
HERITAGE HOUSE COLLECTION, 1847-1989

Finding aid prepared by Jennifer Allan Goldman

California State University, Dominguez Hills

Archives & Special Collections

University Library, Room G-145

1000 E. Victoria Street

Carson, California 90747

Phone: (310) 243-3895

URL: <http://archives.csudh.edu/>

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Descriptive Summary

Title: Heritage House Collection

Dates: 1847-1989

Collection Number: Consult repository.

Creator: Heritage House Museum

Extent: 3 boxes3 linear feet

Repository: California State University, Dominguez Hills Archives and Special Collections

Archives & Special Collection

University Library, Room G-145

1000 E. Victoria Street

Carson, California 90747

Phone: (310) 243-3013

URL: <http://archives.csudh.edu/>

Abstract: A small collection of materials from and about the Heritage House Museum in Compton, California. Materials include correspondence, ledgers, and paper from the Auxiliary; programs, booklets, and correspondence about the museum itself; and ephemera and journals from the 19th century donated to the museum from citizens of Compton.

Language: Collection material is in English

Access

There are no access restrictions on this collection.

Publication Rights

All requests for permission to publish or quote from manuscripts must be submitted in writing to the Director of Archives and Special Collections. Permission for publication is given on behalf of Special Collections as the owner of the physical materials and not intended to include or imply permission of the copyright holder, which must also be obtained.

Preferred Citation

[Title of item], Heritage House Collection, Courtesy of the Department of Archives and Special Collections. University Library. California State University, Dominguez Hills

Acquisition Information

The Heritage House Collection was donated to CSUDH after the City of Compton started the renovation of the city center in the late 1980s. This required emptying the building and moving the Heritage House to another location. Members of the CSUDH history department were crucial in obtaining this collection.

Processing Information

The collection was inventoried after being accessioned, but not processed.

Project Information

This finding aid was created as part of Early Los Angeles/Rancho San Pedro Manuscript Cataloging Project, a CSU Dominguez Hills Library project funded by the National Historical Publications and Records Commission. The project started in 2005. Project Director was Greg Williams. Project Archivists were Thomas Philo and Jennifer Allan Goldman.

History

The Heritage House was built in 1869 by A.R. Loomis and later became the property of the Gaines family. The house stood on Lemon Street (later Main Street, then Compton Boulevard) until the 1950s, when the land was acquired by the city to be used for a new fire station. By this time, the house had been deemed the oldest house in Compton, and the newspaper roused community support to protect it from being demolished. The City of Compton provided a site onto which the house would be moved, an area in the city center next to City Hall, the Police Station, and the Post Office. A large volunteer base donated money, labor, and materials for moving the house, as well as the restoration and renovation required to make it into a museum. Members of the community also donated items to be displayed in the museum, many actually used in Compton during the 1860s and 1870s. The museum officially opened to the public on April 14, 1958. An auxiliary, sponsored by the Native Daughters of the Golden West, was formed in the following months, and was responsible for the care and upkeep of the museum. In 1959, a year from the opening day, the Heritage House was named California State Landmark No. 664. This was the first state landmark given in the community.

In 1970, the City of Compton began development of a new Civic Center Complex to replace City Hall and the surrounding buildings. Part of this plan would require the land on which the Heritage House stood. Under pressure from the Auxiliary, as well as Judson Grenier, Professor of History at CSU Dominguez Hills, and members of the community, the City Council

agreed to move the Heritage House into storage instead of demolishing it. Attempts were made to return donated items to the original owners; items that could not be returned were transferred to the Department of Archives and Special Collections at CSU Dominguez Hills.

After a few years in storage, CSU Dominguez Hills Professor of History Howard Holter petitioned the Compton City Council to move the building back to the Civic Center at the corner of West Myrrh Street and South Willowbrook Avenue. The Council agreed, and Holter began renovations on the house. Through the 1980s, Holter created plans for returning the Heritage House to a museum. In 1989, the Compton Community Redevelopment Agency dropped discussion of the plans. The empty building is now used for receptions and occasions by the City of Compton.

Scope and Content

Materials include donation forms, membership rosters, financial ledgers, newsclippings, correspondence, programs, booklets, journals, and ephemera from the late 19th century, including pieces from "Godey's Ladies Journal". A majority of the documents were created during the renovation and opening of the museum in the late 1950s.

Arrangement

Arranged in two series:

Series I. Auxiliary (1957-1973)

Series II. Museum (1953-1989)

Subjects

California -- Division of Beaches and Parks

Cottages -- California

Historic buildings -- California -- Compton

Small houses -- California -- 19th century

Personal Names

Dollarhide, Douglas

Corporate Names

Native Daughters of the Golden West

Geographic Areas

Compton (Calif.)

Genre/Form

Magazine illustrations -- 19th century

Women's periodicals -- American -- 19th century

Related Material

The following collections are available in the CSUDH Archives and Special Collections:

Compton History Collection

Robert C. Gillingham Working Papers

South Bay Photo Collection

Auxiliary 1957-1973

Physical Description: 4 folders, 2 books

Scope and Content Note

Materials created and collected by the Auxiliary, including by-laws, membership cards, receipt book, membership lists, and correspondence, including letters from the 1970s on the removal of the Heritage House from the Civic Center.

Box 1

Box 1, Folder 1

Box 1, Folder 2

Box 1, Folder 3

Box 1, Folder 4

Box 2

Record book, with minutes, notes, membership lists, and correspondence 1957-1971

By-laws, blank letterhead, blank membership cards, meeting minutes 1959

Auxiliary financial ledger (cover removed) and duplicate receipt book 1959-1973

Correspondence and newsclippings 1957-1970

Membership lists 1958-1969

Heritage House Scrapbooks of clippings and photos (photos removed to box 3) 1957-1959

Museum 1953-1989

Physical Description: 12 folders 14 artifacts and books

Scope and Content Note

Materials not related specifically to the Auxiliary, including the Native Daughters of the Golden West Compton Parlor Pioneer book; donation records and receipts; details on the renovations made to the Heritage House; dedication programs; items from the dedication as State Landmark No. 664; and correspondence and plans from the 1980s renovation. Also, items donated to the museum that were not returned, including railroad tickets, a report card, coursework for classes including sewing, ladies journals, and rare books, which have been cataloged separately.

Box 1, Folder 5	Native Daughters of the Golden West, Compton Parlor, Pioneer Roster and record book, including histories, membership rosters, and minutes 1953-1968
Box 1, Folder 6	Lists of donations and donors 1957-1958
Box 1, Folder 7	Compton piano - history, correspondence, and research materials circa 1958
Box 1, Folder 8	Renovation history, "Construction and Furnishing of Heritage House," and correspondence 1958
Box 1, Folder 9	Heritage House Dedication - programs 1958
Box 1, Folder 10	State Landmark dedication, correspondence, programs, landmark maps 1958-1959
Box 1, Folder 11	"Heritage House Speaks" book, by Maude Walton Cleland and Margaret M. Forsythe 1958
Box 1, Folder 12	"Heritage House Treasures" booklet 1958, 1962
Box 1, Folder 13	"The Story of the Heritage House" by Margaret Forsythe, in California Historian, Vol 7, No 3 1961
Box 1, Folder 14	Slideshow script and correspondence 1959, 1964
Box 1, Folder 15	Ephemera, including early railroad tickets, invitations, report card, and timeline of Compton history no date
Box 1, Folder 16	Redevelopment/renovation correspondence, reports, plans, and sketches 1982-1989
Box 2	Scrapbook of engravings from Peterson's Ladies Journal, 1876 made 1934
Box 2	Easter project by Gertrude Lofthouse at 6th St. Kindergarten 1897
Box 2	Composition book of poems, Gertrude Lofthouse, 6th St. School no date
Box 2	Sewing book, with examples, Gertrude Lofthouse, 5th grade circa 1902
Box 2	Class list 1895
Box 2	Godey's Ladies Book, April 1870
Box 2	Godey's Ladies Book, April 1868
Box 2	Small tin-type portrait album no date
Box 2	Small daguerreotype in case no date
Box 2	Compton Piano (in reading room) circa 1860
Box 2	Frank Hann violin (in reading room) 1889