The Finding Aid of the Kenneth Hahn Collection 0047

Jessica Geiser and Jamie Henricks
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Pepperdine University. Special Collections and University Archives.
April 2012
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URL: https://library.pepperdine.edu/collections/boone-special-collections-university-archives.htm
Language of Material: English
Contributing Institution: Pepperdine University. Special Collections and University Archives.
Title: Kenneth Hahn Collection
Identifier/Call Number: 0047
Physical Description: 2.05 Linear Feet (3 boxes)
Date (inclusive): 1930s - 1990s
Abstract: Kenneth Hahn was a former Los Angeles County Supervisor and Los Angeles City Councilman who served for over 40 years, making him the longest serving elected official in California's history. The collection contains materials about Hahn's life and passing, including photographs, collected obituaries, and items from a public television program on Hahn produced after his death entitled A Salute to Kenneth Hahn.

Pepperdine University. Special Collections and University Archives.

Language of Material: Materials are in English.

Conditions Governing Access
Advance notice required for access.

Conditions Governing Use
Permission to publish, quote, or reproduce must be secured from the repository and the copyright holder.

Preferred Citation
[Box/folder# or item name], Kenneth Hahn collection, Collection no. 0047, Special Collections and University Archives, University Libraries, Pepperdine University.

Biographical note
Kenneth Hahn was born on August 19, 1920 in Los Angeles, California, to Hattie and John Henry Hahn. He grew up in South Los Angeles, and attended local schools John Muir Middle School and John C. Fremont High School. Hahn then enrolled at Pepperdine College, and graduated from the Vermont Avenue campus in 1942 with a degree in public administration. Hahn immediately left for the Navy, having enlisted the day after Pearl Harbor, where he served as a lieutenant for four years. He returned for a year to Pepperdine in 1946, teaching history and government.

In 1947, Hahn began his political career, when he was elected to the Los Angeles City Council. At age 26, he was the youngest person to ever achieve that position, and during his time as a Councilman, he also attended the University of Southern California, earning a Masters in Education in 1952. At age 32, Hahn broke records again when he became the youngest elected member of the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors. Hahn was elected Supervisor a record ten times, and served from 1952 until his retirement in 1992, making him also the longest serving elected official in California's history.

During his 40 years as County Supervisor, Hahn amassed a long list of achievements. These include the establishment of the Los Angeles County Paramedic Program in 1970, the installation of emergency call boxes on the freeways in 1962, the construction and naming of the Martin Luther King Jr. Medical Center, the payment of reparations to Japanese Americans fired during World War II due to discrimination, and bringing the Dodgers to Los Angeles in 1958. Hahn also oversaw the construction of the Los Angeles-to-Long Beach blue line train, as well as many parks, including the Baldwin Hills State Recreation Area, which was later renamed the Kenneth Hahn State Recreation Area.

After experiencing various health issues, including a stroke in 1987 that left him largely confined to a wheelchair, Hahn passed away from heart failure on October 12, 1997. Hahn was survived by his wife Ramona, whom he married in 1948, as well as their two children, both of whom followed him into politics. Ramona was the daughter of missionaries (born October 5, 1924, in Tokyo, Japan) and lived in Japan until she was 11. She passed away July 11, 2011, in San Pedro, California. Their son James K. Hahn served as the City Controller of Los Angeles, Los Angeles City Attorney, and the Mayor of Los Angeles, and now serves as a Judge for the Los Angeles County Superior Court. Their daughter Janice Hahn served on the Los Angeles City Council for 10 years and is now a Congressional Representative for California’s 36th District.

Scope and Content
The collection contains materials about the life of Kenneth Hahn. Included are photographs of Hahn and family members; Hahn with multiple U.S. Presidents and Martin Luther King Jr.; the Pepperdine Vermont Avenue campus; and Hahn at various Pepperdine events, including the Foster Grandparents Day ceremony in 1975 with Betty Ford. Memorabilia and an interview with Hahn at the Kenneth Hahn Library are also included. Also included are materials collected after Hahn's death, such as memorial service programs, obituaries, and materials related to a public access television program on Kenneth Hahn produced after his passing.

Arrangement
The collection is organized alphabetically by folder title.

**Related Archival Materials**
Kenneth Hahn collection. The Huntington Library, San Marino, CA.

**Processing Information note**
The collection was arranged and described by Jessica Geiser and Jamie Henricks in April, 2012.

**Subjects and Indexing Terms**
Audiocassettes
Clippings
Los Angeles (Calif.) -- History
Universities and colleges -- California -- History
Videocassettes
Programs
Photographs
Interviews
Correspondence
Hahn, Kenneth
Hahn, James K.
Pepperdine College
Pepperdine University

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<td>A Salute to Kenneth Hahn: Final Copy 1997</td>
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<td>A Salute to Kenneth Hahn: Videocassette with Pictures 1997</td>
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<td>Articles: Hahn's Retirement 1991</td>
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