



City of Arts & Innovation

City Council Memorandum

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL DATE: MARCH 28, 2023
FROM: MUSEUM DEPARTMENT WARDS: ALL
SUBJECT: ACCESSION INTO THE MUSEUM OF RIVERSIDE'S PERMANENT COLLECTION ONE HISTORIC BIBLE AND FOUR LOTS OF ARCHIVAL ITEMS FROM FIVE DONORS, AND THIRTY PREPARED BIRD SPECIMENS

ISSUE:

Approve accession into the Museum of Riverside's permanent collection of one historic Bible and four lots of archival items from five donors, and thirty prepared bird specimens.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the City Council approve accession into the Museum of Riverside's permanent collection of one historic Bible and four lots of archival items from five donors, and thirty prepared bird specimens.

BOARD RECOMMENDATION:

At a hybrid meeting on January 25, 2023, the Museum of Riverside Board, with seven members present and two members absent for this vote, unanimously agreed to recommend that City Council approve accession into the permanent collection of one historic Bible and four lots of archival items from five donors, and thirty prepared bird specimens.

BACKGROUND:

In its Collections Development Plan, the Museum of Riverside (Museum) identifies areas for growth within its historical collections. The plan notes that "Through its collections, the Museum will seek to broaden the inquiry into the ways in which material culture defines a shared understanding of history, place, and identity." "Accession" is the museum term for adding an item to a permanent collection and assuming indefinite responsibility for its documentation, preservation, and interpretation.

DISCUSSION:

Historical objects and natural history specimens deemed appropriate to accession into the permanent collection and that meet the goals of the Museum's Collection Development Plan as interpreted by the Museum Collections Committee and Museum of Riverside Board include:

1. Jarvis Family Bible, with earliest entries dating to 1847
2. "Riverside Homes" pamphlet published by the Chamber of Commerce in 1934
3. Two commemorative U.S. Post Office envelopes from 1938 featuring Riverside's first air mail flights
4. Chamber of Commerce map of Riverside from 1956
5. Postcard of Lemon Street, circa 1907-1915
6. Thirty prepared study skins of birds

Explanations of the significance of the objects and specimens as additions to the Museum's collection and photographs of the objects and specimens are in the Museum of Riverside Board reports, included as attachments. The historic artifacts have been acquired recently by donation in five lots from five private individuals. The specimens were acquired by collection and donation from many sources over a number of years.

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:

The activities of the Museum of Riverside align with Strategic Priority No. 1, "Arts, Culture and Recreation." Specific programs and activities mentioned in this report support, in particular, Goal No. 1.1 (strengthening Riverside's portfolio of arts, culture, recreation, senior, and lifelong learning programs and amenities), Goal No. 1.2 (enhancing equitable access to arts, culture, and recreational service offerings and facilities), and Goal No. 1.5 (supporting programs and amenities to further develop literacy, health, and education of children, youth, and seniors throughout the community).

Museum programs further support Strategic Priority No. 2, "Community Well-Being." Specific goals supported by Museum programs and partnerships include Goal No. 2.3, which includes strengthening neighborhood identities, and Goal No. 2.5, which points to fostering relationships between community members and partner organizations.

1. **Community Trust** – New accessions to the permanent collection reaffirm community expectation that the Museum acquires, safeguards, and makes accessible artifacts and specimens that reflect Riverside's many histories. Accession recommendations are informed by an advisory committee that includes community members.
2. **Equity** – New accessions to the permanent collection are prioritized to enrich the diversity of stories that the Museum is able to tell through its collection.
3. **Fiscal Responsibility** – New accessions are not recommended if they require immediate investments in costly conservation or storage adaptations.
4. **Innovation** – New accessions expand the palette of artifacts and specimens available to staff and program advisors, facilitating a wider and more inventive range of interpretation.
5. **Sustainability & Resiliency** – New accessions primarily address cultural sustainability and the Museum's ongoing effort to expand its representation of all of the voices,

neighborhoods, and ethnicities that make up the City and its environs.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact associated with this report.

Prepared by: Robyn G. Peterson, Ph.D., Museum Director
Certified as to
availability of funds: Edward Enriquez, Interim Assistant City Manager/Chief Financial
Officer/Treasurer
Approved by: Kris Martinez, Assistant City Manager
Approved as to form: Phaedra Norton, City Attorney

Attachments:

1. Museum of Riverside Board Minutes – January 25, 2023
2. Museum Board Accession Recommendation Reports – January 25, 2023