

Local History Collection

Biography

NAME John S. Gibson Jr.

Occupation General Contractor

Address 1604 Sunnyside Terrace, San Pedro, Cal

Birth (Date and Place) August 11, 1902, Geneseo, Rice Country, Kansas

FATHER John S. Gibson

Birth (Date and Place) Constantine, Michigan

If Deceased, When 1931

MOTHER Flora Dix Gibson

Birth (Date and Place) Lynn, Masschusetts

If Deceased, When 1928

IF MARRIED, TO WHOM Mina Workman

Birth of Same (Date and Place) 1901
Jan. 19, Lyons, Kansas

If Deceased, When ----

When Married January 16, 1923

CHILDREN (Married Names of Daughters)

Marlyn Irene Buehler, San Pedro, Calif.

Flo-Rene Dix Blackwelder, San Pedro, Calif.

SKETCH

(Please make this as full as possible, giving business affiliations, positions of honor or trust with dates if possible.)

Engaged in General Contracting Business
in San Pedro, California since 1941

1933 to 1941 Employed by George M. Bronaugh
General Contractor as Superintendent of
Construction, Secretary of The San Pedro Junior
Chamber of Commerce 1933 to 1938. 1938 Founded
San Pedro Boy's Club. 1936 Director of Calif.
State Junior Chamber of Commerce 1937 Vice
President of Calif. State Junior Chamber
1934 awarded Distinguished Service Metal of
Civitan International, 1939 received National
Junior Chamber of Commerce Award for distinguished
service in Civic Affairs, 1938 received award
from Woodcraft Rangers of America for Constructive
Work with Youth.

1930 to 1933 President of the Citizens Bank of
San Pedro, Calif

1927 to 1930 Assistant Cashier of Citizens Bank
of San Pedro

1924 Elected Mayor of Geneseo, Kansas 1924

1951

At Present time member of Board of Managers
of San Pedro Y. M. C. A. Director of
Pacific Southwest Region of Youth For Christ
International, Member of Chamber of Commerce,
Chairman Board of First Baptist Church,
Member San Pedro Art Association, Chairman
of Board of Harbor Youth For Christ.
Treasurer Harbor Association of Evangelicals
Member Christian Business Men's Association

Gibson Named Employee of the Year

City Council President John S. Gibson, Jr., who has just completed his 25th year as a member of the City Council, was honored by the All City Employees Association as "City Employee of the Year."

In a brief ceremony in the Council Chamber, ACEA President Don Whaley presented the veteran lawmaker with a \$50 U. S. Savings Bond and a large plaque.

"I am most delighted and honored to accept this award," Gibson told members of the Council and a large gathering of spectators. "I am particularly pleased because it comes from fellow city employees themselves."

ACEA has been sponsoring a monthly "City Employee of the Month" award to honor outstanding employees nominated by department and bureau heads for extraordinary and exceptional work.

ACEA President Whaley explained that officers and directors of his organization have decided to skip this month's selection in order to honor President Gibson in recognition of his long and distinguished service to the City of Los Angeles.

"We are doing away with our regular regulations this month so that we can present a special award to a very special City employee," Whaley said.

"We are honoring Mr. Gibson as 'City Employee of the Year,' which is a greater recognition than 'City Employee of the Month,'" Whaley added.

"Mr Gibson has served the city so faithfully and so distinctively that he could have been 'City Employee of the Year' every year for the past quarter of a century," he added.

Of his 25 years on the City Council, Gibson has served as its president for 15 years. Both are records for a City Councilman.

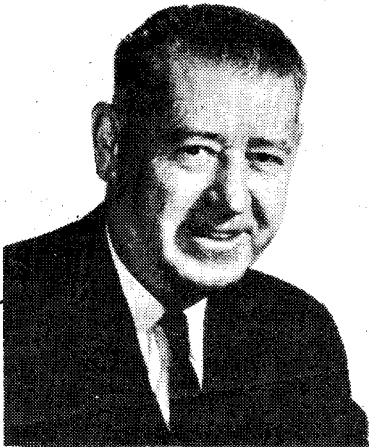
In addition to his duties as Council President, Gibson often serves as Acting Mayor during the absence of Mayor Tom Bradley.

Gibson, who will be 74 years old on August 11, was once the youngest mayor in the United States. At the age of 23, he was City Chief in Genesco in his native Kansas.

A resident of San Pedro and Councilman of the 15th District, Gibson was a general contractor in the Harbor area for 10 years before he first was elected to the Council in 1951.

Gibson guest speaker at Bicentennial service

John S. Gibson Jr., president of the Los Angeles City Council, has been designated chief speaker at a Bicentennial worship service of Temple Baptist Church on Sunday, July 4, 3 to 6 p.m. at Old North



John S. Gibson Jr.

Church, Forest Lawn Memorial-Park, Hollywood Hills.

During the service, which is open to the public, the multi-ethnic diversity of the congregation will be stressed, with tributes in the spirit of the Bicentennial to members of Chinese, Korean, Latin, and European descent.

Following the service, members, many of whom will be

in either native or early American costume, will participate in folk dancing, musical presentations and games in the forecourt and greensward of Old North Church. Participating pastors from Temple Baptist will include Rev. James E. Conklin, Rev. Lionel Robaina, and Rev. Joseph Pang.

Old North Church within Forest Lawn-Hollywood Hills is a precise reproduction of the original in Boston Commons where the lighting of twin lanterns in the spire signaled the start of the midnight ride of Paul Revere and others to alert Minutemen in Lexington and Concord of the approach of a British expeditionary force.

Gibson, was born in Geneseo, Kan., and became the United States' youngest elected mayor when he assumed that office in his home town at the age of 21. He moved to Los Angeles in 1927, and was first elected to City Council in 1951.

He was elected City Council President in 1953, and has held that office since for a total of 16 years for the past nine years running.

Councilman John S. Gibson, Jr., is the new representative from the Fifteenth District, which covers the Harbor Area. He unseated George H. Moore, who had been in the Council since 1943. Mr. Gibson, who is married and the father of two children, was born in Geneseo, Kans., 49 years ago, but has made his home in the Southland for 23 years. He studied at the University of Kansas, and earned a certificate from the American Institute of Banking in Los Angeles. He became interested in politics in his home town, serving as Mayor of Geneseo from 1923 to 1925. For ten years before his election to the City Council, Mr. Gibson was engaged in the building contracting business. After his election, he sold his interest in the firm to his former associates. Mr. Gibson's civic activities included, among other things, member-



MR. GIBSON

ship in the Chamber of Commerce and the YMCA. The Gibsons make their home at 1604 Sunnyside Terrace, San Pedro. Mr. Gibson is Chairman of the Council's Industry and Transportation Committee.

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15th District

John S. Gibson Jr.

City Council 1951-1981

City Council President 1953-61, 1969-77

Born: Geneseo, Kansas August 11, 1902

Attended University of Kansas

Elected Mayor of Geneseo at the age of 21 in 1923, making him youngest such public official in the country.

In 1927 he and his Long Beach native wife Mina moved to California and he worked at his father-in-laws Dairy for a year before relocating to San Pedro in 1928. During these years he also graduated from the American Institute of Banking in Los Angeles and was president of the Citizens Bank of San Pedro. He was also the secretary of the San Pedro Junior Chamber of Commerce and founded the first Boys Club in California in 1938 in his hometown.

In 1941 John S. Gibson Jr. began a successful career as a General Contractor and for ten years was involved in that industry, remaining active in the business affairs of San Pedro. In 1951 he was elected to the Los Angeles City Council and by 1953 had gained enough stature to be named president of that body. For three decades he served as a folksy, popular but firm-handed councilman. Although a Democrat, Gibson was conservative, pro-business and a committed and devout Baptist who showed it in his decision-making.

By coincidence and Mayor Yorty's frequent travels, the burden of dealing with the Watts Riots fell on Gibson's shoulders where he gained respect for his calm and reasoned approach to handling the crisis.

Gibson had several unsuccessful bids for mayor, congressman, and county tax assessor but maintained a stellar career on the council setting standards for length of service (29 years) and as president for sixteen years. John S. Gibson Jr. is the only council member to be named President Emeritus upon his retirement in 1981. He died at his home in San Pedro on April 22, 1987.



CALIFORNIA BIOGRAPHY
FILE A

LOS ANGELES CITY COUNCILMAN

Councilman for the 15th District

Term: 4 years

Salary: \$17,000

Name: John S. Gibson, Jr.

Birthplace & date: Geneseo, Kansas Aug. 11, 1902

Age at time of first election (1951-1953): 49

Personal data: Married, Mina Workman Gibson, 2 children, Marlyn Buehler and Dixie Blackwelder, and 10 grandchildren.

Education: High school in Kansas; Kansas University; graduate of the American Institute of Banking of Los Angeles; graduate of the California Real Estate Assn. course in Real Estate and their course in Appraisal.

Professional data: In 1923, elected youngest Mayor in United States in Geneseo, Kansas. Also served as City Police Judge. Came to California in 1927 and worked for the Long Beach Dairy and Creamery for one year: then moved to San Pedro. Became general contractor and established own business in 1941. Elected to the Los Angeles City Council, 1951-1953, 1953-1957, 1957-1961, 1961-1965, 1965-1969, 1969-1972; Elected President of the Los Angeles City Council, 1953-1955, 1955-1957, 1957-1959, 1959-1961 (Total of 8 years).

Organizations: Founder of the first Boys' Club of California in 1935. Member of the Board of Deacons, First Baptist Church of San Pedro. Vice President, Pacific Southwest Youth for Christ in Los Angeles. Member of the Christian Business Men's Assn. Member of Town Hall. Member of the Masonic Lodge, Geneseo, Kansas. Member of the Al Malaikan Shrine. Member of the San Pedro Lodge No. 966 of the B. P. O. E.

Source: Councilman Gibson's
Office

