Historical Society of Southern California Collection -- California Centennials Commission, Southern California Division, Collection of Photographs: Finding Aid

Finding aid prepared by Sue Luftschein.
The Huntington Library, Art Collections, and Botanical Gardens
Photo Archives
1151 Oxford Road
San Marino, California 91108
Phone: (626) 405-2191
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URL: http://www.huntington.org
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Overview of the Collection

Title: Historical Society of Southern California Collection -- California Centennials Commission, Southern California Division, Collection of Photographs

Dates (inclusive): 1948-1950

Collection Number: photCL 400 volume 28

Creator: California Centennials Commission. Southern California Division.

Extent: 424 photographs in 2 boxes (1.42 linear feet)

Repository: The Huntington Library, Art Collections, and Botanical Gardens. Photo Archives

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Abstract: The collection consists of 424 black-and-white photographs that document the activities of the Southern California Division of the California Centennials Commission during the years 1948 to 1950. The photographs document regional events, including ceremonies, celebrations, parades, and historical reenactments, developed by the Division to commemorate the centennials of the discovery of gold and the Gold Rush in the 1848; the 1849 Constitutional Convention; and the admission of California to the Union in 1850.

Language: English.

Access

Open to qualified researchers by prior application through the Reader Services Department. For more information, contact Reader Services.

Publication Rights

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Preferred Citation

Historical Society of Southern California Collection -- California Centennials Commission, Southern California Division, Collection of Photographs. The Huntington Library, San Marino, California.

Provenance

Donated by the Historical Society of Southern California, 1992.

The collection, identified by Huntington Library catalogers as "Volume 28," was received as part of the Historical Society of Southern California Collection.

Processing Information

Prior to 2006, volunteers began a preliminary organization of the photographs. In 2006, Sue Luftschein completed the bulk of the reorganization, numbered and rehoused the photographs, and created this finding aid.

Related materials in the Huntington Library

The sub-collections of the Historical Society of Southern California Collection (photCL 400) are individually cataloged in the Huntington Online Catalog.

Historical Note of the California Centennials Commission

The California Centennials Commission was established by the State of California in 1946 to develop and direct centennial observances of the discovery of gold and the Gold Rush in the 1848; the 1849 Constitutional Convention; and the admission of California to the Union in 1850. The Southern California Division was organized in 1947, with the assistance of the Historical Society of Southern California, to cooperate with the statewide Commission and organize local programs. Joseph R. Knowland chaired the state Commission; the Southern California Division was managed by Lloyd D. Mitchell.

Historical Note of HSSC

Founded in 1883, the Historical Society of Southern California (HSSC) is the oldest historical society in California. As part of its mission to collect and preserve Southern California's history, the HSSC amassed a photo archive over many decades. The HSSC shifted its emphasis to programs and publications in the 1980s and, in 1992, the organization donated its photo archive to The Huntington Library.
The Historical Society of Southern California Collection contains approximately 15,000 photographs and negatives focused on Southern California from approximately 1870 to 1980. As such, it is an important visual record of the growth and history of the region. The collection represents a variety of donations made to the Society over many years. It is organized into discrete sub-collections (each with a unique "volume" number) within the overall collection, which is identified by call number photCL 400.

**Scope and Content**

The collection consists of 424 black-and-white photographs that document the activities of the Southern California Division of the California Centennials Commission during the years 1948 to 1950. The photographs document regional events, including ceremonies, celebrations, parades, and historical reenactments, developed by the Division to commemorate the centennials of the discovery of gold and the Gold Rush in 1848; the 1849 Constitutional Convention; and the admission of California to the Union in 1850.

Included are images of parades, such as the centennials of Beverly Hills and Long Beach; the 1948 Tournament of Roses Parade that included centennial-themed floats; and gold rush and pioneer-related parades such as those held in Paso Robles, San Bernardino, Redlands, San Luis Obispo, and Santa Monica. Photographs that document celebrations commemorating historic events and places include the Fort Moore celebration held at the Hollywood Bowl and images of the Portola Trek reenactment, including the start in San Diego and images of the riders on Spring Street in Los Angeles.

The collection also includes a large number of images of the dedication of the Commission's Historical Caravan, held at the Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum. Speaking at that event was Lieutenant Governor Goodwin J. Knight. Other images of the Historical Caravan include pictures of the exhibits inside the van and the van on location in Sycamore Grove (the Highland Park area of Los Angeles), at the Pio Pico Adobe in Whittier, and at China Lake. Photographs of the Centennials Commission float, which was made available to communities across the State for inclusion in centennial celebrations, are found in the collection. Among the images in which the float is featured are the Hollywood High School premiere of "California's Golden Beginnings," an educational film intended for show at schools and educational institutions across the state; and the unveiling of a plaque commemorating the centennial of Los Angeles's first post office.

Notable figures in California politics and culture appear in the photographs. The images documenting the opening of the gold mining exhibit in Pershing Square include Eldred L. Meyer, past Grand President of Native Sons of the Golden West and Walter N. Bailey, Grand President of the Native Sons of the Golden West. The premiere of "California's Golden Beginnings" featured Goodwin J. Knight, Lloyd D. Mitchell, Manager of the Southern California Division, and appearing in the film (and documented in stills) was Governor Earl Warren. Other images document the unveiling of various commemorative plaques.

Photographers who created the images include Otto Rothschild, Coy Watson, "Dick" Whittington Studios, J. Allen Hawkins, David F. Stevens, Lew Nichols, the Inman Company, Woro Studios, Randolph Studios, Louis, Pacific Press Photos, Gerhardt, Merriman Photo Art, Junis and Pearson Photo, and Frasher's, Inc.

The photographs are mainly 8x 10 inches, and many of the photographs have captions taped to, or written on, the reverse. Many of the photographs exist in multiple copies.

**Arrangement**

The photographs are arranged by subject: parades, historical event celebrations and reenactments, Centennials Commission exhibits and events, plaques and dedicatory ceremonies, and miscellaneous.

**Index Terms**

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Huntington Library's Online Catalog.

**Persons:**

Knight, Goodwin, 1896-1970.

Bailey, Walter N.

Meyer, Eldred L.

Mitchell, Lloyd D.


**Organizations:**

California Centennials Commission.

California Centennials Commission. Southern California Division.

Hollywood Bowl (Los Angeles, Calif.)—Photographs.

Hollywood High School (Hollywood, Los Angeles, Calif.)—Photographs.

Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum (Los Angeles, Calif.)—Photographs.

Tournament of Roses—Photographs.
Dick Whittington Studio.
Frashers Inc.
Gerhardt.
Hawkins, J. Allen, 1915-
Inman Company.
Junis and Pearson Photo.
Louis.
Merriman Photo Art.
Nichols, Lew.
Pacific Press Photos.
Randolph Studios.
Rothschild, Otto.
Stevens, David F.
Watson, Coy, 1912-
Woro Studios.

**Places:**
Beverly Hills Calif.)—Anniversaries—Photographs.
China Lake (Calif.)—Photographs.
Fort Moore (Calif.)—Anniversaries—Photographs.
Highland Park (Calif.)—Photographs.
Long Beach (Calif.)—Anniversaries—Photographs.
Paso Robles (Calif.)—Photographs.
Pershing Square (Los Angeles, Calif.)—Photographs.
Pio Pico State Historic Park (Whittier, Calif.)—Photographs.
Redlands (Calif.)—Photographs.
San Bernardino (Calif.)—Photographs.
San Luis Obispo (Calif.)—Photographs.
Santa Monica (Calif.)—Photographs.

**Subjects:**
Historical films—California—Photographs.
Parade floats—Photographs.
Parades—California—Los Angeles—Photographs.
Portolá's Expedition, Calif., 1769-1770—Anniversaries—Photographs.
Postal service—California—Los Angeles—History—Photographs.
Traveling exhibitions—California—Photographs.

**Document Types:**
Photographs.

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**Container List**

**Box 1**

- **Photographs 1-312**
- Box 1, Items 1-7
- Beverly Hills Centennial celebration, December 22-30, 1949
- Long Beach Centennial, May 7-11, 1949
- Note
  [No. 8 rehoused in oversize box.]
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box 1, Items</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>35-44</td>
<td>League of California Cities, Long Beach Auditorium, 1948</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45-63</td>
<td>Pasadena Diamond Jubilee, undated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Note</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[No. 58a rehoused in oversize box.]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>64-81</td>
<td>Tournament of Roses Parade, 1948</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>82-88</td>
<td>Paso Robles Pioneer Days, October 12, 1948</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>89-95</td>
<td>Redlands 60th anniversary, &quot;Valiant Years,&quot; May 1948</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>96-105</td>
<td>San Bernardino Days of Gold, October 23, 1948</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Note</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[Nos. 104 and 105 rehoused in oversize box.]</td>
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<tr>
<td>106-116</td>
<td>Fiesta de las Flores, San Luis Obispo, May 20, 1949</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>117-127</td>
<td>Santa Monica Dias de Oro parade, August 1949</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>128-132</td>
<td>Fort Moore celebration, Hollywood Bowl, July 2, 1948</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>133-149</td>
<td>Portola Trek reenactment, October 17, 1948</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>150-186</td>
<td>Centennials Commission van and exhibit (at Los Angeles Coliseum, Sycamore Grove, Pio Pico Adobe, and China Lake), 1950</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Note</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>[No. 150 rehoused in oversize box.]</td>
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<tr>
<td>187-196a</td>
<td>Centennials Commission float, 1948-1950</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Note</td>
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<td></td>
<td>[Nos, 195, 195a, 196, 196a (clippings) rehoused in oversize box.]</td>
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<tr>
<td>197-201</td>
<td>Los Angeles County Museum Centennial exhibition of art, 1949</td>
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<tr>
<td>202-231</td>
<td>Gold Mining exhibit, Pershing Square, 1948</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>232-239</td>
<td>Los Angeles County Fair exhibit, 1948</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Note</td>
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<td></td>
<td>[No. 232 rehoused in oversize box.]</td>
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<tr>
<td>240-275a</td>
<td>Centennial documentary film, &quot;California's Golden Beginning,&quot; 1948</td>
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<tr>
<td>276-281</td>
<td>Centennial celebration plaques, 1950</td>
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<tr>
<td>282-294</td>
<td>William W. Orcutt memorial dedication, October 2, 1948</td>
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<tr>
<td>295-301</td>
<td>Los Angeles Post Office centennial, 1950</td>
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<tr>
<td>302-303</td>
<td>Ortega-Vigare Adobe, San Gabriel, March 27, 1950</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>304-312</td>
<td>Miscellaneous, 1948-1949, 1964</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Container List
Oversize Items

**Box 2**

**Oversize Items**

This box holds items 8, 58a, 104-105, 150, 195, 195a, 196, 196a, and 232.