Guide to the Hotel Brewster Register MS 15

Finding aid prepared by Katrina White
Collection processed as part of grant project supported by the Council on Library and Information Resources (CLIR) with generous funding from The Andrew Mellon Foundation.
San Diego History Center Document Collection
1649 El Prado, Suite 3
San Diego, CA, 92101
619-232-6203
April 26, 2011
Title: Hotel Brewster Register
Identifier/Call Number: MS 15
Contributing Institution: San Diego History Center Document Collection
Language of Material: English
Physical Description: 1.5 Linear feet (1 box)
Date: 1890 January 1-June 14
Abstract: This collection includes one register from Hotel Brewster for the dates January 1-June 14, 1890, listing the guests’ names and cities of residence.
creator: Hotel Brewster.
Biographical / Historical Notes
The Hotel Brewster was built in 1888 and sat on the corner of 4th and C Streets. Owned by Horace Brewster, it was a four story, first class hotel that boasted of a second floor dining room and ballroom as well as several shops accessible from the lobby, including a pharmacy. According to a listing in the American Hotel Guide located in the back of the register, the hotel’s nightly rate in 1890 was $2.50 and up. The hotel was very popular with ranchers and upper-class Mexican citizens and frequently hosted prominent local businessmen such as Philip Morse and local landowners including the Couts family. During World War I, the Brewster would set up cots in the hallways and lobby and rent them out to soldiers. The hotel was torn down in 1934 and replaced with several single story shops.

Scope and Content
The hotel register, of the James T. Hair Co. brand, is made up of daily guest logs, one page in length each, dating from January 1-June 14, 1890. Each log includes the guest name, place of residence and room number assigned, as well as notes in the margins addressed to hotel staff, and occasional annotations related to the companions and activities of certain guests. Prominent local businessmen such as Philip Morse and local landowners including the Couts family are listed as guests. Hotel guests traveled from across the country as well as abroad, hailing from as far away as Sweden, Britain, Canada and Mexico. The register includes a page of time tables for local modes of transportation including railways and steamships, and an American Hotel Guide listing hotels across the country by state and city. There is a blotter page consisting of local ads inserted into the register as well as a flyer for a local theatrical performance.

Arrangement
The pages in the register are arranged chronologically.

Physical Characteristics and Technical Requirements
Binding of register is brittle and partially detached, and the back cover is torn. The register’s covers and pages are discolored. (April 26, 2011)

Processing Information
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Preferred Citation
Hotel Brewster Register, MS 15, San Diego History Center Document Collection, San Diego, CA.

Conditions Governing Access
This collection is open for research.

Conditions Governing Use
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Subjects and Indexing Terms
Brewster, Horace
Couts family
Couts, Ysidora Bandini
Hotel Brewster.
James T. Hair Company.
Morse, Philip
Hotels -- California
San Diego (Calif.)
Entries of interest:

Time tables for 7 different transportation companies are pasted onto the inside front cover of the register: National City and Otay Railway (Nov. 1889); Pacific Coast Steamship Co. (Not dated); Southern California Railway: Santa Fe Route (Oct. 1889); Coronado Railroad: Bay Belt Line (Not dated); San Diego, Old Town and Pacific Beach Railway (Not dated); San Diego, Cuyamaca and Eastern Railroad Co. (1889, 1890); Mexican International Pacific and Gulf of California S.S. Co. (Not dated).

Horace Brewster listed as proprietor and first guest on January 1, 1890.

Mrs. YB (Ysidora Bandini) de Couts listed as a guest with 7 other Couts and a nurse, from Rancho Guajome on January 1, 1890.

Note above Chicago (listed as residence of a guest on January 15, 1890): “World’s Fair.”

Flyer for theatrical performance pasted onto page (January 27, 1890): The Sparkling Comedy Success; A Social Session by the Postage Stamp Company; Grand Military Black Hussar Band; (A Fascimile of the Imperial Russian); and All Star Orchestra.

Philip Morse listed as a guest on February 11, 1890 and February 19, 1890.

Mrs. Y.B. de Couts listed as a guest with J.F. Couts on February 27, 1890, March 27, 1890, and April 14, 1890.

J.F. Couts listed as a guest on April 17, 1890.

“American Hotel Guide” compiled by James T. Hair Co. Lists hotels by state, then city, includes parts of Canada, British Columbia, and Indian Territory. The list includes the population of each city, the hotel name and nightly rate.

Full page, double-sided flyer with local ads inserted in register at various locations. Ads of note include: Brewster Pharmacy; Chas. A. Chase Druggist & Apothecary, est. 1872; 1892 World’s Exposition Chicago.