



City of Arts & Innovation

Museum of Riverside Board Memorandum

TO: MUSEUM OF RIVERSIDE BOARD **DATE: APRIL 28, 2021**

FROM: MUSEUM COLLECTIONS COMMITTEE **WARDS: ALL**

SUBJECT: ACCESSION INTO THE PERMANENT COLLECTION SIX DRAWINGS OF RESIDENCES AND COMMERCIAL REMODELS BY RIVERSIDE ARCHITECT HENRY L. A. JEKEL FOR DOWNTOWN RIVERSIDE AND SAN BERNARDINO

ISSUE:

To approve a recommendation to accession into the permanent collection six drawings of residences and commercial remodels by Riverside architect Henry L. A. Jekel for downtown Riverside and San Bernardino.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Museum of Riverside Board recommend that the City Council approve accession into the permanent collection six drawings of residences and commercial remodels by Riverside architect Henry L. A. Jekel for downtown Riverside and San Bernardino.

BACKGROUND:

The following information about Jekel is courtesy of H. Vincent Moses, Ph.D., and Catherine Whitmore, M.A.:

Noted architect Henry L. A. Jekel (1876-1960) designed over seventy-five houses, and many commercial buildings, including the Neighbors of Woodcraft Home, now the James Complex at California Baptist University, and the famous Benedict Castle (Castillo Isabella) in Riverside. He rose to the top of the City's civic leadership and gained renown in the region for his engineering prowess 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 built for Harry Hammond on Victoria Hill, and homes built 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 many 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 an illustrious career in eastern skyscraper design and construction, where he helped launch the American skyscraper revolution. He was also associated with nationally prominent building and construction activities with the Thompson Starrett Co., reputedly the world's largest construction firm at the turn of the century, and the George A. Fuller Company, the first general contractor in the world. 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. While in Washington, he worked in the Office of the Supervising Architect, Department of the Treasury, where he lent his skills to assisting with the design of the expansion of the Treasury Building.

DISCUSSION:

The Henry L. A. Jekel graphite, ink, and watercolor drawings and photograph offer additional documentation of some of Riverside's historic architectural sites. The Museum of Riverside's existing Jekel collection includes scrapbooks, photographs, documents, architectural drawings, digital copies of documents, and scanned scrapbooks of Krinard House and Benedict Castle newspaper clippings and photographs.

Jekel's Riverside and San Bernardino structures included in the drawings that are the subject of this recommendation include:

1. The A. A. Piddington residence, ca. 1928 Spanish Colonial Revival at Pine and Houghton, Riverside;



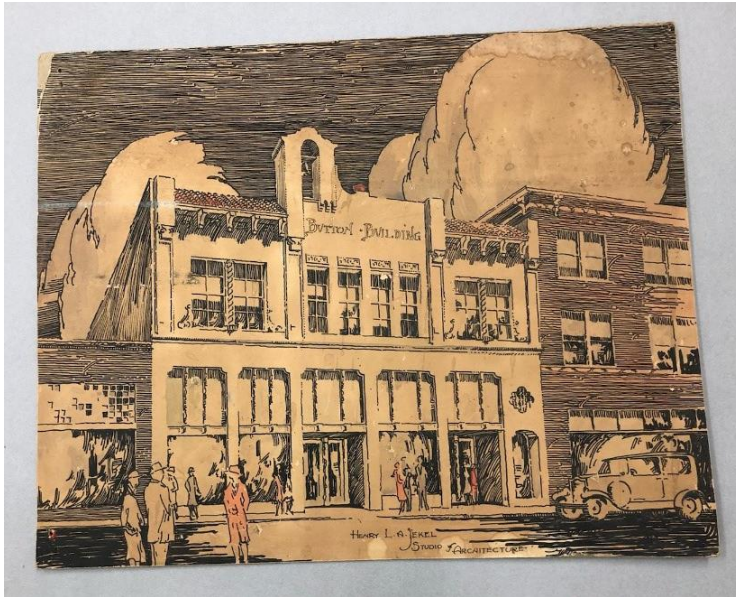
2. California Deco-Moderne Style remodels of the Westbrook Hardware, ca. 1931 (now the façade of Riverside's Imperial Lofts);



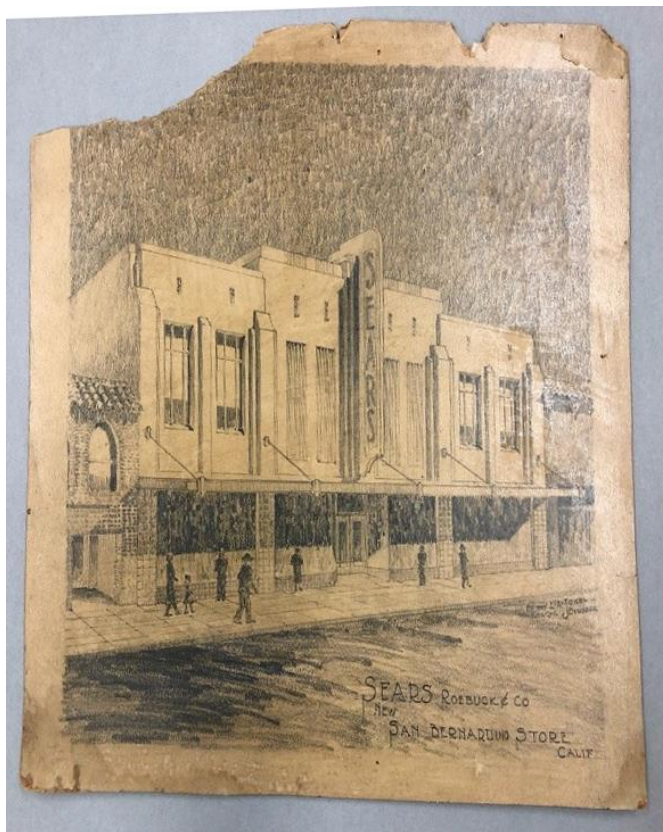
3. Backstrand Hardware, ca. 1941 at 6th and Main, Riverside (now covered over);



4. The Button Building, remnant of a late nineteenth-century Riverside building, which was remodeled by Jekel in rusticated Spanish Colonial Revival style in about 1929 (currently Farmer Boys location);



5. Sears Building, San Bernardino, California, razed in late 1970s -1980s; and



6. Sears Roebuck building at Main Street and Mission Inn, Riverside (basically intact and currently Chrystal's Antiques).



The drawings have been offered by a private donor. The Museum recommends accession of the six Jekel watercolors into the permanent collection as these materials complement and enrich the Museum's existing collection not only of Henry L. A. Jekel's work but of Riverside's architects in general. The drawings exhibit some fading and soiling, and they are mounted to aging backing boards. Conservation is advised but not urgent. Required storage space is minimal as they will be included with the Museum's existing Henry L. A. Jekel collection in flat storage.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact associated with this report.

Prepared by:	Robyn G. Peterson, Museum Director
Approved by:	Moises Lopez, Deputy City Manager