Guide to the Harry Sello papers X8761.2019

Finding aid prepared by Sydney Gulbronson Olson
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November 2019
**Title:** Harry Sello papers  
**Identifier/Call Number:** X8761.2019  
**Contributing Institution:** Computer History Museum  
**Language of Material:** English  
**Physical Description:** 6.25 Linear feet 5 record cartons  
**Date (bulk):** Bulk, 1960-1995  
**Date (inclusive):** 1954-2008  
**creator:** Sello, Harry, 1921-2016  

**Processing Information**  
Collection surveyed by Sydney Gulbronson Olson, 2018.  

**Access Restrictions**  
The collection is open for research. However, the collection may require review by CHM staff before viewing.  

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**Preferred Citation**  
[Identification of Item], [Date], Harry Sello papers, Lot X8761.2019, Box [x], Computer History Museum.  

**Immediate Source of Acquisition**  

**Biographical/Historical Note**  
Harry Sello was a key figure in the early semiconductor industry who worked at Shockley Semiconductor Laboratory and Fairchild Semiconductor during the 1960s and 1970s. Born on March 20, 1921 in Chernihiv, near Kiev, Ukraine, he and his family immigrated to Chicago in 1923. Sello attended the University of Illinois, earning a bachelor’s degree in chemistry in 1942. He then pursued a PhD in physical chemistry at the University of Missouri, leaving to serve in the U.S. Navy from 1944 to 1946. After graduating in 1948, he moved to California to work as a research chemist at the Shell Development Corporation in Emeryville.  

During this time, Sello hosted a live educational science show aimed at high schoolers called “Tempest in a Test Tube” for 54 weeks on KQED, the local public television station. Sello was also a highly enthusiastic auctioneer at numerous KQED yearly fundraisers.  

In 1957, William Shockley recruited Sello to join Shockley Semiconductor Laboratory to work on the chemical aspects of semiconductor manufacturing. Two years later, Sello joined Fairchild Semiconductor as head of pre-production engineering on silicon transistors. As part of this position, he worked with the team that developed the planar process. While at Fairchild Sello held various management positions, including two years as operations manager of SGS Italy. For ten years at Fairchild he implemented and managed international technology alliances for integrated circuit manufacturing in Europe and Asia, negotiating agreements with both state-owned and private companies. He retired from Fairchild in 1981, after 22 years with the company.  

In 1982, he formed Harry Sello and Associates, a consulting business specializing in international licensing and technology transfer. Sello also served as an expert witness on integrated circuit process patent litigation with Texas Instruments that Fairchild won, resulting in substantial royalty payments to the company. Beginning in 2005, Sello became involved in the Computer History Museum, giving oral history interviews, participating in the Semiconductor Special Interest Group, and becoming a docent. Harry passed away on April 4, 2017 at age 96.  

**Scope and Content of the Collection**  
The Harry Sello papers hold materials collected or created by Sello over the course of his career as an engineer at Shockley Semiconductor and Fairchild Semiconductor, as an independent consultant, and as an expert witness. The papers span 1954 through 2008 with the bulk of the collection being from 1960 to 1995. Most of the papers are professional in nature, having been collected over the course of his career.  

The first section of the papers relates to his work at Shockley and Fairchild. Types of materials include department rosters, travel schedules and notes, technology briefing presentations, and internal memos and reports. The materials chronicle his early work as an engineer, his management of SGS Italy, and his work negotiating international technology alliances and
agreements. Additionally, Sello saved materials related to chip history as well as lectures that he presented outside of Fairchild during the 1960s and 1970s. Sello’s professional papers also include materials from his work as an independent consultant beginning in 1982 under the name Harry Sello & Associates. These materials include presentation notes and slides, proposals for seminars, notes from conferences and seminars that he participated in, and articles that he wrote.

Most of the materials pertain to international licensing of technology and come from events sponsored by groups such as the US Department of Commerce and the American Electronics Association. Finally, there is material related to his work as an expert witness during the 1990s on cases such as Cyrix Corporation v. Texas Instruments v. Intel Corp. and Micron Semiconductor Inc. v. Texas Instruments. This area of documentation includes correspondence and research materials such as copies of testimonies and depositions, patents, and licensing agreements.

While most of the materials in the collection pertain to Sello’s professional work, there are some personal files scattered throughout the collection. These files include his resumes, press clippings that mention Sello or his work, awards, and materials related to Fairchild and Shockley commemorative and reunion events.

Finally, the collection holds one box of mixed photographic and audiovisual material, most of which is related to Sello’s work at Fairchild. It includes over 500 35mm slides, as well as about 50 prints, ranging in date from the early 1960s to the early 1980s. Topics include seminar and lecture slides, marketing designs, briefings on Fairchild technologies, Fairchild group trips, and Fairchild facilities. In addition, there are photographs documenting professional groups that Fairchild hosted, such as a 1973 group sent from the USSR. Also included are 16 glass slides from a Fairchild 1965 presentation titled “Recent Results in the Diffusion of Silicon.” There are three VHS tapes related to Advanced Micro Devices and microelectronics, as well as one audiocassette.

**Separated Material**

Physical objects were separated from the collection. To view catalog records for the separated items, please search CHM's online catalog at [https://www.computerhistory.org/collections/search/](https://www.computerhistory.org/collections/search/).

**Related Collections at CHM**

- A Briefing on Integrated Circuits, lot X3929.2007.
- Fairchild Semiconductor Corporation panel discussion: founding years and research and development (R&D), lot X4208.2008, catalog number 102658276.
- Sello (Harry) Interview, lot X5668.2010, catalog number 102702331.
- Sello, Harry SEMI oral history, lot X6196.2011, catalog number 102746367.
- Semiconductor test equipment development oral history panel, lot X5501.2010, catalog number 102702136.
- Shockley Semiconductor Laboratory oral history panel, lot X3452.2006, catalog number 102658250.
- The Rise of Silicon Valley: From Shockley Labs to Fairchild Semiconductor, lecture by Jim Gibbons et al., lot X4923.2009, catalog number 102695088.

**Related Collections at Other Repositories**


**Subjects and Indexing Terms**

- Evidence, Expert
- Fairchild (Firm)
- Sello, Harry
- Semiconductors
- Shockley Semiconductor Laboratory