

CALIFORNIA ORIGINALS

A Quarterly Newsletter of the California State Archives

A Division of the Secretary of State's Office

www.sos.ca.gov/archives

"Preserving and Promoting the History of California"

Volume III, No. 4 Summer 2015

Innovation at the 1915 Panama-Pacific International Exposition

Electric Motor Chairs in the Jewel City

On February 20, 1915, the Panama-Pacific International Exposition (PPIE) opened in San Francisco. Covering 635 acres of land and stretching along three miles of waterfront from Fort Mason to just east of where the Golden Gate Bridge now stands, this "Jewel City" celebrated not only the 1914 completion of the Panama Canal but also the rebirth of San Francisco following the Great Earthquake and Fire of 1906. Even though the exposition was temporary, lasting just over nine months, it featured remarkable architecture and exciting new technologies in an opulent and memorable celebration of innovation and globalization.

Among the almost 19 million people who witnessed the impermanent spectacle of the World's Fair were avid travelers William and Grace McCarthy, whose photo albums from 1905 to 1938 now reside at the California State Archives. In a series of over 300 black-and-white photographs, Mr. McCarthy documented the couple's exploration of the spectacular structures and myriad attractions found throughout the exposition. One such attraction experienced and photographed by the McCarthys was the electric motor chair, otherwise known as the Osborn Electriquette. Designed specifically for use at the Panama-Pacific expositions in both San Francisco and San Diego, these battery-powered wicker chairs seated two to three people, moved at a speed of around three miles per hour, and operated for up to eight hours on one charge. Touted for their potential use in such places as summer resort boardwalks, residence parks, and hospitals, electric motor chairs excited visitors like Mr. and Mrs. McCarthy and embodied the Panama-Pacific International Exposition's spirit of innovation and creativity.

By Kira Dodd, Archivist

Looking back, that spirit of innovation was not temporary at all. California continues its creative leadership as seen in today's Silicon Valley and with the continued development of electric cars, autonomous vehicles, app-based ride sharing services, and other transportation innovations. Additional advances made in the fields of medical research and agricultural technologies have also kept California in the forefront. For a historical perspective, see the records of the Commission on Manpower, Automation and Technology; the Technology, Trade and Commerce Agency; and the Office of Appropriate Technology, as well as the records of the Legislature's Joint Committee on Science and Technology, housed at the California State Archives. For more information on these and other related records, please visit the Archives online catalog, Minerva at www.sos.ca.gov/archives/minerva.

From the State Archivist

Archivists are in the business of collecting, preserving, and providing access to records of the past. We are also historians who look back at milestone events and we like to mark anniversaries. I've been thinking about California in 1915, one-hundred years ago. California was in the world spotlight with the opening of the Panama-Pacific Exposition

in San Francisco and the Panama-California Exposition in San Diego. Both events celebrated the opening of the Panama Canal and, for San Francisco, its recovery from the devastating 1906 earthquake. In 1915, California had just started the second term of Governor Hiram Johnson, who was noted for his efforts to reform state government. With the recently passed initiative, referendum, and recall processes plus other changes, it was the height of the “Progressive Era” that brought more civic engagement than Californians had previously experienced. Today, it is possible to look back and learn about the changes that occurred in the state and to state government in 1915 through records in the State Archives. Perhaps there will be Californians a hundred years from now who will study not only the records of 1915, but also the records being created, collected, and preserved today.

Nancy Zimmelman Lenoil

Program News

California Audiovisual Preservation Project (CAVPP)

The California State Archives, in partnership with other cultural heritage organizations (archives, museums, and libraries), has been participating in a grant funded project to survey, identify, and submit for digitization, audiovisual materials that are at risk for loss due to format obsolescence, age, or condition. Funded by the California State Library, the National Endowment for the Humanities and the Institute of Museum and Library Sciences, the California Audiovisual Preservation Project (CAVPP) asks its partners to submit recordings that document aspects of California history. In order to identify candidate films for the project, the State Archives first sent staff to the University of California, Berkeley, to receive training in surveying audiovisual materials and determining the collective scope and scale of preservation needs.

In November 2010, during the initial phase of the project, the State Archives was invited to choose two films or audio recordings to be digitized. Based on the survey, two films were selected: “Cesar Chavez Interview” from the Records of the Employment Development Department and “Punish or Train?” from the Records of the Dept. of Youth Authority. The Chavez interview, filmed in 1982, documents Chavez’s history in the farm labor movement. He explains how he got involved in organizing farm labor, the evolving relationships he and his organization had with growers, and the people whom he feels were key to his initial involvement with organized labor. Chavez also discusses the accomplishments over the 20 years since the establishment of the United Farm Workers.

The short film entitled “Punish or Train?” documents the athletic, vocational, and educational programs conducted at the Whittier State School under the administration of E. J. Milne. The film was made in 1937 and provides a rare look at the inner workings of the institution. After two controversial youth suicides at the facility in 1939 and 1940, Milne was relieved of duty. The suicides also led to widespread reform, including the creation of the California Youth Authority. The film was suffering from vinegar syndrome, so called because of the vinegary odor that acetate-based films give off when they are in an advanced state of deterioration. Only half of the film was digitized as part of the CAVPP Project. Read more in this issue about how the State Archives secured a grant to not only digitize the entire film, but to also receive a new print.

Because of the work with the CAVPP, the State Archives now has 57 motion picture films and audio recordings preserved and digitized. These items represent a wide array of collections, formats, and content. They range from Earl Warren speeches on Instantaneous discs, to a Ronald Reagan speech on a 2-inch Quadruplex tape, to a Dept. of Fish and Game 16mm film documenting the California condor, to a 1941 Dept. of Natural Resources film depicting the California State Fair at the Stockton Boulevard site. All unrestricted digitized items from the project can be viewed on the California State Archives’ Internet Archive webpage at <https://archive.org/details/californiastatearchives>.

By Chris Garmire, Audio-Visual Archivist

Records in the Spotlight

State Archives Completes National Film Preservation Foundation Grant

In September 2012, the California State Archives received a National Film Preservation Foundation Grant (NFPF) to create a new film print and digital copy of the 1937 film "Punish or Train?" Preservation staff prepared photo documentation of the film, while archivist Chris Garmire researched its history. Due to the deterioration, only half of the film could be digitized through the prior CAVPP grant (see previous article). The CAVPP vendor suggested another company with a machine that could handle film in almost any condition for the digital transfer. Fortunately, this second vendor, despite the deterioration of the film, was able to create a digital image of it. However, the granting agency required the State Archives to also produce a film print for preservation purposes, which the second vendor could not do. Therefore, a third vendor had to be located who could turn a digital print into film stock. The final result of this grant project was not only a new film print for the California State Archives, but also a fantastic digital copy that can be shared with the public. The entire 18 minute film can be viewed on the State Archives' Internet Archive webpage at https://archive.org/details/car_00002.

By Chris Garmire, Audio-Visual Archivist

Speaker Series

The next event in the Archives Speaker Series is scheduled for Thursday, August 20, beginning at 5:00 pm.

Historian Todd Holmes will discuss his forthcoming book, *The Fruits of Fracture: The Corporate West, the United Farm Workers' Movement, and the Rise of Reaganism in American Politics*.

The Fruits of Fracture examines the consequential shifts in business and party politics during the governorship of Ronald Reagan, and the overlooked role the boycott campaigns of César Chávez and the UFW played in this transformation of political economy. The book traces how the vibrant consumer politics employed by the UFW against the Corporate West -- especially its economic hub, California agribusiness -- fractured the political center and profoundly altered the relationship between the western business community and both political parties. Democrats turned against business in favor of a new coalition largely based on that of the UFW. Republicans, on the other hand, moved away from moderate positions to embody the conservative and more business-friendly posture of the Reagan Administration. This realignment set the stage for the policy debates that would erupt in California and the nation during the following decades. It also proved to be the defining factor in the political and economic phenomenon that became known as Reaganism.

Todd Holmes is a postdoctoral scholar with the Bill Lane Center for the American West at Stanford University. A native of Sacramento, Todd earned a BA and MA in History at California State University, Sacramento, and a PhD in History at Yale University. He is the author of numerous articles on California politics, western agribusiness, and environmental policy. At Yale, he served four years as the Program Coordinator for James C. Scott's Agrarian Studies Program and is currently the principal researcher of the California Coastal Commission Project at Stanford University.

For more information, visit www.sos.ca.gov/archives/speaker-series/ or email ArchivesEvents@sos.ca.gov. The Speaker Series is co-sponsored by the Friends of the California Archives <http://www.friendsofcalarchives.org>.

While this is a free event, tickets are required for planning purposes. Click on the ticket to reserve seats (links to the Archives' Eventbrite page) <https://speaker-series-aug-2015.eventbrite.com>

Mini-conference & Workshop

The Gold Country Archivists (GCA), an informal organization for archivists in the Sacramento region, are excited to announce a two day mini-conference this summer. The mini-conference, a Society of California Archivists (SCA)

Member-Initiated Event, will take place August 27-28 in Sacramento, and consists of a pre-conference workshop on Thursday and a day of sessions on Friday. The pre-conference workshop, Digital Forensics for Archivists: Fundamentals, is a Society of American Archivists (SAA) Digital Archives Specialist (DAS) foundational course. For more information about the course, visit the Society's website at <http://saa.archivists.org/events/digital-forensics-for-archivists-fundamentals-1624/620/>. SCA members receive special pricing for the workshop!

The mini-conference program will take place at the California State Archives and the California State Library, and will feature sessions and a luncheon. The day will conclude with site tours of the California State Archives, the California State Library, and the Leland Stanford Mansion State Historic Park. For program details and registration, visit the Society of California Archivists website at <http://calarchivists.org/page-1859596>.

Graduate Internship Available

Are you interested in becoming an archivist? Are you currently enrolled in a graduate program in archival studies, history, public history, library science, or a related field? Please consider applying for the California State Archives' Graduate Internship! Application deadline is July 17.

This program provides structured training in many areas of archival work, from processing to reference, from appraisal to outreach. Interns must commit to working a minimum of 20 hours per week for at least a year. This is a paid internship, with hourly wage based on the state's current schedule for graduate students. Depending on circumstances, and after appropriate training by other archivists, the intern will process documents received into the State Archives, compile finding aids and guides to archival holdings and edit them for publication, provide reference services to scholars and the general public in the use of archival materials, receive records that are transferred to the State Archives, retrieve and refile documents requested by researchers, and use electronic collection management systems to enter and revise information about collections. For detailed information about the application process, please visit the Graduate Internship Program webpage at <http://www.sos.ca.gov/archives/admin-programs/grad-internship/>. If you have questions about the internship program, please email program coordinator Jessica Knox at jknox@sos.ca.gov.

National History Day - California

In May, the 2015 National History Day-California (NHD-CA) State Competition took place at William Jessup University in Rocklin, California. Over 1,000 young scholars in 4th through 12th grades from around the state gathered to present their original projects in one of six categories based on the theme, "Leadership & Legacy in History." Congratulations to all who participated and best wishes for continued success to the state champions who have gone on to National History Day Competition in Washington, DC. For a list of state winners, visit the National History Day - California website at <http://www.nhdca.org/> and click on "News." Next year's theme is "Exploration, Encounter, Exchange in History." Don't forget about History Day How-tos 4.0, a free workshop for History Day participants, on Saturday, November 14, hosted by the California State Archives. Participants will learn how to conduct archival research, how to craft a strong thesis statement, how to properly cite sources, and much more! Archivists will be on hand to assist in finding the best primary sources. For more information, visit <http://www.sos.ca.gov/archives/public-events/history-day/>

At the Museum

"We Are All California" Family History Day, July 18

Sponsored by the California Endowment, this free event for genealogy novices and experienced researchers alike will be held from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm. Explore how to research, document, and preserve a family tree and participate in other festivities. The event includes free admission to all current exhibits, activities for kids, and demonstrations by genealogy experts. Historical societies and collections facilities, including the California State Archives, Sacramento County Historical Society, and many more will be participating in the Family

History Fair. For more information, visit www.californiamuseum.org/family-history-day.

At the State Fair

Look for the State Archives at the 2015 California State Fair, July 10 – 26, as part of an exhibit curated by the the California State Library. The exhibit will focus on the Panama-Pacific International Exposition (PPIE), held in San Francisco in 1915, and will feature some of the State Library’s 3D images as well as a number of PPIE-related treasures.

Items from the State

Archives and the Capitol Museum will round out the exhibit, which will be located in the California Building. For more information about the State Fair, visit www.castatefair.org.

Upcoming Events

June 26, July 31, August 28 Monthly Public Tours of the California State Archives www.sos.ca.gov/archives/tours

July 5 - 17 29th Western Archives Institute, Santa Clara University www.sos.ca.gov/archives/wai

July 10 - 26 California State Fair: Exhibit on the 100th Anniversary of the Panama-Pacific International Exposition www.castatefair.org

July 18 “We Are All Californians” Family History Day at the California Museum www.californiamuseum.org/family-history-day

July 22 - 25 National Association of Government Archives & Records Administrators/Council of State Archivists Joint Annual Meeting, Austin nagara.org/meetinginfo.php

August 16 - 22 Society of American Archivists Annual General Meeting, Cleveland www2.archivists.org/conference

August 20 Speaker Series: The Fruits of Fracture with Todd Holmes www.sos.ca.gov/archives/speaker-series

August 27 - 28 Gold Country Archivists Mini-Conference and Workshop, Sacramento www.calarchivists.org