units have existed at various times throughout the Metropolitan Montreal region.

In 1931 the Downtown Branch was remodeled and a 500-room residential annex was added to provide low-cost accommodation and meals for men. The residence would later serve as accommodation for refugees. (In 2001 as part of a major renovation of the YMCA Centre-ville, the downtown residence was demolished. The Y opened refugee accommodation in the former Reddy Memorial Hospital on Tupper Street.)

The Montreal YMCA has offered many programs, including physical and aquatics programs and social programs. The educational programs grew to become one of Concordia University founding institutions, Sir George Williams College/University. In the 1970s a shift in government policy in Quebec meant increased emphasis on community recreational programs, and the YMCA provided input and management services for these programs. Community development programs, including immigrant, crime prevention, and offender rehabilitation programs, were added.

At the beginning of the twenty-first century, the Metropolitan Montreal Association included the YMCA Centre-ville, the du Parc YMCA, the Guy-Favreau YMCA, the Hochelaga-Maisonneuve YMCA, the Notre-Dame-de-Grâce YMCA, the Pointe Saint-Charles YMCA, the Saint-Laurent YMCA, the West Island YMCA, the Westmount YMCA, Kamp Kanawana, the YMCA residence for refugee claimants, and the YMCA International Language school and the YMCA Foundation and Metropolitan services offices which were located in the same building as the YMCA Centre-ville.

**Scope and content**

The fonds documents the mission, structure, senior personnel, administration, programs, activities, facilities, and evolution of the Montreal YMCA (as of 2009, Le Y du Québec) from its founding in 1851 to the late 20th century.

The records document the Montreal YMCA’s relationships with a wide range of external bodies, including YMCAs in other Canadian cities and towns, the National Council of YMCAs of Canada, the YMCA movement in North America and the world, and other entities.

The records document Concordia University founding institution Sir George Williams College/University and its precursors in the YMCA’s educational programs. In addition, the records document the demographic history of the Montreal region, in particular the English-speaking Protestant community.
The fonds includes materials that were amassed by Harold C. Cross and Murray C. Ross when they were developing their histories of the Montreal Association and the YMCA in Canada, respectively.

The fonds includes materials from the former Metropolitan Montreal YMCA library/documentation centre.

The fonds includes correspondence of YMCA officials and others, board and committee minutes and related records, program and fund-raising publicity, books, newsletters, annual reports, year books, statistical and other reports, demographic studies, lecture notes, photographs, sound recordings on tape and vinyl, videotapes, films and film strips, posters, commemorative T-shirts, badges, trophies and other objects, artwork, blueprints, maps and other items on a variety of material media.

The fonds is arranged according to the following classification plan.

P145/01. – Founding documents, constitution, by-laws, histories.
   P145/01A. – Founding documents, constitution, by-laws.
   P145/01B. – Histories.

P145/02. – Metropolitan Board of Directors.
   P145/02A. – Directors, presidents.
   P145/02B. – Metropolitan Board and Executive Committee meetings.
   P145/02C. – Nominating Committee.
   P145/02D. – Annual Reports.

P145/03. – Annual and Special General Meetings.

P145/04. – Professional Staff.
   P145/04A. – Individual senior employed officers.
   P145/04B. – Staff professional development.
   P145/04C. – Training for YMCA secretaryship (Fellowship Plan).
   P145/04D. – Managerial groups.
      P145/04D01. – Meetings, conferences, administration.
      P145/04D02. – Publications, studies.

P145/05. – Planning, policy, structure.
   P145/05A. – Mission.
   P145/05B. – Organization charts, directories.
   P145/05C. – Organizational review.
   P145/05D. – Policies, procedures.
      P145/05D01. – Manuals.
      P145/05D02. – Policies.
      P145/05D03. – Language policy.
   P145/05E. – Planning, surveys.
      P145/05E01. – 1925 Montreal YMCA Population Study.
      P145/05E02. – 1946 Hugg Study.
      P145/05E03. – 1949-1952 Branch Study.
P145/05E04. – Guide Lines to the Sixties.
P145/05E05. – 1964-1969 Planning and Development.
P145/05E11. – 1990s surveys.
P145/05E12. – Small surveys and planning exercises.
P145/05E13. – Proposals for unrealized branches, facilities.
P145/05E14. – Source materials.

P145/06. – Financial administration.
   P145/06A. – Committees, policies.
P145/06B. – Budget.
P145/06C. – Budget control, accounting.
P145/06D. – Financial statements.
P145/06E. – Funding.
P145/06F. – Investments, gifts.
P145/06G. – Tax-exempt status.
P145/06H. – Purchasing.

P145/07. – Human resources.
   P145/07A. – Personnel committee and personnel management.
P145/07B. – Employee files.
P145/07C. – Union affairs.
P145/07D. – Payroll.
P145/07E. – Benefits.
P145/07F – Volunteers.

P145/08. – Communications.
   P145/08A. – Committees.
P145/08B. – Public relations.
P145/08C. – Advertising.
P145/08D. – Publications.
P145/08E. – Records management.

P145/09. – Membership.

P145/10. – Programs.
   P145/10A. – Committees, policies.
P145/10B. – Aquatics.
P145/10C. – Boys work, boys and girls work, girls work, youth work.
P145/10D. – Citizenship training.
P145/10E. – Community development.
P145/10F. – Community justice.
P145/10G. – Education.
   P145/10G01. – Constitutive documents, histories.
P145/10G02. – Administration.
P145/10G03. – Financial management.
P145/10G04. – Communications.
P145/10G05. – Buildings, properties.
P145/10G06. – Faculty, staff.
P145/10G07. – Students, student services, associations.
P145/10G08. – Curriculum, programs.
P145/10G09. – Research.
P145/10G10. – External relations.
P145/10J. – Handicapped persons.
P145/10K. – Health care.
P145/10L. – Immigrants, refugees.
P145/10M. – Industrial Work.
P145/10N. – International Development.
P145/10O. – Leadership development.
P145/10P. – Physical Education.
P145/10Q. – Pre-school, children.
P145/10T. – Seniors.
P145/10U. – Social recreation.
P145/10V. – Women.
P145/10W. – Y’s Men, Y’s Menettes.

P145/11. – Branches, buildings, facilities.
P145/11A. – Branches and facilities general.
P145/11B. – YMCA Centre-ville.
   P145/11B01. – Histories.
P145/11B02. – Administration, Board of Management.
P145/11B03. – Annual Reports.
P145/11B04. – Annual General Meetings.
P145/11B05. – Financial administration.
P145/11B06. – Planning.
P145/11B07. – Human resources administration.
P145/11B08. – Communications.
P145/11B09. – Facilities, buildings, equipment, supplies.
P145/11B10. – Programs.
P145/11D. – Lachine/Lachine-Dorval.
P145/11E. – Pointe St-Charles.
P145/11G. – West Island.

P145/12. – Camping, outdoor programs.
P145/12A. – Committees.
P145/12B. – Kamp Kanawana.
P145/12B01. – General administration.
P145/12B02. – Financial administration.
P145/12B03. – Land, facilities, equipment, supplies.
P145/12B04. – Communications.
P145/12B05. – Staff, counsellors.
P145/12B06. – Campers.
P145/12B07. – Program.
P145/12C. – Camp Otoeke.
P145/12C01. – General administration.
P145/12C02. – Financial administration.
P145/12C03. – Land, facilities, equipment, supplies.
P145/12C04. – Communications.
P145/12C05. – Staff, counsellors.
P145/12C06. – Campers.
P145/12C07. – Program.
P145/12D. – Camp Becsies.
P145/12E. – Camp Dorval.
P145/12F. – Camp Weredale.
P145/12G. – Camp Perrot.
P145/12H. – Ski lodge.
P145/12I. – Camp Thunderbird.
P145/12J. – Wilderness Survival Camp.
P145/12K. – Les Voyageurs de la Vérendrye.
P145/12L. – Lac St-Joseph/Camp Jubilee.
P145/12M. – Day camp.
P145/12N. – Camping associations.
  P145/12N01. – American Camping Association.
P145/12N02. – Canadian Camping Association.
P145/12N03. – Quebec Section, Canadian Camping Association (also known as Quebec Camping Association).
P145/12N04. – Quebec Camping Association/Association des camps du Québec.
P145/13. – Special events.
  P145/13A. – Visits of dignitaries.
P145/13B. – Anniversaries.
P145/13C. – Open house.
P145/13D. – Memorials, tributes, testimonials, honours.
P145/14. – External relations.
  P145/14A. – The World Alliance of YMCAs, World Councils, World Conferences, international visits.
    P145/14A01. – World Alliance, World Councils, World Conferences.
P145/14A02. – International visits.
P145/14D. – National Council of YMCAs of Canada.
  P145/14D01. – Constitutive documents.
  P145/14D02. – Histories.
  P145/14D03. – Annual Reports.
  P145/14D04. – Correspondence, reports.
  P145/14D05. – Meetings of Council, Board, Executive Committee, staff.
  P145/14D06. – Committee meetings, reports.
  P145/14D07. – Annual, Special General Meetings.
  P145/14D08. – National conferences, conventions.
  P145/14D09. – Policy, planning, surveys.
  P145/14D10. – Program support.
  P145/14D11. – Military Work.
    P145/14D11a. – Boer War.
    P145/14D11b. – World War I.
    P145/14D11c. – Interwar period.
    P145/14D11d. – World War II.
    P145/14D11e. – Post-World War II.
  P145/14D13. – Camp Canada.
  P145/14D14. – Human resources administration.
  P145/14D15. – Financial administration.
  P145/14D16. – Communications, public relations.
  P145/14D17. – Directories, rosters.

P145/14E. – Regional YMCA councils, committees.
P145/14F. – YMCAs of the United Kingdom.
P145/14G. – YMCAs of the United States.
P145/14H. – Canadian local YMCAs.
P145/14I. – YWCA, other organizations.
P145/14J. – Governments.
P145/14K. – Churches.

Immediate source of acquisition
The Montreal YMCA donated the documents to the Concordia University Archives. The first accession was moved to the Archives on the occasion of the Downtown YMCA’s re-occupation of the renovated Norris Building in 2000 and 2001. Additional materials were received in 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, and 2005.

Language
The documents are in English and French.

Accruals
Further accruals are expected.