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Guide to the Vivian Passer papers on Wayne N. Aspinall

Collection Identifier: CMU-SCA-006

Preferred Citation: [description of item, including box and folder], Vivian Passer papers on Wayne N. Aspinall, Tomlinson Library Special Collections and Archives, Colorado Mesa University.

Abstract: The collection includes a selection of articles, correspondence, speeches, documents, photographs, material culture, and biographical information by or about Representative Wayne N. Aspinall of Colorado collected or created by Vivian Passer, his administrative assistant.

Creator: Passer, Vivian; Aspinall, Wayne N.

Dates (inclusive): 1958-1986

Extent: 3 linear feet

Repository: Special Collections and Archives
Tomlinson Library
Colorado Mesa University
1100 North Avenue
Grand Junction, CO 81504

Historical Note:

Wayne Norviel Aspinall was born in Middleburg, Ohio on April 3, 1896. He was the oldest child of Mack Aspinall and Jessie Edna Norviel Aspinall who moved to Colorado in 1904 and settled in Palisade to farm peaches. Aspinall attended the Mt. Lincoln public schools in Palisade, Colorado. After high school he moved to Denver to attend the University of Denver. He enlisted in the Air Service of the Signal Corps during World War I, which interrupted his college career. He returned after the war and graduated in 1919 and went on to earn his law degree from the University of Denver Law School in 1925 where he developed his life-long interest in water rights, irrigation law, and mining law.

Aspinall served as a member of the Colorado House of Representatives from 1931 to 1934 and again in 1937-1938. He was then elected as a member of the Colorado Senate and served for almost ten years from 1939 to 1948. In 1948 he was elected to the United States House of Representatives. During his time in the US House of Representatives, Aspinall served as Chairman of the House Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, a member of the Joint Committee on Atomic Energy, and Chairman of the Sub-Committee on Raw Materials. He also was a member of the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct. He lost the Fourth District Democratic primary in 1972, ending his tenure in the US House of Representatives. Aspinall then became a founding member of the law firm of Aspinall and Aspinall in Grand Junction, Colorado. In 1975 Aspinall was the first occupant of the Milward Simpson Chair in Political Science, in the University of Wyoming. He died on October 9, 1983.

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Vivian Passer, born February 28, 1932, was Representative Aspinall's executive secretary and administrative assistant at the time of his retirement in 1979. After Aspinall retired, Passer attended Mesa College, earning an A.A. with distinction (Liberal Arts) in 1985 and a B.A. cum laude (Liberal Arts – Selected Studies) in 1996. From 1990 to 1996, Passer was a member of the Mesa State College Alumni Association Board of Directors. Passer wrote "The Life of Humanitarian Sabina Veronica Lally O'Malley," an article featuring a Grand Valley woman of generous spirit; it was published in *The Journal of the Western Slope* (Summer 1995, vol. 10, no. 3).

Scope and Contents: The collection includes a selection of articles, correspondence, speeches, documents, photographs, material culture, and biographical information by or about Representative Wayne N. Aspinall of Colorado collected or created by Vivian Passer, his administrative assistant. The collection covers his years in the US House of Representatives and the years following, from 1958 to 1986.

Arrangement: Material is in original order.

Access: Open for research in Special Collections and Archives

Use: It is the responsibility of the user to obtain permission to publish from the owner of the copyright (the institution, the creator of the record, the author or his/her transferees, heirs, legates, or literary executors). The user agrees to indemnify and hold harmless Colorado Mesa University, Tomlinson Library, its administrators, employees, and agents from and against all claims made by any person asserting that he or she is an owner of copyright.

Subjects: Water resources development -- Colorado River Watershed (Colo.-Mexico); Western Slope (Colo.); Colorado River Storage Project (U.S.)

Names: Ford, Gerald R., 1913-2006; Aspinall, Owen; Mesa College; Western State College of Colorado

Finding Aid Author: Lynn Albers (2014); revisions by Amber J. D'Ambrosio (2021)

Collection Description

Box 1/Folder 1: American History Illustrated. Gettysburg, PA: The National Historical Society. May 1979. Vol. 14, no. 2.

- 1/2 Appreciation cards: contribution to Wayne N. Aspinall Bronze Sculpture
- 1/3 Various Aspinall news articles
- 1/4 Aspinall biographies

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- 1/5 Aspinall cards to Passer: A 1981 Christmas card includes a photograph of the commemoration of the Wayne N. Aspinall Storage Unit – Upper Colorado Region and a personal note: “Thank you, Vivian, for your help to me. You made life very much easier for this old war horse. Wayne”
- 1/6 Aspinall letters to Passer – 1972
- 1/7 Aspinall letters – 1974
- 1/8 Aspinall letters – 1975
- 1/9 Vivian Passer correspondence regarding Aspinall’s surprise 80th birthday celebration – 1976
- 1/10 Aspinall letters – 1977
- 1/11 Aspinall letters – 1978. Carbons of several letters to MSC Don McKendrick. Our Nation! What of Its Tomorrows! Speech delivered at Western State College (commencement possibly) in Gunnison, Colorado on 6 May 1978.
- 1/12 Aspinall letters – 1980. A letter to James Watt where he refers to himself as “an old war horse.”
- 1/13 Aspinall’s letters – 1982. Several letters to his children.
- 1/14 Vivian Passer letter – 1991. To Senator William L. Armstrong of Colorado re: Aspinall’s place in the National Statuary Hall. Carbon copies to Owen Aspinall (son) and Tilman Bishop, State Senator.
- 1/15 Aspinall, Wayne N., Hon. The Milward L Simpson Lecture in Political Science. University of Wyoming. Fall 1975.
- 1/16 Historical Calendar of Washington, DC. 1977.
- 1/17 Programs from Aspinall commemorative events: Western Colorado Center for the Arts in Grand Junction, 1976
- Wayne N. Aspinall Storage Unit Dedication. Blue Mesa Dam, Colorado. 18 July 1981
 - Aspinall-Wilson Center at Western State College. 15 July 1982
 - Wayne N. Aspinall Sculpture bound for the Colorado State Capitol. 30 March 1978
 - Mesa College Wayne N. Aspinall Chair and associated foundation programs
- 1/18 Certificate of Recognition and marriage best wishes to Wayne and Essie Jeffers Best Aspinall from the Department of Interior – 1970. (Julia Aspinall passed away in 1969.)

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- 1/19 Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs. Legislative and Review Activities. 93rd Congress, Second Session. Washington DC: US Government Printing Office, 1975. Union Calendar no. 813, House Report No. 93-1666.
- 1/20 Colorado Water: Key to Tomorrow's Quality of Life. Denver: Colorado Water Congress, 1981.
- 1/21 Congressional Record. House of Representatives. Proceedings and Debates. 93rd Congress, Second Session. 18 July 1974. Vol. 120, no. 107.
- 1/22 Congressional Record. House of Representatives. Proceedings and debates. 93rd Congress, Second Session. 17 July 1974. Vol. 120, no. 106.
- 1/23 Card from Congressman and Mrs. Abraham Kazen, Jr.
- 1/24 Club 20 Explorer Newsletters. August 1981 and October 1983.
- 1/25 Denver Law Journal. Public Land Law Symposium. Denver, CO: The University of Denver College of Law. 1977. Vol. 54, no. 3-4.
- 1/26 Wayne Aspinall eulogy manuscript – probably written and delivered by his son, Owen Aspinall.
- Included are copies of condolences from Robert Broadbent, Commission of the Bureau of Reclamation, and from “Tuna and Fofu I.F. Sunia Member of Congress” in Samoa (where Owen Aspinall was governor).
 - There is a lovely sentiment included in the Samoan condolence and is translated as: “The clouds of sorrow shall pass; the blue of the sea shall return; our leader has left us; may he and his creator have a blessed journey.”
 - There is also a memorial remembrance for Essie F. Aspinall.
- 1/27 Roland C. Fischer letter from Colorado River Water Conservation District. 16 January 1981. Included is a western water information publication or newsletter.
- 1/28 Christmas card from Virginia and Elmer Goetz.
- 1/29 Notes for Citation: Honorary Degree Doctor of Laws to “Wayne Norviel Aspinall, Distinguished Statesman and Friend of Alaska.” 1959-1962.
- 1/30 Hosmer, Craig, Rep. The 21st Year: Looking Ahead. The Legislative Road to Future Solutions or Delays. 29 October 1974. Address at the Atomic Industrial Forum. Also included is a manuscript correlating nuclear reaction and Genesis from the Bible.
- 1/31 Wayne Aspinall's death notice. Albuquerque Journal articles. 10 October 1983.

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- 1/32 Wayne N. Aspinall Bronze Bust Fund. Internal Revenue Service. 22 May 1978.
- 1/33 Rice, Ross R. The Carl Hayden Project. 23 October 1973. Transcription of a Wayne Aspinall interview.
- 1/34 Letter from Rep. James P. Johnson to Vivian Passer. 9 April 1976. Tribute to Aspinall from Aspinall's 4th District, Colorado Congressional successor.
- 1/35 Letter from Governor Richard Lamm to Vivian Passer regarding Bureau of Reclamation projects.
- 1/36 Letter from Charles Leppert and The White House to Vivian Passer regarding birthday surprise for Aspinall. 10 March 1976.
- 1/37 Letter to Aspinall from Western Colorado Center for the Arts. 31 August 1976.
- 1/38 Miscellaneous Aspinall letters, papers, documents, Congressional speech/debate extracts, and biographical materials. Of interest is a manuscript of Colorado incumbents who "failed of reelection."
- 1/39 Card from Minnie Callahan to Vivian Passer. 1978.
- 1/40 Natural Resources Lawyer. Journal of the Section of Natural Resources Law. Circa 1974. Vol. 8, no. 4. "Forester Service Regulations" reprint.
- 1/41 N.W. Plummer, Regional Director – Department of Interior. Letter to Vivian Passer. 7 July 1981. Personal invitation to the Wayne N. Aspinall Storage Unit dedication ceremony "to attend as a special guest."
- 1/42 The Ancient Ones: A Proposal for Cultural Resource Development and Management in Southwest Colorado. Bureau of Land Management. Department of Interior. Photocopy annotated Club 20 – 1980.
- 1/43 Proposed Legislation to Establish the Anasazi National Conservation Area. 20 August 1979. Manuscript format.
- 1/44 Questions and Answers – Bureau of Land Management. Circa 1979. An interesting manuscript that addresses various Four Corner regional concerns: National Conservation Areas, the "Sacred Mountain Planning Unit" obligations, the Anasazi Heritage Center and Dolores archeological project, San Juan Resource Area, the Dominguez-Escalante Ruin, Historic Sites Act of 1935, the Utes, and the National Park Service.
- 1/45 Wayne Aspinall Speech transcripts:

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- Irrigation and Federal Participation in Colorado. July 18-20, 1977. Delivered at Western State College in Gunnison, Colorado.
 - Statement of Wayne N. Aspinall before the Sub-Committee on Public Works. Committee on Appropriations. House of Representatives. 28 March, 1977.
 - We Have Come a Long Way on a Rough Road. Delivered at Western State College in Gunnison, Colorado. 7 August 1978.
 - Genesis of the Organic Act and Its Implications. Delivered at a BLM function in Reno, Nevada. January 24 & 31, 1978.
- 1/46 Letter from the University of Wyoming Political Science Department offering Aspinall a position as Professor of Political Science. 13 June 1975.
- 1/47 Library of Congress. Legislative Reference Service. Frederick L. Scott manuscript to Aspinall regarding Speakers of the House marital status. 14 April 1954.
- 1/48 Commemorative compilation created by Vivian Passer. Western Colorado Center for the Arts flag raising ceremony honoring retired Congressman Wayne N. Aspinall. Includes photographs, letters, news articles, programs, and speech transcripts. An American Indian Arts & Crafts Exhibition was featured in the Center's gallery.
- 1/49 Formal Colorado Senate Joint Memorial No. 3 honoring the late Wayne N. Aspinall. Circa 1983.
- 1/50 Senate Journal. 54th General Assembly – State of Colorado. First Regular Session. 20 October 1983.
- 1/51 Shale Country. October 1976. Club 20 and political candidate articles.
- 1/52 Shale Country. February/March 1982. Rifle, Colorado featured.
- 1/53 Energy poem sent to Aspinall from the State of Colorado Poet Laureate Milford E. Shields of Durango. 7 September 1976.
- 1/54 manuscript from fraternal (both whimsical and formal) organizations honoring Aspinall: Jack Smith – Ole Grand Dad, 3 May 1972 and M. Pollard – Cherrydale Lodge No. 42, A.F. & A.M., 5 April 1962.
- 1/55 Speak, Mister Speaker. The Sam Rayburn Library Newsletter. June 1982.
- 1/56 George and Elena Stanescu correspondence to Vivian Passer. 27 July 1978 and 18 December 1986.
- 1/57 Presidential correspondence and miscellaneous manuscripts. 1977 – 1981. Includes transcript of Gerald Ford speech in Grand Junction's Lincoln Park Baseball Field.

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- 1/58 Manuscript of Status of Wilderness, Wild, Scenic and Recreation River Areas in Colorado as of July 1, 1977.
- 1/59 St. Mary's Echo. Grand Junction: St. Mary's Hospital. 20 February 1958. Vol. 1, no. 2. The Chimes. Grand Junction: St. Mary's Hospital & Medical Center. April 1978. Vol. no. 6
- 1/60 The Campus Pulse. Laramie: University of Wyoming. 19 September 1975. Vol. 13, no. 4.
- 1/61 House Journal. 54th General Assembly – State of Colorado. First Regular Session. 21 October 1983.
- 1/62 Delcour, David W. and Diane D. Rees. The Role of the Small Miner. Colorado Mining Association reprint. Originally presented 13 September 1977 at the American Mining Congress Convention.
- 1/63 The Supreme Court of the United States. Historical and informational publication on the Supreme Court Building. undated
- 1/64 The Two Hundredth Anniversary of the First Continental Congress 1774-1974. Independence Hall. Washington DC: Former Members of Congress publication. undated
- 1/65 United States Senate. 96th Congress. Washington DC: US Government Printing Office. 20 April 1979.
- 1/66 University of Wyoming Alumnus. Laramie: University Station. November-December 1975. Vol. 23, no. 2.
- 1/67 Wayne N. Aspinall Bronze Bust Fund. Closing Financial Statement from Vivian E. Passer, Treasurer.
- 1/68 Wayne N. Aspinall Bronze Bust Fund miscellaneous financial documents.
- 1/69 Western Colorado Center for the Arts newsletter. Vivian Passer acknowledgement on page 3. 1976.
- 1/70 Owen Aspinall obituary and Grand Junction Daily Sentinel article 3 February 1997. Cards of thanks to Vivian Passer from Mary (Aspinall) White (Wayne Aspinall's sister).
- 1/71 Letter to Vivian Passer from Marian Zipse, Coordinator of the Mesa County Oral History Program. 3 March 1986.
- 1/72 Photograph by Vivian Passer: Alice Wright and Mary Louise Giblin.
- 1/73 Photograph of the Aspinalls; presumably taken by Vivian Passer.
- 1/74 Photograph presumably taken by Passer; President Ford and Rep. Aspinall are in the center of the crowd.

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- 1/75 President Ford and Rep. Aspinall at a Western State College building dedication; photograph by Vivian Passer.
- 1/76 Photograph: Rep. Aspinall and unidentified woman (perhaps a government official).
- 1/77 Signed photograph of Barbara and George H.W. Bush – possibly in Kuwait.
- 1/78 Aspinall in hard-hat; a black & white photograph.
- 1/79 Christmas photograph of Wayne and Essie Aspinall – 1974.
- 1/80 Annotated copies of vintage photographs of Aspinall family, first home in Palisade, Mr. Lincoln School.
- 1/81 Photographs from flag raising at Western Colorado Center for the Arts – 1976.
- 1/82 Copy of GJ Sentinel photograph of Sen. Edwin Johnson, Walter Walker, Harry S. Truman, Wayne Aspinall, Gov. William Lee Knous.
- 1/83 Photograph of Grand Junction marquee celebrating Aspinall's 75th birthday; arranged by Passer.
- 1/84 Signed photograph of Aspinall in the House Chamber – 1961; "To Vivian Passer, my Secretary – Truly, Wayne N. Aspinall."
- 1/85 Photograph negatives and slides.
- 1/86 Unidentified man at picnic.
- 1/87 Wayne and Essie Aspinall Christmas photograph – 1975.
- 1/88 Photograph of Aspinall – patriotic speaking engagement with conifers and Colorado blue sky background.
- 1/89 U.S. Rep. Aspinall official stationery
- 1/90 Callaks, Shawna. The Honorable Wayne Norviel Aspinall, fourth district. 1976. biography based on a Vivian Passer interview; written by a 9th grade Social Studies student.
- 1/91 Abramson, Kandice. A Guide to the Wayne N. Aspinall – United States Representative Collection. Original 2003 collection guide by 2003 Mesa State College student.

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Congressional Directory. 93rd Congress, First Session. 1973. Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office. Wayne Aspinall's copy.

Congressional Directory. 94th Congress, First Session. 1975. Washington DC: US Government Printing Office. Wayne Aspinall's copy.

1983-1984 Congressional Directory. 98th Congress. Washington DC: US Government Printing Office. Wayne Aspinall's copy.

Box 2

Anna Eleanor Roosevelt 1884 – 1962: Humanitarian, Stateswoman, Diplomat, Author. Washington DC: US Government Printing Office. 1966. 88th Congress, First Session. House Document No. 152. "Memorial Addresses in the House of Representatives on the Life and Ideals of Anna Eleanor Roosevelt." Gift from Wayne Aspinall to Vivian Passer.

Aspinall, Wayne N. "A Family Message to My Family." Journal of the Western Slope. Grand Junction: Mesa State College. Winter & Spring 2001, vol. 16, no. 1 & 2. "Introduction" article by Dr. Steve Schulte.

Brown, Larry. Aspinall. Gunnison, CO: Western State College Foundation, Publisher, 1966.

Congressional Record: Proceedings and Debates of the 98th Congress, First Session. Washington DC: US Government Printing Office. 4 August 1983. Vol. 129, No. 114 – Part II.

Congressional Pictorial Directory. 93rd Congress. Washington DC: US Government Printing Office, 1973. Preliminary Edition.

The Cumbria Lakeland Calendar. Eastfield, North Yorkshire, Great Britain: D.H. Greaves Ltd. Annotated "To Vivian Passer. From "Ye Boss." Happy Times in 1978."

Dwight David Eisenhower. Memorial Tributes Delivered in Congress. Washington DC: US Government Printing Office, 1970. 91st Congress, 1st Session. House Document No. 91-195.

Edmonds, Carol. "'Landslide Aspinall' Recalls 24 Years as Congressman." Colorado West: The Sunday Magazine of the Daily Sentinel. Grand Junction, Colorado. 16 March 1975.

Fenno, Richard F., Jr. Congressmen in Committees. Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1973. Inscribed: "June – 74. Best wishes to Vivian – Co-worker in Politics. Wayne N. Aspinall. Veteran – 50 plus yrs."

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Giblin, Mary Louise. "Wayne Aspinall Dies: Cancer Claims Mesa County's Most Distinguished Politician." Grand Junction, CO: Daily Sentinel. 10 October 1983. Vol. 91, no. 319.

Hugo LaFayette Black. Memorial Addresses and Tributes in the Congress of the United States. Washington DC: US Government Printing Office, 1972. 92nd Congress, 1st Session. House Document No. 92-236.

Journal of the Western Slope. Grand Junction: Mesa State College Historical Society and Phi Alpha Theta. Summer 1995, vol. 10, no. 3. Vivian Passer article: "The Life of Humanitarian Sabina Veronica Lally O'Malley."

Martin, Curtis. Colorado Politics. Denver: Big Mountain Press, 1960. Wayne Aspinall's copy.

Material Culture: 3 Aspinall pencils, Democrat donkey pin (damaged), 3 "Re-Elect Aspinall" matchbooks, Jim Robb for Legislature political buttons. Placard: Reelect Aspinall for Congress.

Telephone Directory. United States House of Representatives. Washington DC: US Government Printing Office. May 1978.

Wayne Aspinall 8"x10" black & white photograph and biography in typed manuscript form.