John Nulty was employed by the Nevada Secretary of State's office but his avocation was photography. He had a photo developing laboratory in the basement of the State Capitol building and spent much of his time capturing on film the officials, employees, buildings, and activities of state government. He also photographed many private businesses, houses, and other buildings in Carson City and the surrounding area, including aerials views of the capital city; and private citizens during special occasions such as anniversaries, weddings, and grand openings of businesses.

The John Nulty collection of photographs consists of 3,191 prints and negatives dating from approximately 1947-1975. The bulk dates range from 1958-1967. They are contained in four archival shoe boxes and one clamshell box. The collection is characterized as almost entirely negatives although Nulty prints exist in other photo collections in the State Archives, principally those of Governor Charles Russell and Governor Grant Sawyer. Other collections of photographs dating from 1958-1967 may largely be non-credited Nulty images.