



TITLE: Harold C. Giss papers

DATE RANGE: 1948-1973

CALL NUMBER: MS 1518

LOCATION: Arizona History Museum, 949 E Second St, Tucson, AZ 85719

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: 33.5 linear ft (69 boxes)

PROVENANCE: Donated by Maurice M. Giss in September 1973.

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PREFERRED CITATION: Arizona Historical Society, Harold C. Giss papers, MS 1518

PROCESSED BY: The collection was originally processed in 1982 by Chris Fowler and reorganized in June 1998 by William Tackenberg. It was previously cataloged as Y-MS 23.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE: Harold C. Giss, Democratic member of the Arizona state legislature and businessman from Yuma, was born in Minneapolis, Minnesota, on February 5, 1906. He was the son of David Giss (1885-1946) and Katherine Edna (Glazier) Giss (1885-1944) of Vineland, New Jersey. In 1918, the family moved to California, where Giss graduated from Anaheim High School and attended Southwestern University, College of Law, in Los Angeles, for one year. Giss married Goldie Pearl Stool (born 1914) on February 21, 1937 and they had three sons: Maurice M. (b. 1941), Kenneth A. (b. 1945), and Gerald D. (b. 1947). Giss was employed by a Los Angeles department store until January 1938, when he settled in Yuma, Arizona and purchased the Emporium Department Store. In 1944, he acquired the Toggery Men's Store in Yuma.

In 1948, Giss began his 25 year legislative career when he ran successfully for the Arizona House of Representatives from District 6 (mostly Yuma County). In 1950, he was elected to the state Senate, where he served as Majority Leader for twelve years (1954-1966) and Minority Leader for seven years (1966-1973). During his tenure, Giss was chairman of several standing committees, including Judiciary, Appropriations, Public Health and Welfare, State Institutions, and Counties and Municipalities. He was a long-standing member of the Education Committee, the Finance and Revenue Committee, and the Legislative Council. Altogether, Giss served on 24 standing committees during his legislative career and was active in promoting social legislation,

including sponsorship of a bill to emancipate 18 to 21-year-olds. Because of his perseverance in trying to perfect all legislation, Giss earned the nickname “The Great Amender.”

Giss represented Arizona on the National Legislative Conference of the Council of State Governments and the National Conference of State Legislative Leaders. He was a life member of the National Society of State Legislators.

In addition to his legislative responsibilities, Giss contributed to many civic projects around Yuma, where he served on several local boards and committees. He was named an honorary member of most of Yuma’s service organizations, including the Elks, Eagles, Kiwanis, and Yuma County Chamber of Commerce. He was vitally interested in the state’s water problems and was chairman of the Lower Colorado River Land Use Committee. He was also a key figure in establishing Arizona Western College in Yuma in 1861. Giss was honored as “Yuma Man of the Year” for 1964-65. His dedication to the state legislature and to the needs of his constituency took its toll on the family business; in 1968, the Emporium closed and Giss filed for bankruptcy. Subsequently, his occupation was listed as “real estate and business consultant.” Senator Giss died of a heart attack while attending the Yuma County Fair on April 15, 1973.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE: Correspondence, political publications, legislative bills, and reports resulting from Giss’ twenty-five years as State Senator and Representative in the Arizona legislature. The collection reflects state and national political issues of the late 1960s and early 1970s including water use, the Equal Rights Amendment, public health and education.

Approximately half of the collection consists of correspondence with political leaders and constituents of Arizona such as Morris Udall, Carl Hayden, Samuel Goddard, and Jack Williams, Yuma mayors, special interest groups, and concerned citizens. Letters reflect issues concerning education, state revenue measures, retirement and land usage, and general political coordination in the Arizona Legislature from 1948 to 1973.

The remainder of the collection consists of printed materials, which reinforce the political activities and concerns of Senator and Representative Giss while in the Arizona Legislature including state political publications, candidate lists for elections, and resolution reflects state political activities from 1967 to 1973. A large number of educational publications reflect Giss’ participation in educational issues and on educational committees for all levels of public school and college levels (1952-1973). Public health, water resource publications, and various state retirement reports reflect issues which Giss became involved with through legislative committee assignments. Arizona House of Representative bills (1957-1973) and Senate bills (1957-1973) reflect issues of concern to Giss as both the Democratic Majority Leader and later Minority Leader in the Arizona Legislature. Finally various national and state conference reports and publications correspond to the education, intergovernmental relations, and improvement in state government issues participated in by Giss.

The papers have been divided into **seven series**: Correspondence and Personal Material; Legislative Committee Minutes; Speeches; Financial Records, Personal Business and Travel Records, and Awards; Printed Material, Scrapbooks and Photos.

Series 1, Correspondence and Personal Material contains the heart of the collection and consists of 24 boxes with materials arranged topically. Giss' papers (1948-1973) provide letters from constituents and interested parties on political issues confronting the Arizona Legislature in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Correspondence includes issues of education, health care, retirement programs for state workers, topics discussed in the Legislative Council, land use, and water resources. A large portion of the correspondence concerns communications with other Arizona politicians including state governors on political appointments, revenue issues, legislative reapportionment, and other topics taken up in the legislature.

Series 2, Minutes From Meetings and Conferences consists of reports and notes from various committees participated in by Giss while in the Arizona Legislature (1958-1973) with 4 boxes of materials arranged topically by committees or organizations. Committees include the Finance and Revenue Committee, joint committees from the House of Representatives and Senate, Judiciary Committee, Committee on Water and Natural Resources, Committee on State Retirement, and Legislative Council meetings.

Series 3, Speeches consists of 2 boxes of materials arranged topically, including Giss' speeches to the Arizona Legislature on political issues such as Colorado River land use, cable television, and the Senate calendars (1968-1973). It also contains drafts of media and community speeches prepared by Giss. In addition, governor speeches to the Arizona Legislature are included from Governors McFarland, Fannin, Goddard, and Williams (1955-1972).

Series 4, Giss Financial Records and Biographical Materials is composed of 2 boxes of materials, arranged topically, focused on campaign expenditures, receipts, as well as biographical information, eulogies, and certificates and awards presented to Giss (1955-1973).

Series 5, Printed Materials contains 32 boxes arranged by general topical areas and covers political publications, pamphlets, legislative bills, newsletters, and conference reports and publications. Materials have been arranged topically into ten subseries. **Subseries A:** Political Publications and Resolutions, 1960-1973; **Subseries B:** State Revenues and Taxation, 1953-1973; **Subseries C:** Education, 1952-1973; **Subseries D:** Public Health Issues, 1954-1973; **Subseries E:** Arizona Judiciary Papers, 1958-1971; **Subseries F:** Arizona Water and Irrigation, 1957-1972; **Subseries G:** Retirement Programs of Arizona, 1959-1973; **Subseries H:** Arizona House of Representatives Bills, 1957-1973; **Subseries I:** Arizona Senate Bills, 1959-1973; **Subseries J:** National/State Legislative Conferences, Reports, and Publications, 1967-1972.

Series 6, Scrapbooks consist of press news clipping scrapbooks documenting Giss' career.

Series 7, Photographs contains pictures of Giss and distinguished state and national leaders including Harry Truman, Governor Paul Fannin, and Governor Jack Williams. Also included are many photos of unidentified men and women with Giss at social events.

SUBJECT TERMS: Giss, Harold C., 1906-1973 | Fannin, Paul J. (Paul Jones), 1907-2002 -- Correspondence | Goldwater, Barry M. (Barry Morris), 1909-1998 -- Correspondence | Udall, Morris K. -- Correspondence | Hayden Carl Trumbull, 1877-1972 -- Correspondence | Goddard, Samuel P., 1919- -- Correspondence | Williams, Jack, 1909-1998 -- Correspondence | Land use -- Arizona | Water use -- Arizona | Politicians -- Arizona -- Correspondence | Legislators -- Arizona | Education -- Arizona | Public health -- Arizona | Trade-unions -- Arizona | Women's rights -- Arizona | Governors -- Arizona -- Correspondence | Yuma (Ariz.) -- Politics and government | Arizona -- Politics and government

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	152	Communications With Building Contractors	1959-1973
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	154	Correspondence Re: Land Use & Interstate Stream Commission	1958-1964
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	480	27 th Legislature-1 st Session	1965
	481	27 th Legislature-2 nd Session & Special Session	1966
	482	28 th Legislature-1 st Session (1967) S.B. 1-195	1967
	483	28 th Legislature-1 st Session (1967) Draft Bills	1967
53	484	28 th Legislature-2 nd Session (1968) S.C.R. 1-S.B. 97	1968
	485	28 th Legislature-2 nd Session (1968) S.B. 106-194	1968
	486	28 th Legislature-2 nd Session (1968) S.B. 202-241	1968
	487	28 th Legislature-2 nd Session (1968) S.B. 244-4	1968
	488	29 th Legislature-1 st Session (1969) S.C.R. 1 – S.B. 48	1969
	489	29 th Legislature-1 st Session (1969) S.B. 51-87	1969
	490	29 th Legislature-1 st Session (1969) S.B. 89-122	1969
54	491	29 th Legislature-1 st Session (1969) S.B. 124-172	1969
	492	29 th Legislature-1 st Session (1969) S.B. 178-227	1969
	493	29 th Legislature-2 nd Session (1970) S.C.R. 17-S.B. 238	1970
	494	29 th Legislature-2 nd Session (1969-1970) Draft Bills	1969-1970
	495	29 th Legislature-Special Session (1969)	1969
	496	30 th Legislature-1 st Session (1970-1971) S.C.M. 3 – S.B. 150	1970-1971
	497	30 th Legislature-1 st Session (1971) S.B. 164-323	1971
55	498	30 th Legislature-1 st Session (1970-1971) Draft Bills	1970-1971
	499	30 th Legislature-2 nd Session (1972) S.J.R. 1001-S.B. 1018	1972
	500	30 th Legislature-2 nd Session (1972) S.B. 1019-1097	1972
	501	30 th Legislature-2 nd Session (1972) (S.B. 1104-1143)	1972
	502	30 th Legislature-2 nd Session (1972) (S.B. 1161-1189)	1972
	503	30 th Legislature-2 nd Session (1972) (S.B. 1202-1288)	1972
56	504	30 th Legislature-2 nd Session (1972) (S.B. 1289-1326)	1972
	505	30 th Legislature-2 nd Session (1971-1972) Draft Bills	1971-1972
	506	30 th Legislature-Special Session (1971)	1971
	507	31 st Legislature-1 st Session (1973) (S.R. 1001-S.B.1026)	1973

Box	Folder	Description	Dates
	508	31 st Legislature-1 st Session (1973) (S.B. 1008-1017)	1973
	509	31 st Legislature-1 st Session (1973) (S.B. 1019)	1973
	510	31 st Legislature-1 st Session (1973) (S.B. 1019)	1973
57	511	31 st Legislature-1 st Session (1973) (S.B. 1021-1026)	1973
	512	31 st Legislature-1 st Session (1973) (S.B. 1027-1049)	1973
	513	31 st Legislature-1 st Session (1973) (S.B. 1050-1060)	1973
	514	31 st Legislature-1 st Session (1973) (S.B. 1064-1086)	1973
	515	31 st Legislature-1 st Session (1973) (S.B. 1087-1090)	1973
	516	31 st Legislature-1 st Session (1973) (S.B. 1091-1096)	1973
58	517	31 st Legislature-1 st Session (1973) (S.B. 1101-1110)	1973
	518	31 st Legislature-1 st Session (1973) (S.B. 1112-1153)	1973
	519	31 st Legislature-1 st Session (1973) (S.B. 1140-1165)	1973
	520	31 st Legislature-1 st Session (1973) (S.B. 1167-1197)	1973
	521	31 st Legislature-1 st Session (1973) (S.B. 1201-1237)	1973
		Subseries J: National/State Legislative Conferences, Reports, and Publications	1967-1972
59	522	National Legislative Conferences (Correspondence and Reports)	1971-1972
	523-526	Reports/Conference Papers From Council of State Governments	1955-1970
60	527	Proposed Agendas For Meetings of Council of State Govts	1970
	528	Reports/Conference Papers From Council of State Governments	1971
	529	Proposed Agendas For May Meeting of Council of State Govts	1972
	530	Newsletters On State Government and Legislative Issues: “Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations” “Arizona News Service” “The League of Arizona Cities and Towns” “League of Women Voters Legislation Newsletter”	undated
	531	Newsletters On State Government and Legislative Issues: AZ Department of Economic Planning and Development “Ideas For Arizona Communities” “Yuma Cty Chamber of Commerce: Legislative Briefs” “Arizona Association of Counties” “Phoenix Chamber of Commerce Legislative Bulletin” “State Government Administration”	undated
61	532	Reports and Conference Publications From Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations	1970-1971
	533	Publications, Meeting Notes, Reports On State Govt Topics	1963, 1967
	534	Publications, Meeting Notes, Reports On State Govt Topics	1968-1969
	535	Publications, Meeting Notes, Reports On State Govt Topics	1970-1971
	536	Publications, Meeting Notes, Reports On State Govt Topics	1972-1973

Box	Folder	Description	Dates
		Series 6: Scrapbooks	1954-1966
62	1	Scrapbook, January 1954	1954
	2	Scrapbook, January 1955	1955
	3	Scrapbook, February 1955	1955
	4	Scrapbook, March 1955	1955
	5	Scrapbook, April-October 1955	1955
	6	Scrapbook, November-December 1955	1955
	7	Scrapbook, January-February 1956	1956
	8	Scrapbook, March-April 1956	1956
63	1	Scrapbook, May-August 1956	1956
	2	Scrapbook, September-December 1956	1956
	3	Scrapbook, January-February 1957	1957
	4	Scrapbook, February-December 1957	1957
	5	Scrapbook, January-February 1958	1958
	6	Scrapbook, March-June 1958	1958
	7	Scrapbook, June-December 1958	1958
64	1	Scrapbook, January-February 1959	1959
	2	Scrapbook, March-June 1959	1959
	3	Scrapbook, July-December 1959	1959
	4	Scrapbook, January 1960	1960
	5	Scrapbook, February 1960	1960
	6	Scrapbook, March 1960	1960
	7	Scrapbook, April-July 1960	1960
	8	Scrapbook, August-December 1960	1960
65	1	Scrapbook, January-March 1961	1961
	2	Scrapbook, April-July 1961	1961
	3	Scrapbook, August-December 1961	1961
	4	Scrapbook, January-March 1962	1962
	5	Scrapbook, April-December 1962	1962
66	1	Scrapbook, January-February 1963	1963
	2	Scrapbook, March-April 1963	1963
	3	Scrapbook, May-December 1963	1963
	4	Scrapbook, January-February 1964	1964
	5	Scrapbook, March-April 1964	1964
	6	Scrapbook, May-December 1964	1964
67	1	Scrapbook, January-February 1965	1965
	2	Scrapbook, March-April 1965	1965
	3	Scrapbook, May-June 1965	1965
	4	Scrapbook, August-December 1965	1965
68	1	Scrapbook, January-February 1966	1966
	2	Scrapbook, March-April 1966	1966

Box	Folder	Description	Dates
		Series 7: Photographs	
69	1	Portraits of Harold Giss. Includes other politicians such as Wesley Bolin, Harry Truman, Burton S. Barr, Sam Goddard, Stewart Udall, Jack Williams, Paul Fannin, Carl Hayden, and various civic leaders and businessmen. Also includes images of Morales Dam ceremony, visiting the Yuma Proving Grounds, Yuma Silver Spur Rodeo, and various awards dinners.	1950s – 1970s
	2	Portraits of Harold Giss. Also includes photographs of Jack Williams	1960s – 1970s
	3	United States Marine Corps 185 th Birthday Ceremony	Nov 1960