

Museum of Riverside Board Memorandum

City of Arts & Innovation

TO: MUSEUM OF RIVERSIDE BOARD DATE: SEPTEMBER 27, 2023

FROM: MUSEUM COLLECTIONS COMMITTEE WARDS: ALL

**SUBJECT: ACCESSION INTO THE PERMANENT COLLECTION FOUR LOTS OF
HISTORIC ARTIFACTS AND ARCHIVAL ITEMS FROM FOUR DONORS AND
TWO LOTS ACQUIRED BY PURCHASE**

ISSUE:

To approve a recommendation to accession into the permanent collection four lots of historic artifacts and archival items from four donors and two lots acquired by purchase.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Museum of Riverside Board recommends that City Council approve accession into the permanent collection of four lots of historic artifacts and archival items from four donors and two lots acquired by purchase.

BACKGROUND:

Donated objects (lots 1-4)

LOT 1: Sixty-three images and fifteen items of Riverside local history

In early 2023, a former member of the staff of the Museum offered locally relevant historical materials acquired from various sources. The items span the early to mid-twentieth century and include phone books, business advertisements, and press photos relating to Senator Leland Backstrand.

LOT 2: Twenty-five historic Valentine's Day postcards, circa 1905-1915

These postcards were originally donated to the Riverside Museum Associates (RMA) for use as props in their annual Victorian Valentine's Day decorations for the Heritage House. Due to the local provenance, staff asked if they could be considered for addition to our permanent collection, and the RMA agreed.

LOT 3: Historic photo of Arline Roach, circa 1921

This object was donated to the Museum, arriving by mail from Faya Cansey of Washington, DC, without accompanying note or explanation.

LOT 4: One item of Victorian mourning jewelry

In July 2023, a longtime Riverside resident and Museum supporter offered to donate a Victorian period locket and muff chain of jet and seed pearls, an item of mourning jewelry.

At its meeting on June 14, 2023, the Museum of Riverside's Collections Committee unanimously supported the recommendation to accession into the permanent collection:

1. The donated lot of sixty-three images and fifteen items of local history
2. The donated lot of twenty-five historic Valentine's Day postcards
3. One donated photograph of Arline Roach

At its meeting on August 9, 2023, the Museum of Riverside's Collections Committee unanimously supported the recommendation to accession into the permanent collection:

1. One donated item of Victorian mourning jewelry

Purchased objects (lots 5-6)

LOT 5: Three Poly High School yearbooks and one letter sweater

These items were purchased through a staff member at the estate sale of the previous owners in Riverside.

LOT 6: One George Ward political campaign pin

The museum was approached by a collector to purchase this pin for \$80.00. The Riverside Museum Associates purchased the pin on the Museum's behalf on the staff's recommendation.

At its meeting on June 14, 2023, the Museum of Riverside's Collections Committee unanimously supported the recommendation to accession into the permanent collection:

1. The purchased lot of three Poly High School yearbooks and one letter sweater
2. The purchased lot of one George Ward political campaign pin

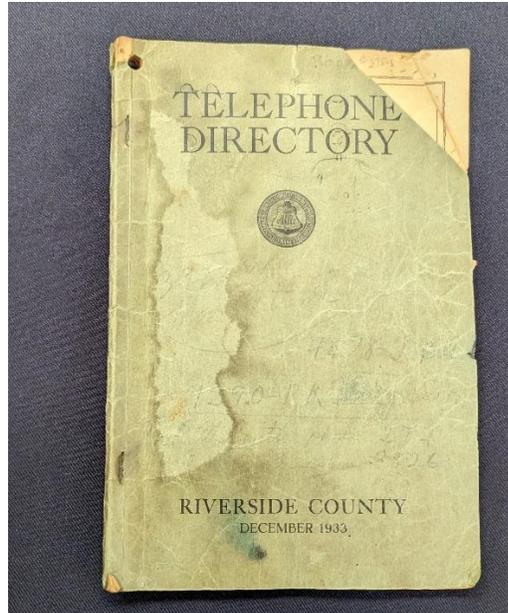
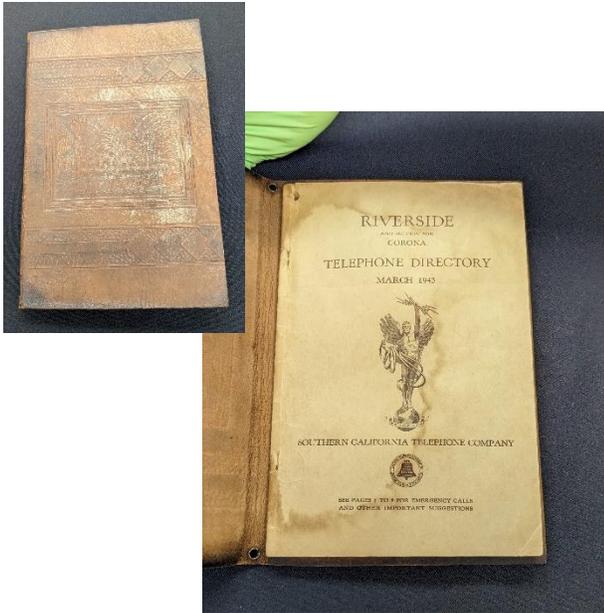
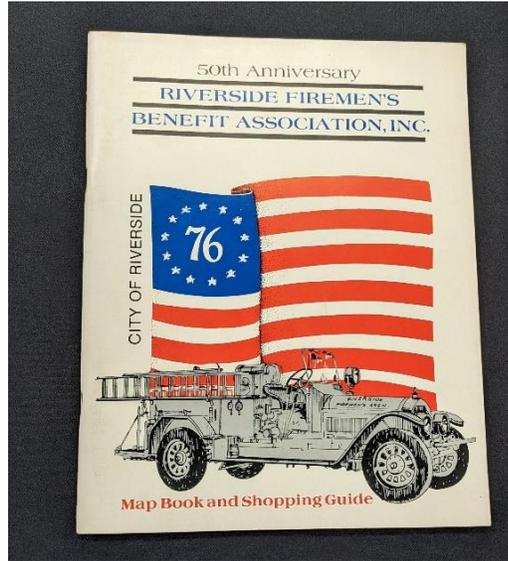
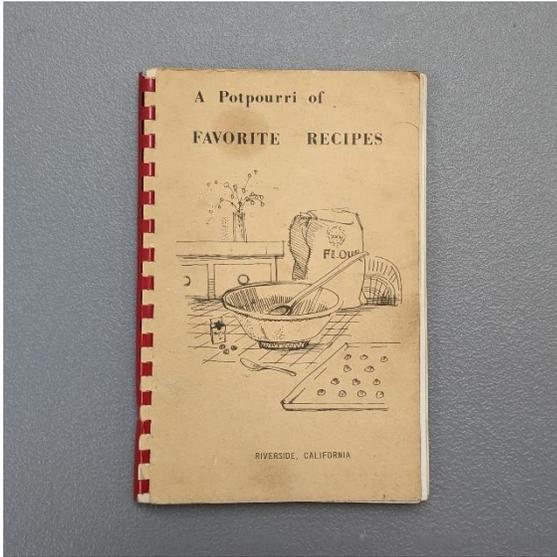
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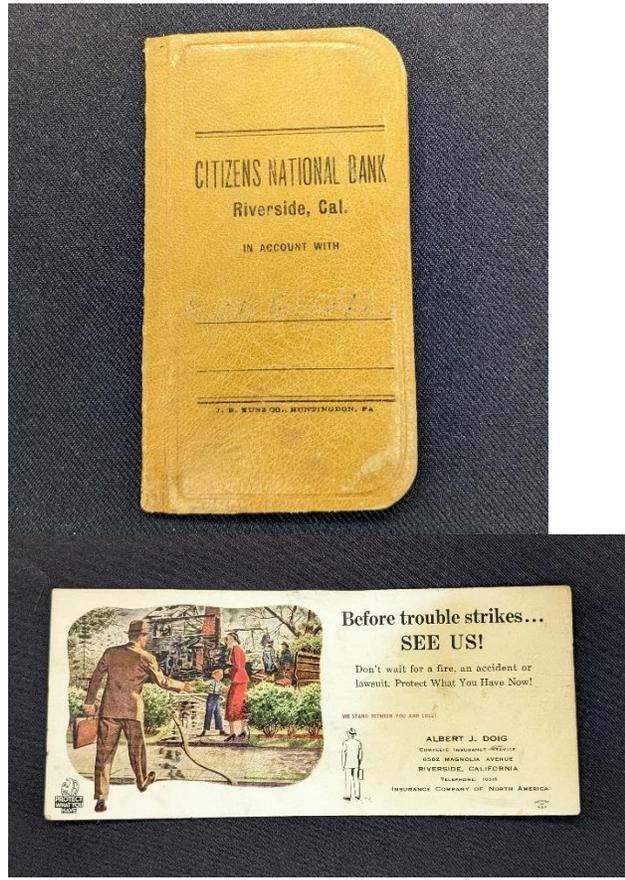
LOT 1:

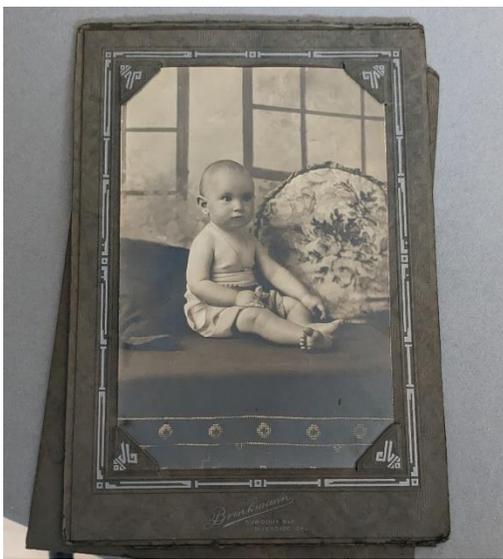
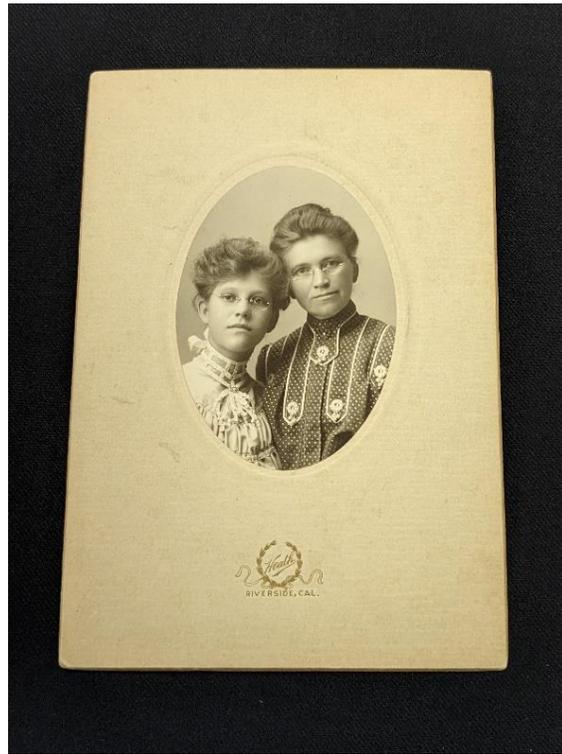
Staff strongly support acceptance of this diverse collection of locally relevant content, which supplements existing collections but does not duplicate.

1. "Potpourri of Favorite Recipes Riverside California" book, dimensions: 6 x 8.75" x .25"
2. "50th Anniversary Riverside Fireman's Association, Inc: map, book and shopping guide" dimensions: 8.5 x 11" - a snapshot of businesses and Riverside in 1976
3. Chi-Chi restaurants advertisement, dimensions: 9.25 x 4.25"
4. Telephone directory Riverside County, December 1933, dimensions: 6.25 x 9.25"
5. "Riverside Police: A Report" December 1954, dimensions: 8.5 x 11"
6. "The Masonic Trowel" newsletter, October 1945, dimensions: 7.25 x 3.75"
7. Albert J. Doig Complete Insurance Service advertisement, dimensions: 9 x 4"
8. Citizens National Bank Riverside, California, check log, dimensions: 2.25 x 4"
9. Riverside and Corona telephone directory, March 1943, dimensions: 6.25 x 10"
10. B&W card photograph, Lillian Backstrand and Mrs. Backstrand, dimensions: 5 x 7"
11. Senator Backstrand publicity photos and related documents.
 - a. 58 B&W images, one newspaper, plastic sleeve with three photos, and two typed letters
12. The Loring Confectionary Geo. G. Taylor 679 Main Street, Riverside California, die-cut

- fan advertisement, dimensions: 13 x 8"
- 13. Central Pharmacy calendar 1944-1946, dimensions: 15.5 x 9.5"
- 14. Central Pharmacy calendar 1944-1946, dimensions: 15.5 x 9.5"
- 15. One B&W photo of an unidentified child taken at the Brinkmann photography studio

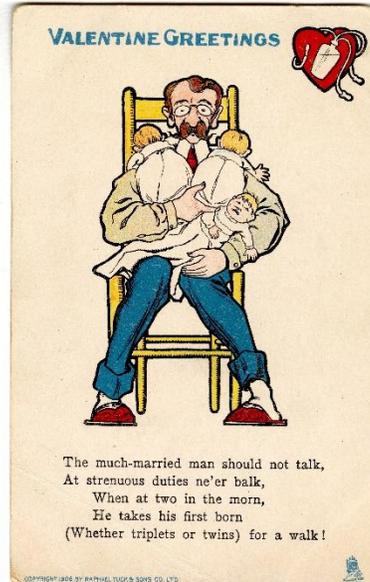
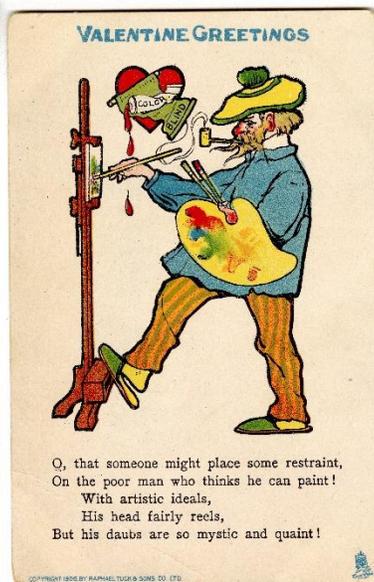
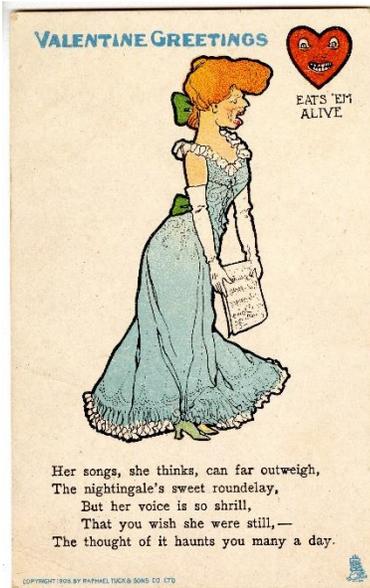


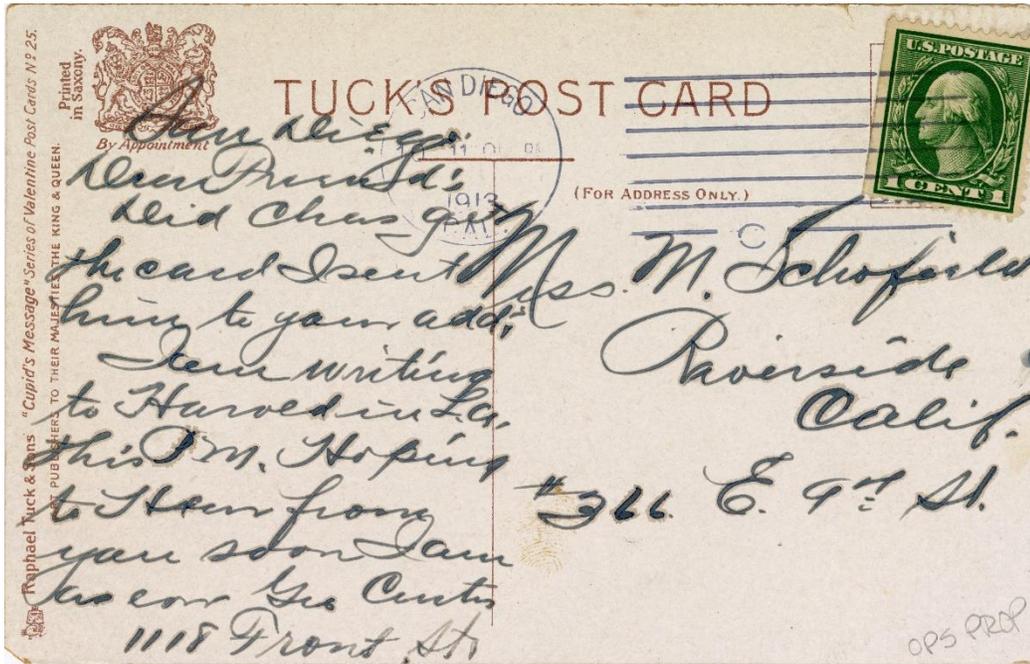




LOT 2:

Museum staff made a specific request to the Riverside Museum Associates for the gift of the historic Valentine's Day postcards, due to their rarity, local interest, and immediate relevance to annual Valentine's Day programming at Heritage House. Most of these 3.5" x 5.5" postcards are addressed to Mamie Schofield, married name Mrs. Edward Cooper, with addresses on 9th and 12th Streets in Riverside. Mamie Schofield was the aunt of long-time Heritage House volunteer, Bob Skilling. Mamie's husband Edward Cooper was an officer in the Riverside Police Department as was their nephew, Bob Skilling. Of note are the "vinegar Valentines," a form of humorous (and sometimes cruel) Valentine that was popular during this period.





LOT 3:

This is a small portrait photograph, 3-7/8 x 2-7/8 inches, in a two-flap cardboard folder measuring 4-1/4 x 8-1/2 inches, extended. The photographer's name and location are embossed on the cover, "RUMSEY / RIVERSIDE, CAL." The right flap of the cover is torn and exhibits some black mold. Inscribed on the inside right flap in what appears to be fountain pen ink is "Lovingly, Arline Roach, 1921." Condition is good to fair. Ms. Roach is presumed to have been a Riverside resident. Staff research resulted in the likely identification of her as an individual born in 1903 who may have lived in Riverside her entire life, dying in 1993. Assuming this identification is correct, the photo would have been taken when Arline was about 18.



LOT 4:

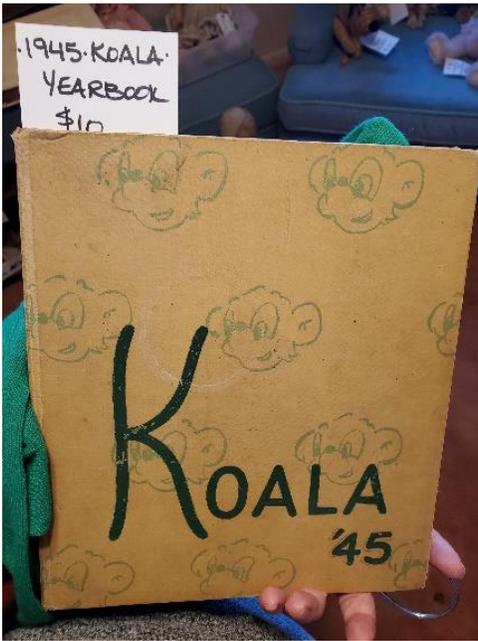
Staff support the recommendation to include this item in the permanent collection. The locket contains photographs of relatives of the donor who, like the donor, were regional residents. The Museum's collection of jewelry is very limited, and this particular item has immediate relevance to programming that takes place at Heritage House. The item is a Victorian period jet locket with a lily of the valley floral spray in seed pearls set in gold and with a jet bead muff chain. The locket contains photographs of May Hanbury Reche and son Bayard.



LOT 5:

The sweater has a Riverside Polytechnic High School letter handstitched to it. The green sweater is an acrylic "Tour Touch Collection California Styling" brand size XL. No similar item is represented in the Museum collections. The three Koala yearbooks are 1945, 1946, and 1946. These were all from Riverside Polytechnic High School. Two were owned by William "Bill" Lewis and the other was the property of Consuelo "Connie" McChristy (July 12, 1928 - August 19, 2022). The 1945 yearbook was owned by Bill who participated in ROTC during World War II. These items provide a look at what life was like for Riverside's soon-to-be adults during major historical events. There is duplication in the 1946 yearbooks because these two students met in high school, had the same yearbooks, and were subsequently married for 60 years.





LOT 6:

George F. Ward (1862-1920) was a prominent Riversider in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Ward was an undertaker, served on City Council, and was Chief of the Volunteer Fire Department. Because of the early Riverside provenance, the documentation of George F. Ward's activities in the City, and the good condition of the pin, staff recommend inclusion in the permanent collection.



George F. Ward in front of his establishment in 1888



STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:

The activities of the Museum of Riverside align with the Strategic Priority, “Arts, Culture and Recreation” and in particular goal 1.1 (strengthening Riverside’s portfolio of arts, culture, recreation, senior, and lifelong learning programs and amenities), goal 1.2 (enhancing equitable access to arts, culture, and recreational service offerings and facilities), and goal 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 the Strategic Priority, “Community Well-Being.” Specific goals supported by Museum programs and partnerships include goal 2.3, which includes strengthening neighborhood identities, and goal 2.5, which points to fostering relationships between community members and partner organizations.

1. **Community Trust** – The Museum’s Collections Committee is composed of Museum staff, Museum Board members, and members of the Riverside community. Strengthening the Museum’s collections in accordance with the Museum’s Collection Development Plan and with the involvement of community members builds community trust and supports the Museum’s mission.
2. **Equity** – New collection resources enrich the stories that the Museum can tell across all neighborhoods through exhibitions and programs that are offered equitably.
3. **Fiscal Responsibility** – These proposed new accessions came to the Museum by

donation or modest purchase costs and pose minimal demands on current storage and recordkeeping resources.

4. **Innovation** – New accessions into the Museum’s permanent collection expand the diversity and flexibility of collection resources, enabling more programming options.
5. **Sustainability & Resiliency** – Strengthening the Museum’s collections in accordance with the Museum’s Collection Development Plan, collection management policies, and mission enhances the City’s ability to preserve Riverside’s history for the future in a considered and judicious manner.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact associated with this report.

Prepared by: Robyn G. Peterson, Ph.D., Museum Director