

# **Hubert H. and Muriel Humphrey Collection**

## **M/A 1994.21.01-03**

**Finding aid prepared by Benjamin C. Skinner**

---

This finding aid was produced using the Archivists' Toolkit

August 01, 2015

Describing Archives: A Content Standard

James K. Hosmer Special Collections Library  
January 5, 1913  
300 Nicollet Mall  
Minneapolis, MN, 55401  
612-543-8200  
[specialcoll@hclib.org](mailto:specialcoll@hclib.org)

## Table of Contents

---

<u>Summary Information</u> .....	3
<u>Biography</u> .....	4
<u>Description of Collection</u> .....	6
<u>Controlled Access Headings</u> .....	7
<u>Collection Inventory</u> .....	9
<u>Newspaper Clippings</u> .....	10

## Summary Information

---

<b>Repository</b>	James K. Hosmer Special Collections Library
<b>Title</b>	Hubert H. and Muriel Humphrey Collection
<b>Date</b>	1943-2002
<b>Extent</b>	3.0 boxes
<b>Language</b>	English

## Biography

---

Hubert H. Humphrey Jr. was born on May 27, 1911 in Wallace South Dakota. His father Hubert H. Humphrey Sr. was a drugstore owner and part time politician. He was the second of four children, and was instilled with a zeal for work by his father at an early age. Humphrey's began learning about politics at an early age. His father would read to him about the lives of Thomas Jefferson and Woodrow Wilson. In addition, he would listen to the speeches of William Jennings Bryan. In 1927 Humphrey's family was hit by financial distress, which was present all over South Dakota at the time. This culminated with the sale of the family home to pay off their outstanding debts.

Despite the family financial woes Humphrey was still able to attend the University of Minnesota beginning in 1929. However, he was only able to complete two years of study before returning home. His family needed his help to manage their new drugstore. To further this end he enrolled in pharmacy courses, and completed the three year course in six months. It was on this return trip to South Dakota that he met his future wife Muriel Buck.

Muriel Buck was born in 1912 in Huron South Dakota. Her father worked as a grocery wholesaler and resort owner. She met Humphrey in 1933 while he was working with his father. The Humphrey's drugstore was a popular meeting place for college students, and Muriel met him on one of her visits. They would go out dancing frequently, or listen to traveling bands at a pavilion in town. It was also during this time that Humphrey came to political consciousness, and decided to enter the realm of politics. They were married in 1936, and the couple returned to Minnesota in 1937 so Humphrey could continue his studies at the University of Minnesota.

He studied political science and managed a fourplex with Muriel. She also held a job as a typist at an investment firm. During this period Humphrey got involved in "New Deal" politics, and met several people who would be lifelong colleagues. These included Orville Freeman, who would later be Governor of Minnesota, and future mayor of Minneapolis Arthur Naftalin. Humphrey graduated in 1939, and proceeded to the University of Louisiana to take a graduate fellowship position. Again Muriel went with him, and would make sandwiches for him to sell to support them with.

In 1940 he again returned to Minnesota to teach in Duluth, and later in Minneapolis. There he made connections with labor unions that would later aid in his political career. In 1943 he ran for Mayor of Minneapolis, but was defeated by the incumbent Marvin Kline. He then took a teaching job at Macalester College to pay off his campaign debts. This was not to last though, and he quit in 1944 to devote himself fulltime to politics. Humphrey ran for mayor again in 1945, and this time he was victorious. This would mark the entrance of both Hubert and Muriel on the political scene. While he was busy with the work of government she would manage their household. However, she also took part in politics by campaigning for her husband and appearing at political rallies. She would continue to support her Hubert both domestically and politically throughout his entire career.

As mayor Humphrey set about trying to improve the city of Minneapolis. He pushed hard for urban renewal projects, and housing for returning WWII veterans. He also managed to pass one of the first fair employment ordinances aimed at eliminating the city's reputation for anti-Semitism. Further, he

also attempted to improve law enforcement in the city. Minneapolis at this time had a reputation for racketeering, prostitution, and after hours drinking halls. Together with Police Chief Ed Ryan he initiated a number of grand jury investigations into illicit businesses. Soon the city's bad image began to improve greatly. In 1947 he was re-elected in a landslide victory.

In 1948 he began to look towards the national stage. At the 1948 Democratic National Convention he caused a split in the party between northern and southern Democrats. This was due to his insistence that they include a strong civil rights plank. Despite these tensions, he was elected to a U.S. Senate seat. He was the first Democrat from Minnesota to do so. His reputation as a brash man with a sharp tongue preceded him, and caused problems early on. He railed at the senate chastising its members, and criticizing long held policies. However, he still entered the senate's inner circle thanks to Texas Senator Lyndon Johnson. Johnson used Humphrey as a political contact to tie himself to northern Democrats. This would be the beginning of a long political relationship for the two.

As Humphrey continued to take part in senate activities, he began to soften his behavior slightly. He found that compromise was an important political tool. Humphrey introduced a number of pieces of legislation including a bill that would have given free healthcare to the elderly, and another that would have eliminated the Electoral College. Much of his time in the Senate was spent trying to advance the cause of labor and civil rights. In 1953 when Senator Johnson became Minority Leader, Humphrey was placed on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. In 1958 Humphrey captured attention for his trip to the Soviet Union where he spoke to Premier Nikita Khrushchev for 8 1/2 hours.

With the Election of John F. Kennedy, Humphrey saw some of his most important work accomplished. These included the creation of the Peace Corps, the 1963 Limited Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, and finally the Civil rights Act of 1964. This latter achievement was considered one of his greatest, and made discrimination on the basis of race illegal at public accommodations. In addition it added "Equal Opportunity" to employment practices, and eliminated voting restrictions for African Americans. Soon after the passing of this legislation he became the Democratic Nominee for the Vice-Presidency.

As Vice President, Humphrey's political career began to lose its luster. The specter of the Vietnam War was tarnishing the good work he had done other areas. However, he continued to champion many of the causes that he had in the senate. He was the Washington liaison for the implementation of anti-poverty measures. These included the Job Corps, the Youth Corps and Head Start. In addition he was chairman of several councils for things such as equal opportunity and marine sciences.

In 1965 after a Viet-Cong attack an extensive bombing campaign was staged by the U.S. which Humphrey opposed. This action froze him out of policy discussions for months. In 1966 he traveled to Vietnam, and became convinced of the need for U.S. Intervention. From that time onward he never publicly criticized the war effort. This decision may have increased his alienation of his Liberal Supporters.

In 1968 Humphrey decided to seek the Democratic nomination for President. In August of that year he succeeded in getting the nomination, but was immediately met with resistance from the political left. Lack of support and a divided Democratic Party led to his loss to Richard Nixon. However, in 1972 he again sought the Presidential Nomination. This time he lost the nomination to George McGovern and, when the primaries started again in 1976, resisted the urge to enter again.

During the 1971 campaign for President he also returned to the Senate. The Senate's reception to his return was mixed. He was still tainted by his connection to President Johnson and the Vietnam War. He was denied a seat on the Foreign Relations Committee, but regained favor as a member of a Democratic council which urged withdrawal from Vietnam. In 1977 he was rejected for the title of majority leader, and his health began to fail. However, his reputation had been repaired somewhat, and he was given the title of Deputy President Protem of the Senate.

In August of 1977 Humphrey was diagnosed with cancer, and his wife Muriel also fell ill while caring for him. He was unable to return to the Senate floor until October. He was greeted by Thunderous Applause from both sides of the isle as he took the floor. Choked with emotion, he delivered a speech thanking his colleagues. Shortly after in January of 1978 Humphrey died surrounded by friends and Family. Minnesota, and the whole U.S., mourned his death deeply.

The job of nominating his replacement to the Senate ultimately fell to then Minnesota Governor Rudy Perpich. While there were several people who wanted the position, it ended up going to Humphrey's widow Muriel. She had supported him throughout his entire political career, and had connections at the national level that other green senators would not have had. She became the only woman in the senate and only the 12th woman ever to serve.

She was sworn in on February 6th 1978, and set about proving that she would not just ride her husband's coat tails. She introduced legislation on unemployment, aid for disadvantaged medical students, and national advocacy for psychiatric patients. Her term was short lived however, and she decided not to run for re-election to her husband's seat after she finished his term. Her own health was questionable, and she still had unresolved grief about her husband's death.

In 1979 she returned to Huron South Dakota, and in 1981 married a friend from high school named Max Brown. Also, she continued to campaign for her son until 1984 when she decided to drop out of politics entirely. She lived quietly until her death almost twenty years later.

In September of 1998 Muriel Humphrey Brown passed away. Her funeral was well attended by many political colleagues and family including several former governors as well as former Vice President Walter Mondale.

---

## Description of Collection

---

The Hubert H. and Muriel Humphrey Collection consists of three boxes containing a number of materials including: speeches, campaign paraphenalia, and newspaper clippings.

## Administrative Information

---

### Publication Information

James K. Hosmer Special Collections Library January 5, 1913

---

## Controlled Access Headings

---

### Geographic Name(s)

- Minneapolis (Minn.) -- History.
- Minneapolis (Minn.) -- Politics and government.
- Minneapolis (Minn.) -- Race relations.
- Minneapolis (Minn.). Mayor.
- Minnesota -- History.
- Minnesota -- Politics and government.

### Personal Name(s)

- Humphrey Brown, Muriel, 1912-1998
- Humphrey, Hubert H., 1911-1978
- Johnson, Lyndon B., 1908-1973
- Naftalin, Arthur, 1917-2003
- Perpich, Rudy, 1928, 1995

### Subject(s)

- Civil rights movements -- Minnesota -- Minneapolis.
- College teachers.
- Democratic Party (Minn.)
- Democratic Party (U.S.)
- Elections -- Minnesota -- Minneapolis.
- Elections -- Minnesota.

- Elections -- United States
- Farmers -- Government policy -- United States
- Labor unions -- Minnesota.
- Legislators -- United States.
- Local elections -- Minnesota -- Minneapolis.
- Mayors -- Election
- Political campaigns -- United States
- Political campaigns.
- Political candidates -- Minnesota -- Minneapolis.
- Political candidates -- United States
- Politicians -- Minnesota.
- Presidential campaigns -- United States
- Presidential candidates -- United States.
- Presidents -- United States -- Nomination.
- Vice-Presidential Candidates
- Vice-Presidents -- United States.
- War.
- Women in politics -- Minnesota -- Minneapolis.

## Collection Inventory

	<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>
Biographical Sketches: Hubert H. Humphrey	1	1
Biographical Sketches: Hubert H. Humphrey, Death	1	2
Hubert H. Humphrey: Funeral Materials	1	3
Biographical Sketches: Muriel Humphrey Brown	1	4
Biographical Sketches: Muriel Humphrey Brown	1	5
Private Life and Family	1	6
Private Life and Family	1	7
Hubert H. Humphrey Cancer Society and Commemorative information	1	8
Correspondence	1	9
List of Cartoons Drawn by Scott Long That Feature HHH	1	10
Memorabilia	1	11
Campaign Materials: 1943 & 1945	2	1

## Newspaper Clippings

Campaign Materials: 1954	2	2
Campaign Materials: 1970	2	3
<b>Newspaper Clippings</b>		
	<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>
Clippings Index: 1943-1952	2	4
Clippings: 1943-1945	2	5
Clippings: 1946-1949	2	6
Clippings: 1950-1955	2	7
Clippings: 1956-1959	2	8
Clippings: 1960-1963	2	9
Clippings: 1964 #1	2	10
Clippings: 1964 #2	2	11
Clippings: 1964 #3	2	12
Clippings: 1965	2	13

## Newspaper Clippings

Clippings: 1966	2	14
Clippings: 1967	2	15
Clippings: 1968 #1	2	16
Clippings: 1968 #2	2	17
Clippings: 1969	2	18
Clippings: 1970	2	19
Clippings: 1971	2	20
Clippings: 1972	2	21
Clippings: 1973	2	22
Clippings: 1974	2	23
Clippings: 1975	2	24
Clippings: 1975-1980 1975-1980	3	1
Clippings: 1976 #1	2	25
Clippings: 1976 #2	3	2

## Speeches, Reports, and Newsletter

Clippings: 1977	2	26
Clippings: 1978	2	27
Clippings: 1979	2	28
Clippings: 1980-2002	2	29
Clippings: Humphrey Institute, 1976-1980	2	30
Speeches, Reports, and Newsletter	3	3
<b>Speeches, Reports, and Newsletter</b>	<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>
	3	4
		<b>Box</b>
Hubert H. Humphrey Funeral Commemorative Material, January, 14-17, 1978		3