



Guide to the Robert B. Griffith Photograph Collection

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Summary Information

Repository:	University of Nevada, Las Vegas. University Libraries. Special Collections and Archives.
Creator:	Griffith, Robert B., 1899-1979
Title:	Robert B. Griffith Photograph Collection
ID:	PH-00106
Date [inclusive]:	approximately 1950 to 1970
Physical Description:	0.25 Cubic Feet (1 box, 1 shared box of negatives, 1 hanging folder, and 1 flat file)
Physical Description:	2.14 Linear Feet
Language of the Material:	English
Abstract:	The Robert B. Griffith Photograph Collection (approximately 1950-1970) contains black-and-white and color photographic prints, negatives, and slides of Las Vegas, Nevada including Fremont Street, Helldorado parades, and hotel and casino properties along the Strip including the Sahara Hotel and Casino, the Flamingo Las Vegas, the El Rancho, the Thunderbird Hotel and Casino, and the Hotel Last Frontier. Also included are photographs of Lake Mead Recreation Area and tunnel drilling within and near the Las Vegas Valley, Nevada. Other Nevada locations outside of Las Vegas include Reno, Virginia City, and Crystal Bay, Nevada.

Preferred Citation

Robert B. Griffith Photograph Collection, approximately 1950-1970. PH-00106. Special Collections and Archives, University Libraries, University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Las Vegas, Nevada.

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Biographical Note

Robert B. Griffith was born in 1899 in California and moved to Las Vegas, Nevada with his father E.W. Griffith, a Las Vegas contractor and settler, in 1905. He attended the University of Nevada, Reno and graduated in 1923 with a degree in civil engineering. That same year he married Ruth Atcheson and returned to Las Vegas. In 1925 upon his appointment as postmaster, the Las

Vegas Chamber of Commerce assigned Griffith the task of determining whether the city could accommodate airmail services. As part of this task, Griffith helped the city lease Anderson Field, later renamed Rockwell Field as part of the lease agreement. Upon the expiration of the lease, Rockwell Field's owners sold the land and Griffith selected a new site later known as Nellis Air Force Base. Griffith retired as postmaster in 1930, but continued to serve as an aviation expert for the community. He was instrumental in the development of both the Nellis Air Force Base and McCarran International Airport.

During World War II, Griffith began working towards securing water access for southern Nevada. Starting in 1957, Griffith served on the Colorado River Commission and served as chair in 1966. Griffith, along with other community leaders, convinced the federal government to assist in the building of a water pipeline that went from Lake Mead to the Las Vegas Valley, Nevada. The project, initially named the Southern Nevada Water Project, supplied water to Las Vegas, North Las Vegas, Henderson, Boulder City, and Nellis Air Force Base. Griffith passed away in 1979. In 1982, the city renamed the project the Robert B. Griffith Water Project, and in the early 1990s, the project was incorporated into the Southern Nevada Water System Treatment and Transmission Facility (SNWS TTF). As of 2020, the SNWS TTF continues to supplement the Griffith Project.

Sources:

Stoldal, Robert. "Robert Griffith." *Las Vegas Review-Journal*. February 7, 1999. Accessed June 27, 2018. <https://www.reviewjournal.com/news/robert-griffith/>.

Rogers, Jedediah. "Robert B. Griffith Water Project." Bureau of Reclamation. 2006. Accessed June 27, 2018. <https://www.usbr.gov/projects/pdf.php?id=181>.

"R. B. Griffith Project." Bureau of Reclamation. 2020. Accessed January 30, 2020. <https://www.usbr.gov/projects/index.php?id=385>

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Scope and Contents Note

The Robert B. Griffith Photograph Collection (approximately 1950-1970) contains black-and-white and color photographic prints, negatives, and slides of Las Vegas, Nevada including Fremont Street, Helldorado parades, and hotel and casino properties along the Strip including the Sahara Hotel and Casino, the Flamingo Las Vegas, the El Rancho Vegas, the Thunderbird Hotel and Casino, and the Hotel Last Frontier.

Helldorado parade photographs feature people marching and parade floats representing Las Vegas hotel and casino properties, organizations, and local businesses. Photographs of Fremont Street and the Strip include images of signage and stage performances. Also included are photographs of Lake Mead Recreation Area and tunnel drilling within and near the Las Vegas Valley, Nevada. Other locations outside of Las Vegas include Reno, Virginia City, and Crystal Bay, Nevada.

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Arrangement Note

Materials are arranged by topic.

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Administrative Information

Access Note

Collection is open for research.

Publication Rights

Materials in this collection may be protected by copyrights and other rights. See [Reproductions and Use](#) on the UNLV Special Collections and Archives website for more information about reproductions and permissions to publish.

Acquisition Note

Materials were donated periodically from 1980 to 1990 by Mary Jane Reiter Griffith; accession numbers 80-97, 84-79, 85-39, 86-31, and 90-48.

Processing Note

In 2020, as part of an archival backlog elimination project, Jimmy Chang rehoused and arranged the materials, wrote the finding aid, and entered the data into ArchivesSpace.

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Related Materials

Related Collections

The following resources may provide additional information related to the materials in this collection:

Mary Jane Griffith Reiter Papers, 1919-1964. MS-00262. Special Collections and Archives, University Libraries, University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Las Vegas, Nevada.

Robert B. Griffith Collection, 1928-1975. MS-00315. Special Collections and Archives, University Libraries, University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Las Vegas, Nevada.

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Names and Subjects

- Fremont Street (Las Vegas, Nev.)
- Helldorado Parade (Las Vegas, Nev.)
- Lake Mead National Recreation Area (Ariz. and Nev.)
- Las Vegas Strip (Nev.)
- Flamingo Las Vegas
- Hotel Last Frontier

Collection Inventory

Title/Description	Containers
Front of the Majestic Theater. Original image is from approximately 1920 to 1929. Las Vegas, Nevada: photographic print and photographic negative, approximately 1950 to 1970 (0106_0001) Physical Description: 2 Photographic Negatives	folder 01 box SH-021
View of the "Mole" drilling machine poking its nose out of a tunnel through the ground, River Mountains Tunnel of the Southern Nevada Water Project, Nevada: photographic print, 1969 June 28 (0106_0003)	folder 01
Close-up view of the "Mole" drilling machine poking its nose out of a tunnel through the ground, Lake Mead side or east end of the four-mile-long River Mountains Tunnel on the Southern Nevada Water Project, Nevada: photographic print, 1969 June 26 (0106_0004)	folder 01
Side view of the Jarva Tunnel Borer's cutter head, Nevada: photographic print, 1968 September 18 (0106_0005)	folder 01
Front view above outlet portal showing 988 Caterpillar Loader towing "Mole" and "Conveyor" drilling machines to a tunnel portal, Nevada: photographic print, 1968 September 24 (0106_0006)	folder 01
Looking down from the left side of an outlet portal showing the "Mole" drilling machine preparing to move into the tunnel, Nevada: photographic print, 1968 September 24 (0106_0007)	folder 01
View inside the North American River Mountains Tunnel looking back at station 394, Nevada: photographic print, 1968 October 16 (0106_0008)	folder 01

Plaque of Alfred Merritt Smith Water Treatment Facility, Boulder City, Nevada: photographic print, approximately 1970 (0106_0009)	folder 01
Federal, state, and contractor representatives posed in front of the "Mole" drilling machine breaking through a tunnel, Nevada: photographic print, 1969 June 26 (0106_0010)	folder 01
Federal, state, and contractor representatives posed in front of the "Mole" drilling machine breaking through a tunnel, Nevada: photographic print, 1969 June 26 (0106_0011)	folder 01
Federal, state, and contractor representatives posed in front of the "Mole" drilling machine breaking through a tunnel, Nevada: photographic print, 1969 June 26 (0106_0012)	folder 01
Eight men seated, Robert B. Griffith is present (identified fifth from the left on verso): photographic print, approximately 1950 to 1970 (0106_0013)	folder 01
Five men seated, Robert B. Griffith is present (identified in the center on verso): photographic print, approximately 1950 to 1970 (0106_0014)	folder 01
Three people standing with Dickinson Library Director Hal Erickson on the left: photographic print, approximately 1965 to 1990 (0106_0015)	folder 01
Unidentified man signing a document, a woman watching: photographic print, approximately 1965 to 1990 (0106_0016)	folder 01
Five men standing, Paul Laxalt is present (identified second from the left): photographic print and negative, approximately 1967 to 1987 (0106_0017)	folder 01 box SH-021
The Board of Directors of the First National Bank of Nevada. Seated are E. H. Fitz, Earnest Martinelli, Gordon B. Harris, James Cashman Jr., William Laub Jr., and Arthur M. Smith Jr. Standing are Roy Young, C. E. Helgren, Norman Brown, Neil Plath, Herbert E. Grier, Paul Garwood, F. Lorwin Ronnow, Robert B. Griffith, Gaylord K. Prather, and Ernest Maupin Sr. (identified left to right on verso): photographic print, 1969 (0106_0018)	flat file 02
Golden Nugget Gambling Hall marquee, Las Vegas, Nevada: photographic slide, approximately 1950 to 1959 (0106_0019)	box 03
Fremont Street, Pioneer Club, Vegas Vic, Las Vegas, Nevada: photographic slide, approximately 1950 to 1959 (0106_0020)	box 03
Pioneer Club and Vegas Vic at night, Las Vegas, Nevada: photographic slide, approximately 1950 to 1959 (0106_0021)	box 03
Las Vegas Club at night, Las Vegas, Nevada: photographic slide, approximately 1950 to 1959 (0106_0022)	box 03
Fremont Street, Vegas Vic at night, Las Vegas, Nevada: photographic slide, approximately 1950 to 1959 (0106_0023)	box 03
Fremont Street at night, Las Vegas, Nevada: photographic slide, approximately 1950 to 1959 (0106_0024)	box 03
Fremont Street, daytime, Las Vegas, Nevada: photographic slide, approximately 1950 to 1959 (0106_0025)	box 03

Golden Nugget and Fremont Street, daytime, Las Vegas, Nevada: photographic slide, approximately 1950 to 1959 (0106_0026)	box 03
Flamingo Hotel & Casino sign, Las Vegas, Nevada: photographic slide, approximately 1953 to 1970 (0106_0027)	box 03
Flamingo Hotel & Casino sign, Las Vegas, Nevada: photographic slide, approximately 1953 to 1970 (0106_0028)	box 03
Flamingo Hotel & Casino marquee, Las Vegas, Nevada: photographic slide, approximately 1953 to 1970 (0106_0029)	box 03
Sahara Hotel and Casino marquee, Las Vegas, Nevada: photographic slide, approximately 1952 to 1970 (0106_0030)	box 03
Possibly a pageant at the Last Frontier Hotel, Las Vegas, Nevada: photographic slide, 1951 (0106_0031)	box 03
Night club performer, Las Vegas, Nevada: photographic slide, 1951 (0106_0032)	box 03
Performers, Las Vegas, Nevada: photographic slide, 1951 (0106_0033)	box 03
Dancers, Las Vegas, Nevada: photographic slide, 1951 (0106_0034)	box 03
Yma Sumac, Peruvian coloratura soprano, performing, Las Vegas, Nevada: photographic slide, 1951 (0106_0035)	box 03
Tennessee Ernie Ford performing, Las Vegas, Nevada: photographic slide, 1951 (0106_0036)	box 03
Performers at the Sands Hotel & Casino, Las Vegas, Nevada: photographic slide, 1951 (0106_0037)	box 03
Performers at the Sands Hotel & Casino, Las Vegas, Nevada: photographic slide, 1951 (0106_0038)	box 03
Performers at the Sands Hotel & Casino, Las Vegas, Nevada: photographic slide, 1951 (0106_0039)	box 03
Helldorado parade, Las Vegas, Nevada: photographic slide, 1951 (0106_0040)	box 03
Boulder Club float, Helldorado parade, Las Vegas, Nevada: photographic slide, 1951 (0106_0041)	box 03
Golden Nugget float, Helldorado parade, Las Vegas, Nevada: photographic slide, 1951 (0106_0042)	box 03
Ronzone's Store float, Helldorado parade, Las Vegas, Nevada: photographic slide, 1951 (0106_0043)	box 03
Desert Inn float, Helldorado parade, Las Vegas, Nevada: photographic slide, 1951 (0106_0044)	box 03
Helldorado parade float, Las Vegas, Nevada: photographic slide, 1951 (0106_0045)	box 03
Ox-pulled caravan, Helldorado parade, Las Vegas, Nevada: photographic slide, 1951 (0106_0046)	box 03

Western-styled float, Helldorado parade, Las Vegas, Nevada: photographic slide, 1951 (0106_0047)	box 03
El Rancho Vegas float, Helldorado parade, Las Vegas, Nevada: photographic slide, 1952 (0106_0048)	box 03
F-86 Sabre fighter jet being towed, Helldorado parade, Las Vegas, Nevada: photographic slide, 1952 (0106_0049)	box 03
Horseshoe Club float, Helldorado parade, Las Vegas, Nevada: photographic slide, 1952 (0106_0050)	box 03
Desert Inn Hotel & Casino float, Helldorado parade, Las Vegas, Nevada: photographic slide, 1952 (0106_0051)	box 03
California Club float, Helldorado parade, Las Vegas, Nevada: photographic slide, 1952 (0106_0052)	box 03
Boulder Club float, Helldorado parade, Las Vegas, Nevada: photographic slide, 1952 (0106_0053)	box 03
Ronzone's Store float, Helldorado parade, Las Vegas, Nevada: photographic slide, 1952 (0106_0054)	box 03
Golden Nugget float, Helldorado parade, Las Vegas, Nevada: photographic slide, 1952 (0106_0055)	box 03
Pioneer Club and Vegas Vic at night, Las Vegas, Nevada: photographic slide, 1952 (0106_0056)	box 03
Golden Nugget float, Helldorado parade, Las Vegas, Nevada: photographic slide, 1952 (0106_0057)	box 03
Oxen, Helldorado parade, Las Vegas, Nevada: photographic slide, 1952 (0106_0058)	box 03
Helldorado parade, Las Vegas, Nevada: photographic slide, 1953 (0106_0059)	box 03
Helldorado parade, Las Vegas, Nevada: photographic slide, 1953 (0106_0060)	box 03
Helldorado parade, Las Vegas, Nevada: photographic slide, 1953 (0106_0061)	box 03
Helldorado parade float, Las Vegas, Nevada: photographic slide, 1953 (0106_0062)	box 03
Helldorado parade, Las Vegas, Nevada: photographic slide, approximately 1950 to 1959 (0106_0063)	box 03
Helldorado parade, Las Vegas, Nevada: photographic slide, approximately 1950 to 1959 (0106_0064)	box 03
Horse-drawn stagecoach, Helldorado parade: photographic slide, approximately 1950 to 1959 (0106_0065)	box 03
Helldorado parade float, Las Vegas, Nevada: photographic slide, approximately 1950 to 1959 (0106_0066)	box 03
Helldorado parade, Las Vegas, Nevada: photographic slide, approximately 1950 to 1959 (0106_0067)	box 03

Helldorado parade in front of the Pioneer Club, Las Vegas, Nevada: photographic slide, approximately 1950 to 1959 (0106_0068)	box 03
Monte Carlo Club float, Helldorado parade, Las Vegas, Nevada: photographic slide, approximately 1950 to 1959 (0106_0069)	box 03
Helldorado parade float, Las Vegas, Nevada: photographic slide, approximately 1950 to 1959 (0106_0070)	box 03
Historic marker plaque near Virginia City, Nevada: photographic slide, approximately 1950 to 1970 (0106_0071)	box 03
Historic marker plaque near Virginia City, Nevada: photographic slide, approximately 1950 to 1970 (0106_0072)	box 03
Historic marker plaque near Virginia City, Nevada: photographic slide, approximately 1950 to 1970 (0106_0073)	box 03
Historic marker plaque near Virginia City, Nevada: photographic slide, approximately 1950 to 1970 (0106_0074)	box 03
"Chicago Nevada Gold Mining Co." sign, near Virginia City, Nevada: photographic slide, approximately 1950 to 1970 (0106_0075)	box 03
"Virginia City-Queen of the Comstock" sign, Virginia City, Nevada: photographic slide, approximately 1950 to 1970 (0106_0076)	box 03
Gold mine, Virginia City, Nevada: photographic slide, approximately 1950 to 1970 (0106_0077)	box 03
Cal Neva Lodge, Crystal Bay, Nevada: photographic slide, approximately 1950 to 1970 (0106_0078)	box 03
Gold ore in rocks, near Virginia City, Nevada: photographic slide, approximately 1950 to 1970 (0106_0079)	box 03
Griffith Methodist Church, Las Vegas, Nevada: photographic slide, approximately 1950 to 1959 (0106_0080)	box 03
Helldorado parade on Fremont Street and desert scenes in Las Vegas, Nevada; fishers pulling up a swordfish at the Hotel Playa de Cortes, Guaymas, Mexico: photographic slides, approximately 1951 to 1953 Physical Description: 100 Photographic Slides	box 03
Thunderbird Hotel performances and one view of the desert, Las Vegas, Nevada: photographic slides, 1960 December 27 Physical Description: 18 Photographic Slides	box 03
John Charles Thomas performing at the Flamingo Hotel & Casino, Las Vegas, Nevada: photographic slides, 1953 August 22 Physical Description: 16 Photographic Slides	box 03
Hotel Last Frontier stage performances, Las Vegas, Nevada: photographic slides, 1967 December 28 Physical Description: 18 Photographic Slides	box 03
Opera performance featuring Lauritz Melchior at the Sahara Hotel, Las Vegas, Nevada: photographic slides, 1953 October 20	box 03

Physical Description: 20 Photographic Slides	
Yma Sumac performing at the El Rancho Vegas, Las Vegas, Nevada: photographic slides, approximately 1952 to 1960	box 03
Physical Description: 15 Photographic Slides	
Helldorado parade; a quail walking around; and views of the sky, Las Vegas, Nevada: photographic slides, approximately 1950 to 1960	box 03
Physical Description: 13 Photographic Slides	
Southern Nevada water supply tunnel boring, excavating, and cement pouring; people golfing; spectators in an air force base watching an explosion in the distance, Nevada: photographic slides, 1970 February to 1970 May	box 03
Physical Description: 22 Photographic Slides	
Desert scenery around Virginia Gold Mine, Virginia City, Nevada: photographic slides, 1965 May 01	box 03
Physical Description: 15 Photographic Slides	
Views in and around Lake Mead Recreation Area: photographic slides, 1967 June 26	box 03
Physical Description: 28 Photographic Slides	
"M. J. and local" images of a woman in a wedding gown, children during a Christmas celebration, and Lake Mead Recreation Area: photographic slides, approximately 1950 to 1970	box 03
Physical Description: 15 Photographic Slides	
Views of the Las Vegas Strip, Lake Mead Recreation Area, Boulder City, and Reno, Nevada; interior view of a family residence: photographic slides, approximately 1950 to 1970	box 03
Physical Description: 15 Photographic Slides	
Views of a mining town, desert scenery, and alpine gold flowers: photographic slides, approximately 1950 to 1970	box 03
Physical Description: 16 Photographic Slides	
Views of a cemetery, streets, and residential interiors, Virginia City, Nevada: photographic slides, 1959 October	box 03
Physical Description: 27 Photographic Slides	
Griffith Methodist Church and Helldorado parade, Las Vegas, Nevada; Badwater Basin, Death Valley, California: photographic slide, approximately 1950 to 1970	box 03
Physical Description: 17 Photographic Slides	