



Museum of Riverside Board Memorandum

City of Arts & Innovation

TO: MUSEUM OF RIVERSIDE BOARD

DATE: JUNE 24, 2020

FROM: MUSEUM COLLECTIONS COMMITTEE

SUBJECT: ACCESSION OF ONE (1) ARCHITECTURAL ILLUSTRATION OF A PROPOSED WORLD WAR II MEMORIAL FOR DOWNTOWN RIVERSIDE BY RIVERSIDE ARCHITECT HENRY L. A. JEKEL INTO THE MUSEUM'S PERMANENT COLLECTION

ISSUE:

Recommend that the City Council approve the accession of one (1) architectural illustration of a proposed World War II memorial for downtown Riverside by Riverside architect Henry L. A. Jekel into the Museum's permanent collection.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Museum of Riverside Board recommend that the City Council approve the accession of one (1) architectural illustration of a proposed World War II memorial for downtown Riverside by Riverside architect Henry L. A. Jekel into the Museum's permanent collection.

BACKGROUND:

A member of the public formerly affiliated with the Museum of Riverside has donated one (1) architectural illustration by Riverside architect Henry L. A. Jekel to the Museum.

On February 26, 2020, the Museum's Collections Committee, with nine (9) members present and two (2) members absent, unanimously approved a recommendation for the accession of one (1) architectural illustration of a proposed World War II memorial for downtown Riverside by Riverside architect Henry L. A. Jekel into the Museum's permanent collection.

DISCUSSION:

Noted architect Henry L. A. Jekel (1876-1960) designed over 75 houses, and many commercial buildings, including the Neighbors of Woodcraft Home (now the James Complex at California Baptist University), and the renowned Benedict Castle (Castillo Isabella) in Riverside. He rose to the top of the City's civic leadership and earned praise for his engineering ability and his

mastery of the Spanish Colonial Revival, Tudor Revival, and related architectural styles of the 1920s and 1930s.

Jekel's Riverside-based homes, including his own home at 5063 Magnolia Avenue, evoke Spanish architecture with tile roofs, uneven roof lines, metal grill work, arched windows, and patios. He designed the Mediterranean villa for Harry Hammond on Victoria Hill, and homes for such Riverside notables as A. N. Sweet (4447 Seventh Street), G. A. Hammer (4563 Prospect Avenue), Fred Stebler (4522 Sixth Street), E. P. Clarke (5125 Ramona Drive), Walter Banks (3105 Pine Street), and others. His reputation spread throughout Southern California where he gained commissions in Laguna Beach, Palm Springs, San Bernardino, Hemet, and elsewhere. Probably his last work in 1948 was the remodeling of quarters for the Banks Drug Store, in what is now the Mission Inn Foundation Museum, northeast corner of Mission Inn Avenue and Main streets.

Henry Jekel came to Riverside after having already built a career in eastern skyscraper design and construction, where he helped launch the American skyscraper revolution. In 1902, he was architect for the Pennsylvania Building, Philadelphia's first steel frame building, a seventeen-story Beaux Arts masterpiece. He also designed the Westory Building in Washington, D.C., in 1907, that city's first steel-frame skyscraper. In Washington, he worked in the Office of the Supervising Architect, Department of the Treasury, where he assisted with the design of the expansion of the Treasury Building.

While in Riverside, Jekel drew the World War II memorial plan pro bono as a member of the Mayor's Citizens Committee on the Memorial. He researched extant memorials around the country prior to designing this one. It was never built due to disagreements among planners and citizens.

Approval of this recommendation would result in this illustration—donated by local individuals and with a continuous local provenance—joining an existing Museum of Riverside Henry L. A. Jekel collection, which includes scrapbooks, photographs, documents, architectural drawings, digital copies of documents, and scanned scrapbooks of Krinard House and Benedict Castle.

Henry L.A. Jekel's 30 x 40-inch architectural illustration is mounted on acidic board and has been water-damaged and will require some conservation. It is poorly framed and should be removed from its frame as soon as possible.

Sections of this discussion have been paraphrased from recent publication(s) on Henry L. A. Jekel by H. Vincent Moses and Catherine Whitmore.



FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact associated with this report. Storage space is minimally impacted by this acquisition. Conservation, which is not urgent, will proceed only when funding is available.

Prepared by:
Certified as to
availability of funds:
Approved by:

Robyn G. Peterson, Ph.D., Museum Director
Edward Enriquez, Chief Financial Officer/Treasurer
Lea Deesing, Assistant City Manager