Finding aid of the County Fairgrounds Collection

Collection number: 2011-004 and 2011-005

Santa Clara County Archives
San Jose, California
Processed by:
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Descriptive Summary
Title: County Fairgrounds collection
Dates: 1939-2009
Collection number: 2011-004 and 2011-005
Creator: Santa Clara County Fairgrounds
Collection Size: Approximately 65 cubic feet
Repository: Santa Clara County Archives.
San Jose, CA 95112-2527
Abstract: The County Fairgrounds Collection consists of materials pertaining to the County Fair and Fairgrounds ranging from 1939 to 2009. These materials include: Fairgrounds' Board meeting minutes, financial reports, programs, premium lists, administrative files, photographs, slides, negatives, video and audio tapes, scrapbooks, newspaper clippings, blueprints, press kits/books, Fairgrounds publications, Senior Expo records, and ephemera.
Physical location: For current information on the location of these materials, please consult Archives staff.
Languages: Languages represented in the collection: English
Access
Collection is open for research.
Publication Rights
The Archives can claim physical ownership only for some collections. Users are responsible for securing permission of the copyright holder for publication or quotation.
Preferred Citation
County Fairgrounds collection, 2011-004 and 2011-005, Santa Clara County Archives.
Acquisition Information
The collection was transferred from the County Fairgrounds to the Archives in 2011.
Administrative History
The Santa Clara County Fairgrounds has held the annual county fair since 1941. While a fair was held in San Jose during the late nineteenth century, Santa Clara County did not have a fair during the early 1900s, despite the county's prominence in agriculture and livestock. Therefore the Santa Clara Valley Fair Association was created in 1937 in order to create a fair. On October 28, 1940 the County Board of Supervisors purchased the 97 acre Macomber Ranch on Tully Road for $35,000 from H. Kirk Macomber. On March 12, 1941 the County authorized the renamed Santa Clara County Fair Association to run the fair.
The first fair was held October 7th through 12th in 1941. The next fair was not held until 1946 due to World War II. A fair has been held annually since then. The annual fair included horse and car racing, carnival rides, an exposition hall, livestock, displays of flowers and agriculture, arts and crafts, live entertainment, merchant displays, and competitions of all sorts. Over the years building were added, such as horse barns, the sheep and swine building, the rabbit and poultry building, administrative buildings, the Exposition Hall, the Pavilion Building, a large blue arch over the entrance to the fairgrounds, a reproduction of the original capital building, grandstands, and arenas. The "Cheery Farmer" became the...
mascot, and the official slogan was "Hi, Neighbor!"

While the Fairgrounds have shrunk in size since its heyday, and the horse track and many of the buildings no longer exist, the Fairgrounds still hosts an annual fair and many events year round. The Exposition Hall and Pavilion Hall still stand, and the Fairgrounds now has an off-track betting parlor. The Fairgrounds is currently run by the Fairgrounds Management Corporation.

**Scope and Content of Collection**

The County Fairgrounds Collection consists of materials pertaining to the County Fair and Fairgrounds ranging from 1939 to 2009. These materials include: Fairgrounds' Board meeting minutes, financial reports, programs, premium lists, photographs, slides, negatives, video and audio tapes, scrapbooks, newspaper clippings, blueprints, administrative records, press kits/books, Fairgrounds publications, Senior Expo records and ephemera. Please see the container for more details for each series.

**Arrangement**

This collection is arranged into fifteen series: Fairgrounds' Board Meeting Minutes, Financial Reports, Programs and Premium Lists, Photographs, Slides, and Negatives, General Information and Memorabilia, Video and Audio Tapes, Scrapbooks, Newspaper Clippings, Blueprints, Administrative records, Press Kits/Books, Fairgrounds Publications, Pamphlets and Posters, Senior Expo records, and Ephemera. These series are arranged in chronological order.

**Indexing Terms**

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the library's online public access catalog. Santa Clara County (Calif.)
County fairs
Agricultural exhibitions
Racetracks (Horse racing)
Amusement rides
Livestock

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Series: I Fairgrounds’ Board Meeting Minutes, 1939-1997

Physical Description: 5 boxes

Series Scope and Content

This series consists of the meeting minutes for the Santa Clara County Fair Association Board.

Series: II Financial Reports, 1941-1998

Physical Description: 2 boxes

Series Scope and Content

This series consists of annual financial reports for the County Fair, including expenditures and profits.

Series: III Programs and Premium Lists, 1941-2009

Physical Description: 2 boxes

Series Scope and Content

This series consists of programs, premium lists, and entry handbooks for the annual County Fair.

Series: IV Photographs, Slides, and Negatives, 1941-2000s

Physical Description: Approximately 25 cubic feet

Series Scope and Content

This series consists of photographs taken at each annual County Fair. These images include aerials of the Fairgrounds, beauty pageants, farm animals, amusement rides, arts and crafts, children, contests, Fairgrounds buildings, merchant booths, exhibits, floral arrangements, and much more.
Series: V General Information and Memorabilia, 1941-2006
   Physical Description: 2 boxes
   Series Scope and Content
   This series consists of an artificial collection of information and memorabilia on the Fair compiled and arranged by a Fair employee. Items in this series includes programs, pamphlets, newspaper articles, and information about the fair.

Series: VI Video and Audio Tapes, 1980s-1990s
   Physical Description: Approximately 5 cubic feet
   Series Scope and Content
   This series consists of videos and audio tapes of television and radio commercials for the annual County Fair.

Series: VII Scrapbooks, 1941-1980s
   Physical Description: Approximately 17 cubic feet
   Series Scope and Content
   This series consists of scrapbooks created for each annual County Fair. The scrapbooks include newspaper clippings, photographs, programs and pamphlets.

Series: VIII Newspaper Clippings, 1941-2000s
   Physical Description: 1 box
   Series Scope and Content
   This series consists of newspaper clippings of articles about the annual County Fair.

Series: IX Blueprints, 1940s-2000s
   Physical Description: Approximately 2 cubic feet
   Series Scope and Content
   This series consists of blueprints of buildings at the County Fairgrounds.

Series: X Administrative files, 1949-1998
   Physical Description: 1 box

   Box-Folder: 1/1 A Brief History of the Santa Clara County Fair by Dick Barrett, 1968
   Physical Description: 1 folder

   Box-Folder: 1/2 Master Project List (Roof/Pavement), 1985-1987
   Physical Description: 1 folder

   Box-Folder: 1/3 Horse Barns, 1989-1990
   Physical Description: 1 folder

   Box-Folder: 1/4 Facility Conditions Assessment Draft Report, 1998
   Physical Description: 1 folder

   Box-Folder: 1/5 Final Asbestos Survey Report, 1991
   Physical Description: 1 folder

   Box-Folder: 1/6 Board Committees, 1996-1997
   Physical Description: 1 folder

   Box-Folder: 1/7 By-Laws of the Santa Clara County Fair Association, 1996
   Physical Description: 1 folder
Box-Folder: 1/8 **Articles of Incorporation, 1995**
Physical Description: 1 folder

Box-Folder: 1/9 **Advertising, 1956**
Physical Description: 1 folder

Box-Folder: 1/10 **Tech High School Feed, 1953**
Physical Description: 1 folder

Box-Folder: 1/11 **Concessions-Expo Hall, 1953**
Physical Description: 1 folder

Box-Folder: 1/12 **Publicity, 1955**
Physical Description: 1 folder

Box-Folder: 1/13 **Construction Work, 1957**
Physical Description: 1 folder

Box-Folder: 1/14 **Premium Books, 1953**
Physical Description: 1 folder

Box-Folder: 1/15 **Praise and Thank You Letters, 1953**
Physical Description: 1 folder

Box-Folder: 1/16 **Women's Department, 1957**
Physical Description: 1 folder

Box-Folder: 1/17 **Press, Radio TV Dinner 1953**
Physical Description: 1 folder

Box-Folder: 1/18 **Children's Playgrounds, 1949**
Physical Description: 1 folder

Box-Folder: 1/19 **Correspondence, 1951-1988**
Physical Description: 1 folder

Box-Folder: 1/20 **Santa Clara County Fairgrounds Management Corporation, Inc. and Fair Association Records, 1995-1997**
Physical Description: 1 folder

Box-Folder: 1/21 **Memorandum, 1996**
Physical Description: 1 folder

Box-Folder: 1/22 **Administrative Records, Miscellaneous, 1970s-1990s**
Physical Description: 1 folder

Box-Folder: 1/23 **Public Opinion Surveys, 1949 and 1998**
Physical Description: 1 folder

Box-Folder: 1/24 **Annual Statistical Attendance Reports, 1986-1989**
Physical Description: 1 folder

Box-Folder: 1/25 **Five Year Maintenance Plan, 1987-1992**
Physical Description: 1 folder
Box-Folder: 1/26 **Building Maintenance Proposal, 1995**  
Physical Description: 1 folder

Box-Folder: 1/27 **Consulting Analysis on the Santa Clara County Fairgrounds 1994**  
Physical Description: 1 folder

Box-Folder: 1/28 **Fairgrounds Revitalization Plan, 1998**  
Physical Description: 1 folder

Physical Description: 5 folders  
Series Scope and Content  
This series consists of kits/books that were given out to the press that contained information about the fair. There is also one folder of materials that were given out to corporate sponsors.

Series: XII **Fairgrounds Publications, 1957-2006**  
Physical Description: 3 folders  
Series Scope and Content  
This series consists of newsletters and publications created by the Fairgrounds.

Box-Folder: 1/7 **Faircast, 1957**  
Physical Description: 1 folder

Box-Folder: 1/8 **Happy Talks, News and Views, and The Fair Views, 1980-2001**  
Physical Description: 1 folder

Box-Folder: 1/9 **As the Wheel Turns..., 1993**  
Physical Description: 1 folder

Series: XIII **Pamphlets and Posters, 1970s-1990s**  
Physical Description: 1 folder  
Series Scope and Content  
This series consists of pamphlets and posters promoting the fair.

Series: XIV **Senior Expo, 1986-1993**  
Physical Description: 16 folders  
Series Scope and Content  
This series consists of administrative records, pamphlets, and newspaper articles about the Senior Expo, which was an event held for Senior Citizens in order to "educate, entertain, and make available to our 176,000 Santa Clara County Seniors...knowledge that will enable them to enjoy a full and meaningful life."

Series: XV **Ephemera, circa 1940s-2000s**  
Physical Description: Approximately a quarter cubic foot  
Series Scope and Content  
This series consists of ephemera of the annual County Fair, such as pins, posters, and ribbons.