

## **Guide to the Byrd Wall Sawyer Collection**

---

This finding aid was created by Lee Hanover on July 06, 2018.

Persistent URL for this finding aid: <http://n2t.net/ark:/62930/f1c62b>

© 2018 The Regents of the University of Nevada. All rights reserved.

**University of Nevada, Las Vegas. University Libraries. Special Collections  
and Archives.**

Box 457010

4505 S. Maryland Parkway

Las Vegas, Nevada 89154-7010

[special.collections@unlv.edu](mailto:special.collections@unlv.edu)

---

## Table of Contents

---

Summary Information .....	3
Historical Note .....	3
Scope and Contents Note .....	4
Arrangement .....	5
Administrative Information .....	5
Related Materials .....	6
Names and Subjects .....	6
Collection Inventory .....	6
Professional files .....	6
Publications .....	10
Transparencies and audiovisual materials .....	10

## Summary Information

<b>Repository:</b>	University of Nevada, Las Vegas. University Libraries. Special Collections and Archives.
<b>Title:</b>	Byrd Wall Sawyer Collection
<b>ID:</b>	MS-00316
<b>Date [inclusive]:</b>	1893-1977
<b>Date [bulk]:</b>	1930-1970
<b>Physical Description:</b>	6.44 Cubic Feet (12 boxes)
<b>Physical Description:</b>	6.51 Linear Feet
<b>Language of the Material:</b>	English
<b>Abstract:</b>	The Byrd Wall Sawyer Collection primarily consists of Byrd's research files on Nevada from 1930 to 1970. The materials concentrate on her monograph, "Nevada Nomads," as well as her co-authored textbook, "Here is Nevada." The collection also includes speeches, journal articles, memos, research note cards and papers, correspondence, informational booklets and pamphlets, maps, photographs, audiovisual materials, and newspaper articles and clippings.

### Preferred Citation

Byrd Wall Sawyer Collection, 1893-1977. MS-00316. Special Collections and Archives, University Libraries, University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Las Vegas, Nevada.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

## Historical Note

Byrd Sawyer was a noted historian, librarian, and educator in Nevada during the mid-twentieth century. Born Byrd Fanita Wall in Warrensburg, Missouri on May 5, 1895, she later relocated to Reno, Nevada where she met her husband Harry W. Sawyer (M.D.). The couple married on September 11, 1923 and moved to Berkeley, California, where Byrd attended the University of California, Berkeley. Byrd attained her Master of Arts degree in History in 1931. Sawyer's thesis was titled, "The Gold and Silver Rushes of Nevada: 1900-1910." Byrd and Harry relocated to Fallon, Nevada, where Byrd became engaged in both academic and philanthropic activities throughout Western and Northern Nevada.

Byrd Sawyer worked as the librarian at Churchill County High School from the 1930s through the 1950s. She served as a member of the Philanthropic Educational Organization (PEO), Chapter X in Carson City, Nevada. She also created the organization's fourth Nevada chapter, Chapter D of Fallon in 1927, and served

as its first president. Sawyer's role in the organization heightened as she became the Nevada PEO's first State Organizer, and in 1949 she served as the Nevada State Chapter president. Sawyer also spoke at many meetings of the American Association of University Women at the University of Nevada, Reno, and toured Nevada providing histories of places to their local communities.

Byrd Sawyer was noted for writing the first complete history of the Nevada sheep industry. Her monograph, "Nevada Nomads: A Story of the Sheep Industry," was published in 1971. In recognition of her research and writing skills, she received the 1972 Annual Award for the Best Writer of Nevada History from the Nevada Historical Society. Sawyer also co-wrote two textbooks prior to her monograph, including "Our State Nevada" (1956) and "Here is Nevada" (1965). She assisted in writing the first history of Nevada's public education system. The book was called "Inside Nevada Schools: A Challenge for the Future" (1976), created by the Nevada Retired Teachers Association in observance of Nevada's Bicentennial. Sawyer served as the State Chairman for the project, which was a nationwide effort of regional history projects created by the National Retired Teachers Association. Sawyer also co-wrote a history monograph titled, "The History Of Fifty Years of Mining At Tonopah, 1900-1950" (1976), with Russell Elliott and Jay Carpenter.

Byrd Wall Sawyer continued her active interest in Nevada history until her death in October 15, 1981. Byrd was the step mother to Grant Sawyer, the Governor of Nevada from 1959-1967.

Sources:

"Byrd Sawyer honored by PEO." *Nevada Appeal*. May 11, 1977.

"New book details Nevada education." *Nevada Appeal*. November 7, 1976.

"Bicentennial Book Features Teachers' Works." *Nevada Appeal*. February 17, 1976.

"Retired Teachers to Record Nevada History." *Fallon Eagle-Standard*. February 11, 1975.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

---

## Scope and Contents Note

---

The Byrd Wall Sawyer collection is comprised of Byrd's research papers, and contains topics specifically related to Western and Northern Nevada's history from 1930 to 1970. The collection includes speeches, photographs, correspondence, and newspaper articles and clippings relating to Reno, Carson City, Virginia City, Tonopah, Goldfield, Fallon, and Washoe County. The collection also contains research notes and copies of her monograph, "Nevada Nomads," and her co-authored textbook, "Here is Nevada." The collection includes slides of foreign countries, sound recordings of interviews, and audiovisual materials, such as an anniversary celebration for Boulder City.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

## Arrangement

---

These records are organized into three series:

Series I. Professional files, 1893-1977;

Series II. Publications, 1904-1974;

Series III. Transparencies and audiovisual materials, undated.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

---

## Administrative Information

---

### Access Note

Collection is open for research, with the exception of materials that are restricted to protect personally identifiable information. Restrictions are noted at the file level of this inventory. Where use copies do not exist, production of use copies is required before access will be granted; this may delay research requests. Advanced notice is required.

Restricted materials are housed in box 02.

### 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 received periodically from 1974-1990; accession numbers 90-52, 86-33, 74-347, T-134, and T-179.

### Processing Note

In 2018, as part of an archival backlog elimination project, Lee Hanover rehoused and arranged the materials, wrote the finding aid and entered the data into Archives Space.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

---

## Related Materials

---

### Related Collections

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

The Byrd Wall Sawyer Photograph Collection, undated. PH-00256. Special Collections and Archives, University Libraries, University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Las Vegas, Nevada.

Sawyer, Grant. Interview, 1972, May 05. OH-01634. Oral History Research Center, Special Collections and Archives, University Libraries, University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Las Vegas, Nevada.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

---

## Names and Subjects

---

- Manuscripts
- Manuscript preparation
- Nevada -- History
- Women -- Nevada -- History
- Southern Nevada -- 20th Century -- Rural Nevada
- Education and state -- Nevada
- West (U.S.) -- History

---

## Collection Inventory

---

### Professional files, 1893-1977

Physical Description: 3.24 Cubic Feet (5 boxes)

Scope and Contents Note: The Professional files series, 1893-1977, are comprised of Byrd's research interests, and contains topics specifically related to Western and Southern Nevada's history from primarily 1930-1970. The series includes speeches, interview transcripts from her 1930-1931 Tonopah and Goldfield research, journal articles, maps, photographs, correspondence, and newspaper articles and clippings.

Arrangement: Materials are arranged alphabetically within subject files.

Title/Description	Containers
Agricultural files: photograph of the Carson Valley Ranch, Report of the Nevada State Soil Conservation Committee, and Agricultural Conservation Program Handbook, 1953-1961	box 01
Albright, Hardie: correspondence materials and research notes on Virginia City and Gold Canyon trip, 1936, undated	box 01

American Association of University Women: speeches to college women, 1950, 1967, undated	box 01
American Automobile Association: directories and maps, 1975-1976	box 01
Ancestry materials: contains photographs, personal belongings, and assorted materials, 1966, undated	box 01
Barbed wire: research notes, speech, and newspaper clippings, 1969, 1973, undated	box 01
Bibliographies: book lists from Sawyer's personal library, undated	box 01
Bishop Manogue High School: speech on dangers of alcohol, undated	box 01
Books: "Here is Nevada" publishing materials, 1965-1969	box 01
Books: "Inside Nevada Schools," newspaper clippings and photographs, 1977, undated	box 01
Books: "Nevada Nomads," publishing materials, 1970-1972	box 01
Book jackets: assorted book jackets, magazine clipping, and letters, 1931-1932, undated	box 01
Canada: photographs, 1950	box 01
Carson City geological materials: personal notes and newspaper clippings, 1974, undated	box 01
Carson City historic places and tours: guide books, maps, booklets, newspaper clippings, and photographs, 1963, 1973-1976, undated	box 01
Carson City legislative materials: reports, directories, letters, research notes, census data, and newspaper clippings, 1961, 1970-1976	box 01
Carson Nugget: newspaper clippings and memos on the casino's gold display, 1975, 1976	box 01
Carson Tahoe Hospital: memo and newspaper article, 1976, undated	box 01
Desert Ecology: magazines and photographs of plants and animals in California and Nevada, 1947, 1964	box 01
Education: report by the State Board of Education and a report card, 1893, 1895	box 01
Environmental: bulletins, Nevada State Park's brochure, and newspaper clippings, 1941, 1962-1973	box 01
Fallon: speech and notations on region's history, 1923, 1971	box 01
Family photographs, 1972, undated	box 01
Forts of Nevada: newspaper clippings and an index of Nevada forts, 1937, 1960, undated	box 01
Geography materials: social studies programs, articles, research notes, and newspaper clippings, 1947-1948	box 02
Glass: journal, newspaper, and magazine articles and clippings, 1895, 1955-1959, undated	box 02

Health and wellness: retreat packet, medical fliers, and postcard, undated	box 02
Highways and trails: assorted maps and informational booklets, 1948, 1955-1959, undated	box 02
Horses: journal, magazine, and newspaper articles and clippings about the Pony Express, rodeos, horse breeding, and famous Nevada horses, 1926, 1939-1956, undated	box 02
Indian history: report by the Nevada Indian Affairs Commission, photographs, and newspaper articles, 1876, 1960-1970, undated	box 02
Interviews: Tonopah, Goldfield, and the Carson and Colorado Railroad, 1930-1931	box 02
Judaism: speech by Sawyer's and magazine clipping, 1939, undated	box 02
Land: laws, homesteading, and Pyramid Lake information, 1958, undated	box 02
Letters: correspondence to and from Sawyer, 1936-1970	box 02
Life insurance and home title: personal financial information, 1942-1975 Physical Description: 2 Files Restricted: Materials are restricted to protect personally identifiable material. Restricted materials are housed in box 2.	box 02
Magazines: speech by Sawyer on magazines, undated	box 02
Magazines: assorted magazines, 1965, 1977	box 02
Maps: United States and individual state maps, 1976, undated	box 02
Mark Twain: booklets, magazines, and journal articles, 1927, 1960-1961, undated	box 03
Martin, Anne: Sawyer speech, undated	box 03
Midwifery: speech and notations on midwifery in Nevada, 1971	box 03
Mining: Bodie and Virginia City photographs, as well as maps of Nevada's gold production for Esmeralda and Nye counties, undated	box 03
Mound House, Nevada: research notes, and magazine articles on the Carson and Colorado Railroad, undated	box 03
Nevada: map and bicentennial calendar of events, 1976	box 03
Nevada history: materials include booklets, reports, notes, photographs, and newspaper articles and clippings, 1928, 1969-1971, undated	box 03
Nevada history: Sawyer's speeches, 1966, undated	box 03
Nevada libraries: speeches, guidebooks, photographs, scrapbook, and newspaper clippings, 1958-1969, undated	box 03
Nevada Public Affairs Report: reports on Clark County's consolidation and the election, 1974, 1976	box 03
Nevada State Future Teacher's Association: speech by Sawyer, 1964	box 03
Nevada State Retired Teacher's Association: materials include accounting information and program for an annual meeting, 1976-1977	box 03



Note cards: materials contain quotes and speech notes, undated	box 03
Nurses: speech by Sawyer, undated	box 03
Ormsby: map, speech by Sawyer, and newspaper clippings about Carson City's Ormsby House, 1972, undated	box 03
Tuolumne and Calaveras Counties: "Memories of the Days of Old, Days of Gold, Days of 49," book, and photograph, undated	box 03
Overland Trail: a guidebook, undated	box 03
Photographs: Nevada, undated	box 03
Pioneer, Nevada: Sawyer's speech, undated	box 03
Public schools: report and college handbooks, 1914, 1973-1977	box 04
Quotes: assorted inspirational quotes, 1948-1955, undated	box 04
Reno: speech by Sawyer and newspaper clippings, 1957, 1967, 1976, undated	box 04
Reno Pen Women: materials concerning historic topics in Nevada, 1947-1950	box 04
Round Mountain Mining Company: stock bonds and newspaper clippings, 1907-1922, 1972	box 04
Schofield, Patricia: a biography and newspaper clipping, 1961, 1970	box 04
Speech: Local Teacher's Association and values of American youth with assorted notecards, 1946, 1966, undated	box 04
Sheep: speech by Sawyer with notations, 1971	box 04
The Carson Sink Quadrangle: research paper, photographs, and maps, undated	box 04
The Society of Mayflower Descendants: speech by Sawyer, notes, and assorted materials, 1965-1976	box 04
Tonopah and Goldfield: materials include an interview, notes, and newspaper clippings about the towns' histories, 1900, 1931-1937, 1947, undated	box 04
Twin Falls, Idaho: photographs of surveyors, a horse team, gambling hall, and the mainstreet, 1903-1905	box 04
Vacation: assorted materials, 1974	box 04
Water and Reno: newspaper clippings, 1957-1960	box 05
Water: Governor Russel's speech and newspaper clippings on water development projects, 1958, 1966-1974, undated	box 05
Welfare: Nevada Social Welfare Conference speech with notations, 1964	box 05
Winnemucca, Sarah: Sawyer's speeches on the Paiute leader and Nevada women's history, undated	box 05

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

## Publications, 1904-1974

Physical Description: 3.24 Cubic Feet (5 boxes)

Scope and Contents Note: The Publications series, 1904-1974, primarily contains Sawyer's manuscripts and editions of the manuscripts by editors. The book manuscripts include, "Nevada Nomads" and "Here is Nevada." Additionally, the series contains a Nevada State Publication Depository System Manual, election materials, pamphlets on Nevada places, and journal articles from colleagues, as well as personal files containing recipes, postcards, and research note cards.

Arrangement: The materials are arranged and grouped by Sawyer's publications.

Title/Description	Containers
Nevada Nomads: complete manuscript in chapter by chapter bindings, 1971	box 05
Nevada Nomads: manuscript edits and annotations, 1968, undated	box 05
Physical Description: 7 Files	box 06
Nevada Nomads: incomplete copies, undated	box 06
Physical Description: 2 Files	
Nevada Nomads: index, undated	box 06
Nevada Nomads: research notes and collected book documents, undated	box 06
Photographs: Smith and Washoe Valley ranches, undated	box 06
Here is Nevada: manuscripts, edits, and annotations, 1964	box 07
Physical Description: 3 Files	
Nevada Official Publications Index: from Nevada State Libraries' indexes, 1969	box 07
Nevada State Publication Depository System Manual: as well as Student Library Assistants' Manual, 1969, undated	box 07
Home of the Wanderer: book by Evelyn Coverston and Laverne Howard, undated	box 07
Pamphlets on Nevada: materials concern hunting, fishing, camping, western lore, gambling, and special events, 1969, 1973, undated	box 07
Legislative materials: Nevada Election Laws manual and Governor Grant Sawyer's pens used for signing a bill on campus, 1966	box 07
The Open Range of Nevada: by Byrd Wall Sawyer, 1965	box 08
Research: bound newspaper notations and loose note cards of Sawyer's research, 1904-1957	box 08
Printing blocks: eight assorted blocks, undated	box 08
Sawyer's personal interests: materials include postcards, recipes, and labels from New Zealand, undated	box 08
Research notecards, undated	box 12

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

## Transparencies and audiovisual materials, undated

Physical Description: 1.94 Cubic Feet (3 boxes)

Scope and Contents Note: The transparencies and audiovisual materials series, undated, contains sound tapes, movie reels, and slides for an extensive class and travel documentation.

Arrangement: Materials were arranged by material type.

Title/Description	Containers
Unlabeled sound tapes, undated	box 08
Physical Description: 8 Items	box 09
Nevada broadcast and music recordings, undated	box 09
Physical Description: 2 Items	
Carl Dodge recording, undated	box 09
Physical Description: 4 Items	
McLaughlin and Laird recording, and unlabeled sound tapes, undated	box 09
Physical Description: 6 Items	
Films, undated	box 09
Physical Description: 3 U-Matic Videotapes	
Slides 107-109, undated	box 08
Slides 1-64, undated	box 10
Slides 65-147, undated	box 11

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)