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Foreword

Many of you probably "lived the history" of the 1960s here in Riverside. If you did you will enjoy the article by Nicolette Rohr as she explores the Folk Music which sprang up in Riverside, including a visit by Pete Seeger. Some familiar Riverside names appear in this music movement of the 60s.

An important part of the study of history is through the examination of old photographs. This is especially interesting in the area of local history where we can relate to the people and the places very closely and often personally. Two of our articles demonstrate the importance of such pictures and remind us to correctly label these treasures. Dr. Carlos Cortes relates how he and his brother came to the conclusion that they needed attempt to label many of the photos in their family collection. We thank the Press Enterprise for allowing us to use this article.

Marie and Steve Mains took an unlabeled photo that was shown at a recent Riverside Historical Society lecture by Leigh Gleason from the California Museum of Photography and went out and photographed the same location today. With a good eye and the right settings one can discover where many of these old photographs were shot. A comparison of then and now can sometimes be surprising.

The Trujillo Adobe played an important and interesting role in the early history of the Riverside area. Nancy Melendez gives us a good summary of this place which is actually part of her own family history. Again, we see that local history can be very personal.

Finally we have a section at the end of this issue where the Board members of the Riverside Historical Society were invited to submit one of their favorite photos that gives us a glimpse of Riverside History. Check out these photos and read why each one treasures that particular photo.

Enjoy our latest efforts as we all learn more about Riverside.

Glenn Wenzel, Editor
Riverside Historical Society Journal

About the Authors

Dr. Carlos Cortes is a retired UCR history professor. Dr. Cortes holds a B.A. from the University of California in Berkeley, a M.S. from Columbia University and a M.A. and a PhD in History from the University of New Mexico. He is still active in lecturing and consulting throughout the United States at various universities. The article in this journal was originally published in the Riverside Press Enterprise as an Inlandia column.

Marie Mains is a retired high school English teacher (34 years), holding a Master's Degree in Educational Leadership and a Bachelor's Degree in English. Her interest in history stems from her college days as an undergrad when she almost decided to major in history. She enjoys a "peripheral hobby" of rocks and minerals having been married to her husband Steve Mains, a hydrogeologist, and she attempts to proofread MOST of his reports and longer emails, if possible, to keep her red pen from drying out.

Steven Mains is a proud graduate of Ramona High School, has an Associate of Science Degree from Riverside City College and a Bachelor of Arts Degree in the Earth Sciences. He has spent his professional career working with water rights and water quality issues in the Inland Empire. Riverside has been good to him and his family, and he strongly believes in giving back to the community. He is an active volunteer with a number of community and educational groups, including being a board member of the Riverside Historical Society.

Nancy Melendez hails from Riverside, California with deep roots in her community. Her family ties (Baca/Trujillo) stem from the original 10 families that founded La Placita de los Trujillos and Agua Mansa in the 1840's. Nancy, and her cousins Darlene and Suzanne, created the Riverside Tamale Festival and founded the Spanish Town Heritage Foundation with the mission of saving the Trujillo Adobe in Riverside and recreating La Placita de los Trujillos to share the stories of the first settlers in the Inland Empire. She is currently serving as President of Spanish Town Heritage Foundation and Interim California Director of the Old Spanish Trail Association.

Nicolette Rohr is a PhD candidate in History at the University of California, Riverside. Her dissertation project explores women and popular music fandom in the 1960s. She holds an M.A. in Public History from UCR and has been involved in many community projects and preservation efforts in her hometown of Riverside and co-curated exhibitions at the California Museum of Photography and Riverside Art Museum. In 2015, she was a Gladys Kriebel Delmas Visiting Scholar at the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame Library and Archives in Cleveland, Ohio.

Rise Up Singing: Riverside and the Folk Revival

By Nicolette Rohr

On a spring night in 1963, a crowd gathered on a Riverside hillside off Alessandro. They brought chairs and pillows and found spots on the hill near Via Vista, not yet covered with houses, ready for a "starlight concert."[1] The audience was there to see, hear, and sing with Pete Seeger, the folksinger who inspired many to pick up a guitar (or banjo), learn to play, and rise up singing. Seeger had been invited by the Riverside Folk Song Society, founded three years earlier by Chet Roistacher. While in Riverside, he was hosted by Keith and Rusty McNeil. They were members of the Folk Song Society and would themselves become professional folksingers three years later when Keith left his job to tour across the country and around the world teaching history through folk music. While at the McNeil's home, Seeger shared a song he had just learned, recently written by a young folksinger named Bob Dylan. It was called "Blowin' in the Wind."[2]

Seeger's appearance in Riverside marks a moment of celebrity in the city's history of music and culture, but more importantly, it reflects the rich history of the national (and international, to an extent) folk revival in Riverside. In the late 1950s and early 1960s, people across the country were drawn to folk music and came together to sing, play, and listen to music. Riverside was no exception. What became known as the folk revival took root in clubs and on college campuses across the nation, flourished in folk circles, and grew increasingly popular in the early 1960s, eventually dominating music charts, air waves, television specials, and influencing the fashion, politics, and music of the revolutionary era.

This particular revival in the popularity and commercial success of folk music traces its roots to the song collecting of Alan Lomax, Charles Seeger, Harry Smith, and others and to the politics of the Popular Front and celebration of the common man during the Great Depression. These traditions continued in smaller circles throughout the war years and into the postwar era, spurred by the Almanac Singers in the 1940s and then the Weavers, who made the Leadbelly song "Goodnight, Irene" the greatest hit of 1950. The Weavers led a remarkable but brief moment of commercial popularity and success before the Red Scare sent folk music and the people and politics associated with it underground for much of the decade.[3] While Seeger and others were blacklisted, Doc Watson, The Greenbrier Boys, and others developed steady followings of devoted listeners aligned with folk music and

Pete Seeger Riverside Concert Poster
Chet Roistacher's signed poster. Image courtesy of Chet Roistacher.

rural traditions as a rejection of the prevailing trends—musical, political, social, cultural—of the times. Their fan bases embraced an aesthetic seen as authentic and unadulterated in an age of mass production and marketing. Folk music seemed increasingly appealing in this era, especially to those frustrated by the superficiality of mainstream culture and the music it produced and increasingly resistant to the politics and contradictions of Cold War America. Although grounded in tradition, the folk movement created a new musical form, a new cultural space, and a new set of social and political geographies in the United States as people, many of them young people, were drawn to old songs that were new to them, or new songs written to sound old, and learned to sing and play this music as well. Folk music is widely considered to have made its full commercial comeback in 1958 when the Kingston Trio made the Appalachian ballad "Tom Dooley" a radio hit, one year after Keith and Rusty McNeil recorded "K. O. and Rusty Sing." From there, Joan Baez, Peter, Paul, and Mary, and Bob Dylan, led a remarkable surge in the genre's growth and popularity, topping American music charts in the 1960s and influencing the remarkable music of the decade.

Folk music was enthusiastically inclusive and, led by Seeger, embraced the participatory principle—"learn to play the banjo," "won't you join me," "rise up singing…."[4] As Seeger explained,

> I sang songs about people from all walks of life, and I talked about how anyone from any walk of life could sing this kind of song himself. What I was getting at was the idea of flip-flopping the power structure, so every individual had some power, rather than all the power being centered on a few organizations or just one. I said 'Sing with me. Sing by yourself. Make your own music. Pick up a guitar, or just sing a capella. We don't need professional singers. We don't need stars. You can sing. Join me now….[5]

Formed in 1960, the Riverside Folk Song Society exemplified this era and this ethos. Although Riverside did not have quite the same infrastructure for folk music as some of the larger cities did, the folk revival reached Riverside nevertheless and was supported by the Folk Song Society and the many partnerships it housed.

Chet Roistacher came to Riverside in 1952 as a plant pathologist at the University of California campus at Riverside, soon to be the system's newest campus. He had grown up in New York and been introduced to a wide variety of music from a young age. At Cornell University in 1940s, he founded a folk song society as well as a folk dancing society and met many heroes of the folk

"The Folk Music Gang"
Rusty McNeil is second from the left, next to Clabe Hangan. Chet Roistacher is sitting on the bottom left, next to Keith McNeil. Keith Chalmers is seated at the far right. Image Courtesy of Chet Roistacher.

scene: Woody Guthrie, Josh White, John Jacob Niles, as well as Pete Seeger.[6] As it did for so many, folk music brought rural Appalachia to Roistacher, a "city boy," and inspired him to learn to play.[7] Eventually, he carried this talent all the way to Japan, where he performed "This Land Is Your Land" upon the request of the local governor while attending a conference of the International Organization of Citrus Virologists in Wakayama. Asked to play unexpectedly, he changed the words on the spur of the moment: "From far Hokkaido, to Kyushu Island / From the great Mt. Fuji, to Wakayama."[8]

When he came to Riverside, Roistacher missed gathering with other folkies and wished to replicate the folk music societies he had enjoyed in New York. Therefore, he formed the Riverside Folk Song Society. He put an ad in the paper seeking interested parties and organized a gathering early in the new year of a new decade. The first meeting of the Riverside Folk Song Society was held on January 2, 1960 at the home of Ed and Nancy Nauer. There was a charge of 50 cents per

person to cover refreshments "and other expenses," and attendees were instructed to bring their own sitting pillows.[9] Of course, they were also asked to bring songs.

Meetings of the Folk Song Society were song circles where participants shared music and learned new (or new to them) songs from one another. As the announcement of the first meeting stated, "It is expected that each individual will come prepared to offer some contribution; alone, or with a partner on any phase of folk music."[10] Although not at the first meeting, subsequently the host would often pick a theme to guide the song selections. "Parting Glass," an old Irish song, was the closer (and remains so to this day). Many attendees remember the gatherings as "always welcoming," with "very little criticism and pretention," and "encouragement for beginners."[11]

While many of the famous moments of the folk revival occurred in coffeehouses and clubs, Riverside's song circles were usually held in private homes and, as one attendee remembered, "brought magic to people's homes."[12] There was a social component along with the singing. Meetings included an "intermission" and refreshments, and meetings were often followed by a late night visit to a restaurant.[13] The Folk Song Society was also the "beginning of many friendships" and created an "extended family."[14] Although the name remains "Riverside" to this day, the group spread to Redlands, San Bernardino, Corona, and surrounding communities, sometimes meeting at homes there and drawing membership from the wider inland region. The group gained some publicity through *Press-Enterprise* reporter T.E. Foreman who kept the Folk Song Society in the "What's Happening?" section of the paper.[15] Many members also forged partnerships with other singing groups and folk song societies, namely those based in Claremont, where Charles and Dorothy Chase established the Folk Music Center in 1958, and San Bernardino, where the Penny University (known as the Penny U), a coffeehouse and community was founded in 1963, featuring Clabe Hangan, Sally Thomas, and many more.[16] In 1962, there was an Inland Empire Folk Song Festival organized by the folk song societies in Riverside and San Bernardino and held at San Bernardino College Valley Auditorium.[17] The event featured performances by Roistacher, the McNeils, and Keith Chalmers, followed by a hootenanny, one of the common folk traditions of the day.

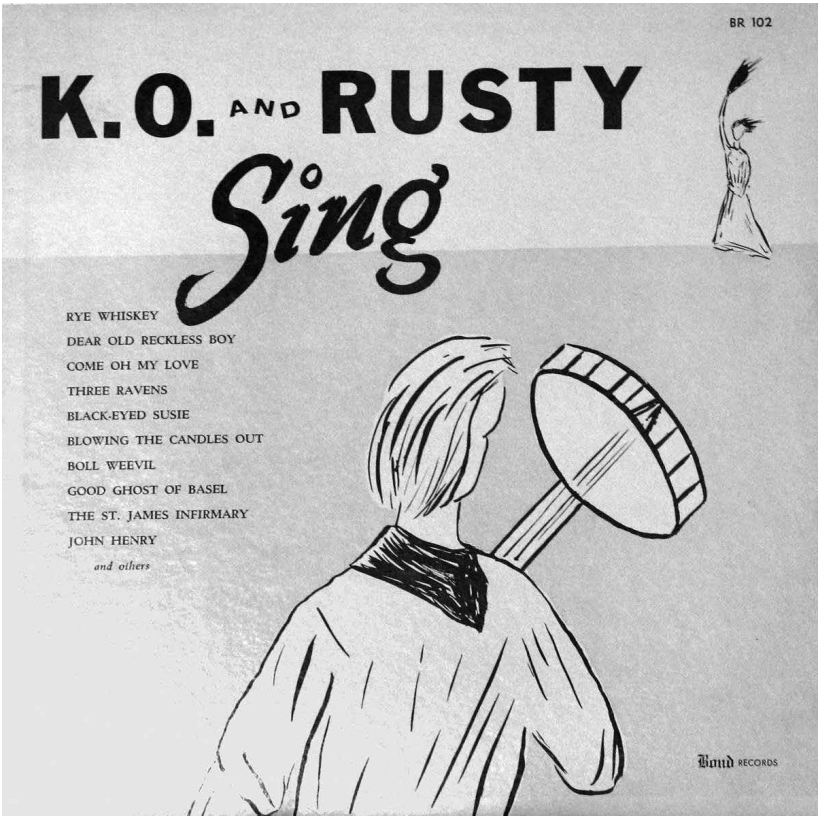
In the 1960s especially, folk music was widely aligned with the civil rights movement and often with the peace and disarmament movements as well.[18] The McNeils, Clabe Hangan, and others were activists as well as musicians and used music as a tool to build bridges. "Learning to play and sing songs from cultures different from my own," McNeil wrote, "taught me that music has the power to build bridges of understanding and appreciation between individuals,

groups, communities, cultures, and nations."[19] In Riverside, many members were specifically involved in the campaign against Prop. 14, a 1964 ballot proposition regarding fair housing and racial discrimination. The folk community was also a good place to organize. Seeger's visit itself was an example of this activism; Seeger had been blacklisted during the Red Scare, and Roistacher remembered the Society's invitation to Riverside as an expression of support during this period and a way to honor his resolution in the face of McCarthyism.[20]

Bringing Seeger to Riverside was a group effort of the Society, the McNeils, and the Universalist Unitarian Church, who co-sponsored the event and provided the venue on their property off Alessandro.[21] The hill created a natural amphitheater, volunteers built a stage, and tickets were sold at Harris Company, Cheney's, and the Unitarian Universalist Church. In a thank you note to Rusty McNeil, Seeger wrote that the evening "was a memorable one" and that he would never forget it.[22]

Seeger's visit was one of many folk performances in Riverside during the 1960s, including many on the RCC and UCR campuses. Bob Dylan visited Riverside in 1964 and played in the gym at UCR (for an admission fee of $1.50!) the same night Joan Baez performed in Redlands, where she had gone to high school not long before.[23] Dylan reportedly loved Riverside and found the people he met more down to earth than the crowd he had been hanging out with on the Sunset Strip. Dot Harris, also a member of the Folk Song Society, organized a Sunday folk music series in the Barn at UCR and brought Judy Collins, Ella Jenkins, and many more to campus.[24] In 1967, the New Lost City Ramblers visited Riverside and attended a reception held at the Roistachers' home near UCR, bringing John Cohen and Mike Seeger, Pete's half-brother, to Riverside.[25]

Aside from these celebrity appearances, many local communities and groups were forged out of the folk community. Some members began gathering to sing Shape Notes and songs from the *Sacred Harp*. This gathering of the McNeils, Tom and Sally Johnson, Bill and Joy Junkert, Art and Alice Clawson, Garrett and Mary Lou Short, Jim and Marge Montgomery, and others lived on at the McNeil's home every Christmas Eve until shortly before Rusty's death in 2010.[26] Some members began visiting Camp O-Ongo in the local mountains where their families played music together.[27] Rev. Garrett Short incorporated some folk music into his "Celebration" worship services at Calvary Presbyterian Church during the 1960s and 70s. In 1970, a singing group of eight women calling themselves the Why Nots formed after Keith Chalmers, one of Riverside's musical masters, prompted some of the women who had been taking guitar lessons from him to perform in downtown Riverside for the city's centennial. Rachel Dudek, Marie



K.O. and RUSTY Sing
Courtesy of WEM Records.

Hempy, Marsha Loveridge, Marge Montgomery, Dympna Nurre, Alicia Rowe, and Beverly Wingate Maloof would sing together for over forty years. In 1997, the Why Nots hosted their first "hoot," continuing the parlance of the 1960s, sending out invitations entitled "Why Not A Hoot?" These Labor Day weekend gatherings, held first in the backyard of Shelter West Realty on Brockton and later at the Maloof Compound in Alta Loma, often represented a reunion of sorts for the folk community in Riverside.

Keith and Rusty McNeil were Riverside's leading folksingers, active prior to the founding of the Folk Song Society and long after.[28] Both native Californians, the McNeils grew up learning music and history and crafted a career out of both. Keith taught himself to play the five-string banjo with Pete Seeger's book *How to*

Play the Five-String Banjo as his guide.[29] The McNeils sang with the Riverside Folk Song Society and also founded the Young People's Folk Song Society. Recognizing the power of music to connect people, they used folk music as a tool in their activism.[30] They also valued the history of the music they sang, and when Keith left his day job with Pacific Telephone in 1966, he and Rusty built a career for themselves teaching American history through folk music.[31] They published a series of historical songbooks and recordings and gave school assemblies, concerts, and courses for audiences across the country and around the world. For domestic performances, they traveled on a 1949 school bus they converted into a tour bus for their family, friends, and instruments (often as many as thirty per performance). They also left a legacy in Riverside's classrooms by teaching teachers to use music in the classroom, collaborating with Tom Johnson, an RCC professor, and their son David on drums. The McNeils also led folk music tours abroad, and many of their Riverside folk song friends were often along.

The Folk Revival waned as the decade wore on; the Beatles arrived, Dylan went electric, and they both influenced the innovative rock music of the era. The Riverside community, however, demonstrates the ways in which those categories and timelines are never quite so neat, as the music and community both continued to flourish. Today, the Riverside Folk Song Society continues to meet each month, although the repertoire has shifted from traditional folk music to more generally acoustic music.[32] The McNeils have passed away, and so has Sally Thomas, Clabe Hangan, two of the Why Nots, and many more. Still, Chet Roistacher joins "Why Nots Plus" to come together and sing every month. The Why Nots have written their memoir, *While We're Here, We Should Sing*, published by the Inlandia Institute in 2016. The McNeils' papers are now housed at the Riverside Metropolitan Museum, and some of their instruments have found a home at their good friends the Chases' Folk Music Center in Claremont. For Pete Seeger's 95th birthday, Kris Lovekin hosted a sing-along at her Riverside home, singing Seeger's music with Roistacher, McNeil, some of the Why Nots, and some new friends. The concert poster from 1963, signed by Seeger with his characteristic banjo and "Shalom," stood proudly on display.

The Riverside Folk Song Society and its affiliates represent a rich part of Riverside's history in the 1950s and 60s and the national and global connections forged by the music. Moreover, the case study reveals the broader significance of the folk revival across the country. While many histories focus on the hotbeds of Greenwich Village and San Francisco, folk was popular around the country, not only for those who listened to records, but also those who formed song circles and came together to rise up singing.

Endnotes

1 Pete Seeger concert poster, courtesy of Chet Roistacher.

2 McNeil, Keith. Interview with the author. December 2, 2004, Riverside. McNeil also recalled hearing "A Hard Rain's a-Gonna Fall." Both songs would be released on *The Freewheelin' Bob Dylan* a few weeks later.

3 For more on folk music and the folk revival, see Robert Cantwell, *When We Were Good: The Folk Revival* (Cambridge: Harvard, 1996); Benjamin Filene, *Romancing the Folk: Public Memory and American Roots Music* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000); Ronald D. Cohen, *Rainbow Quest: The Folk Music Revival and American Society, 1940-1970* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2002); David Hajdu, *Positively Fourth Street: The Lives and Times of Joan Baez, Bob Dylan, Mimi Baez Farina and Richard Farina* (New York: Picador, 2001); Suze Rotolo, *A Freewheelin' Time: A Memoir of Greenwich Village in the Sixties* (New York: Broadway Books, 2008). For contemporary accounts see Susan Montgomery, "The Folk Furor" (*Mademoiselle*, Dec. 1960) and John Pankake, "Pete's Children: The American Folk Song Revival, Pro and Con," (*Little Sandy Review* 29: 1964). For more on the Weavers in particular, see Ronnie Gilbert, *A Radical Life in Song: A Memoir* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2015).

4 Cantwell notes the connections between Seeger's participatory ethos and the affiliations of folk music with communism, labor, and the American Left (*When We Were Good*, 89). For more on Seeger's "passion for audience involvement," see Filene, *Romancing The Folk*, Chapter 5.

5 Seeger quoted in Hajdu, *Positively Fourth Street*, 8.

6 Roistacher, Chet. Interview with the author, December 18, 2015, Riverside.

7 Roistacher, Chet. "Pete Seeger – In Memoriam." http://riversidefolksociety.blogspot.com. February 2014, posted June 7, 2014.

8 Roistacher, Chet. "Celebrating Pete Seeger on May 3, 2014 and remembering Wakayama Japan, in Oct. 1969." May 4, 2014. Personal collection of Chet Roistacher.

9 "Folk Song Society of Riverside: Chapter I." Original invitation. Personal collection of Chet Roistacher.

10 *Ibid.*

11 Curtin, Mary, Kevin Curtin, Bill and Joy Junkert. Interview with the author, January 14, 2016, Riverside.

12 *Ibid.*

13 *Ibid.*

[14] *Ibid.;* Chet Roistacher, Interview with the author, December 18, 2015, Riverside ("loving friendship"). This author is grateful to be a descendant of that extended family

[15] Curtin/Junkert interview (January 14, 2016, Riverside).

[16] Folk Music Center, "Our History" (folkmusiccenter.com); Nick Cataldo, "There was no place like the Penny University" (*San Bernardino County Sun*, August 24, 2015); thanks to Don Reynoso for memories of the Penny U.

[17] "Folk singers to hold music festival" (*The Press Enterprise*, September 1962).

[18] For more on this alliance, see Guy and Candie Carawan, *Sing for Freedom: The Story of the Civil Rights Movement Through Its Songs* (Montgomery: New South Books, 2007).

[19] McNeil, Keith. Quote courtesy of Sarah McNeil.

[20] Roistacher, "Pete Seeger – In Memoriam."

[21] *Ibid.*

[22] Seeger, Pete to Rusty McNeil, May 28, 1963. Courtesy of the McNeil family.

[23] French, Ross. "Live From the Barn." (*UCR Magazine*, Winter 2013, p. 20-21: 21). Dylan played UCR on February 25, 1964. Thanks to Terry Ogden for sharing memories of the concert.

[24] *Ibid.*, 20.

[25] For more on the New Lost City Ramblers, see Ray Allen, *Gone to the Country: The New Lost City Ramblers and the Folk Revival* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2010).

[26] Johnson, Sally. Interview with the author, February 16, 2017, Riverside.

[27] Roistacher Interview (December 18, 2015, Riverside).

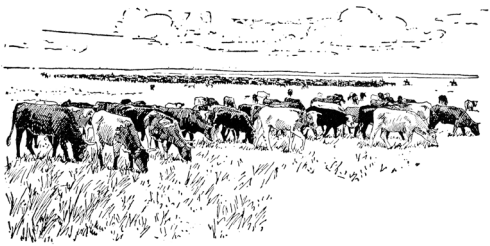
[28] Altman, Ross. "Rusty McNeil." (folkworks.org).

[29] "Who Are We" (mcneilmusic.com).

[30] *Ibid.*

[31] Nelson, Valerie J. "Rusty McNeil dies at 81; U.S. folk-music historian who teamed with her husband" (*Los Angeles Times*, December 28, 2010).

[32] Curtin/Junkert interview (January 14, 2016, Riverside).



Location Unknown

By Steven and Marie Mains

If you are reading this article, by definition, you have an interest in history. And as such, you can also understand the many problems we face trying to understand and document past events.

One common problem we all come across constantly are photos without names, dates or locations. Is that Aunt Jenni's birthday party? Was this taken at Yosemite or Yellowstone? I think the picture was taken after 1950 because that is Uncle Paul's pickup truck in the background.

If you attended the January 2017 meeting of the Riverside Historical Society, you would understand that undocumented photographs are not just the issue with the average family.

Ms. Leigh Gleason, the Curator of Collections for the California Museum of Photography, spoke to a full house with a presentation entitled Historic Photos of Riverside from the Collection of the California Museum of Photography.

The two photos shown in the following two pages were included in her presentation, and with a room full of people with an interest in history, both Erin Snyder of the Springbrook Heritage Alliance and myself (Steven) thought we recognized the location.

Ms. Snyder thought this was Point of Rocks, the location of the first, but short lived, railway station in Riverside. I am a geologist with a strong interest in geomorphology (study of landforms) and I have always been curious about how the hillside became terraced.

The Point of Rocks is located in what is now the Hunter Park neighborhood of Riverside. The site we identified for photo CMP 1984-0044.002 is east on Marlborough Avenue, immediately past the Union Pacific and Santa Fe rail lines. The site was fenced (02/17) for the construction of a new research building for the University of California. Our picture was taken at the locked driveway access for the City of Riverside's Sugarloaf water storage tank.

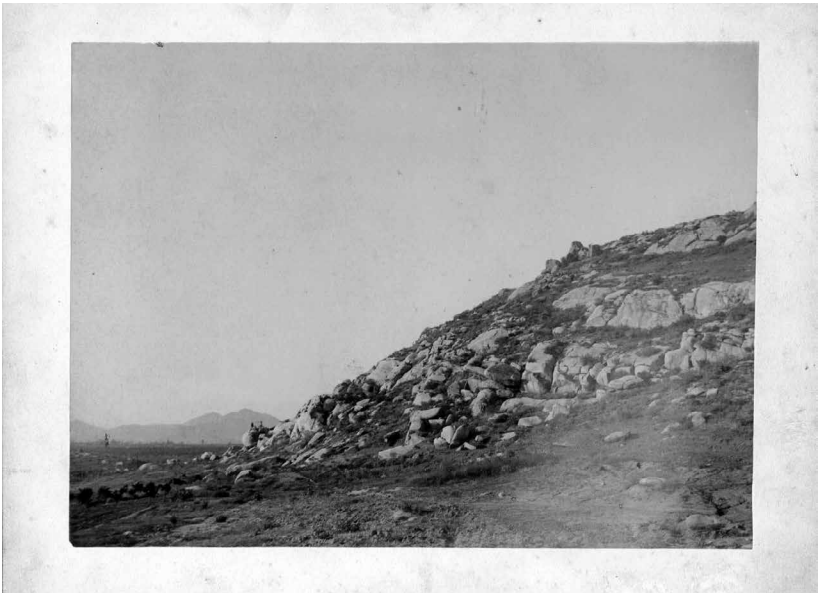
We were able to match eleven hillside/rock outcrops and two terrace features. Slight variations in the photo are assumed to be due to differences between professional photographic lens of the 1890's and our modern smartphone camera.

One of the terraces in this picture is actually the "patrol road" for our locally well-known Gage Canal. This portion of the canal is now a modern buried steel pipeline, and the canal is actually tunneled through the Point of Rocks.

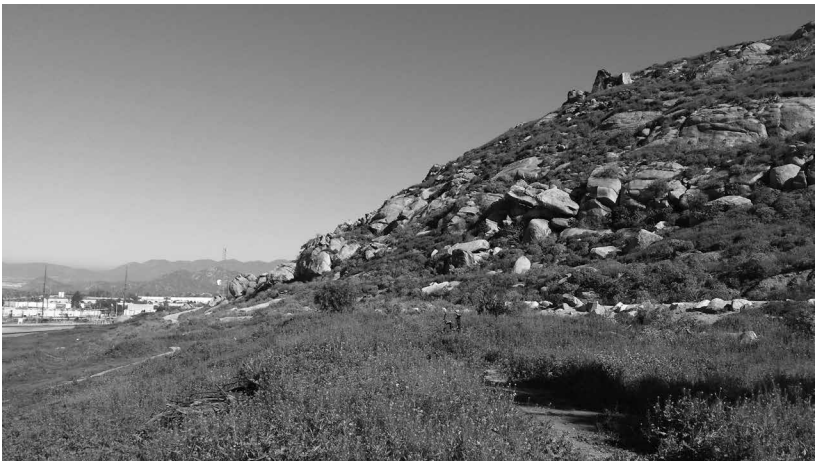
Approximately a quarter mile south along the canal road is the site we identified for the second photo, CMP 1984.0044.0001. We matched eight rock outcrops plus the shape of the La Loma Hills in the middle background.

Many of us are able to identify historical buildings in old photos, but we would like to remind members that if you have a good skyline in the photo, with assistance from Google Earth Street View, and a little shoe leather, you may be able to field locate where pictures were taken.

Undated archive index
California Museum of Photography
CMP 1984.0044.0001 and CMP 1984.0044.0002
Taken by F.H. McMillen (active in Riverside 1890-1896)
Donated by John Nichols of Santa Paula, CA, December 1984
Location: Unknown
Field located February 2017 by Steven & Marie Mains



CMP 1984.0044.0001
33.99430, -117.333548
Photo facing north, 1,000' south of center line Marlborough Avenue, Riverside 92507, 430' east of center line Rustin Avenue, 125' east of ATSF rail line



CMP 1984.0044.0002
33.99728, -117.334060
Photo facing southeast, 100' south of center line of Marlborough Avenue, Riverside 92507, 600' east of center line Rustin Avenue, immediately west of Gage Canal Company right-of-way

The Haunting World of Uncaptioned Family Photos

by Carlos Cortéz

(Originally published in the Riverside Press-Enterprise*, November 6, 2016)*

It started last month with a simple question from my brother, Gary, during our annual Cortés family gathering in Kansas City, where Gary and I grew up. "Carlos, which of these two photos do you think was taken first?"

I stared at the two pictures, one a formal portrait of the two of us dressed up and grinning, the other a casual snapshot of Mom, Gary, and me standing by our car in front of our new home. We agreed that we looked about the same age in both of them, while 1941 was written on the back of the portrait.

1941 was a momentous year. It was the year we bought our first home, on the corner of Rockhill and Oak in the middle-class south part of Kansas City. It was the year I started second grade at J. C. Nichols Elementary school, after kindergarten in Lawrence, Kansas, and first grade near downtown Kansas City.

It was the year my father taught me how to box so that I could deal with the physical gauntlet of Nichols neighborhood bullies who challenged outsiders like me for intruding on their sacred turf. And it was the year I watched my mother burst into tears when we heard the December 7 radio report that the Japanese had bombed Pearl Harbor. I have vivid memories of 1941, but those two photos provide our only remaining visual evidence of that pivotal year.

As we reminisced, Gary and I looked at other photos that adorn his home, built by our folks in 1952, the year that I graduated from high school. It is the home that my brother bought in 1984, the year after Mom died and when Dad moved into a senior citizens' home. As we looked at those pictures, we shared that we didn't know the dates of most of our family photos. Moreover, there were people we couldn't recognize, people whose names had disappeared from our family's oral lore when our folks died thirty years ago.

That conversation also brought back a haunting 1984 image of my sitting down with Dad to look at old photos that he had –- which I now have –- of relatives and family friends in early-twentieth-century Mexico. Realizing that his Parkinson's-ravaged memory was failing, Dad was anxious to make certain that we put captions on those photos before it was too late. But it was already

too late. Dad couldn't remember most of the people in the photos and there was nobody else to help him. So, I'm left with unidentified images of family I never knew and will never know, a wordless heritage of life before my family fled to the United States during the Mexican Revolution.

So Gary and I decided on a course of action. We don't want that happen to our family images. We plan to scan the old photos, write captions for all of them, and, with some luck, even construct a narrative that provides context for those images so that our future generations will have a better sense of their family heritage.

At 82 (me) and 76 (Gary), I'm sure we're not going to get everything right and certainly not complete. But when we finish this project –- if we ever finish it –- at least we'll know that we've tried to enrich the photo-viewing experience of our children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren-to-be. Let's hope they care, a least a little bit.

Photograph of Carlos E. Cortes y Ortigosa, the author's grandfather, some time between 1900 and 1914, when he had to flee Mexico. I have neither the date nor the names of any of the other people. I believe it was when my grandfather (center and dressed in white) was either Alcalde (Mayor) of Guadalajara, Mexico, or Guadalajara Jefe Politico for Revolutionary President Francisco Madero. As I mentioned in my article, this is the tragedy of uncaptioned photos.

The Trujillo Adobe -- La Corazon de La Placita

by Nancy Melendez

Three walls, four windows, a door frame, and adobe bricks with layers of renovation efforts are all that remain of what was once the "heart" of La Placita de los Trujillos, a thriving pioneer community of immigrant families from Abiquiu, New Mexico. It was a community centered around faith, family, and the American dream.

Lorenzo Trujillo and J. Manuel Baca and their families joined the Rowland-Workman party and walked along the Old Spanish Trail from Abiquiu to the Lugo Brothers' ranchero in present-day San Bernardino and Redlands in the fall of 1841. The Lugo brothers promised land ownership to the pioneers in return for their help in protecting against local raids on their livestock. The Lugo brothers reneged on that promise, and the families were planning to return to Abiquiu. Then a fellow member of the Rowland Workman party, Benjamin Wilson, who had just purchased a portion of the Jurupa Rancho from Juan Bandini, donated 2,200 acres of land on either side of the Santa Ana River to the New Mexican families. All that he asked was that they settle permanently in the area, and aid all community members in the protection of their crops and livestock. This was the beginning of La Placita de los Trujillos, under the leadership of Lorenzo Trujillo.

Lorenzo acted as spokesman for subsequent emigrants arriving from Abiquiu in the assignment of land parcels from the Bandini donation. The same things were asked of each new settler: to settle permanently in the area, help protect against raiders, help retrieve stolen stock, and to bring violators to justice. Adobe homes were built on the parcels, and the river frontage afforded the new landowners the ability to water crops of grapes, grains, vegetables, and fruit trees. The irrigation canals dug by these early families were the precursors to the Trujillo Ditch and to the still functional Trujillo Water Company. The first Trujillo Adobe was constructed in 1842, fairly close to the Santa Ana River on Lorenzo's parcel. This adobe remained the hub of activity in La Placita until the flood of 1862.

The settlers' need to practice their faith as a community led to Lorenzo building a communal altar in the square or plaza in front of his adobe, for use until a formal church could be built. Just as the roof was about to be completed, the unfinished church they had been trying to build washed away in a heavy rain due to the instability of the soil near the river. According to Jane Davies Gunther,

Trujillo Adobe in May, 1979.
(Riverside County Regional Park and Open-Space District).

"The community was also called San Salvador (Holy Savior) because it was the site of the first San Salvador church which, when virtually completed, collapsed on November 14, 1852." Subsequently, it was decided to build the church on the north side of the Santa Ana River, the Church of San Salvador, which remains a parish to this day.

After the Mexican-American war, California became a state of the United States in 1850. With statehood came citizenship in the United States, and voting privileges for the New Mexican pioneers. Once again the Trujillo family and their adobe home were the heart of the community, serving as the first voting precinct and polling place for La Placita and Agua Mansa, now known as San Salvador.

Lorenzo passed away in 1855, but his four sons took up his torch of leadership and civic engagement. Then 1862 was a year of torrential floods, and the original Trujillo Adobe was washed away. Lorenzo's sons rebuilt the adobe on higher ground, the remains of which we see today at the corner of North Orange and Center Streets in Riverside. The Trujillo School was established in 1875 and employed a woman named Alice Rowan, the first African-American teacher in California. The Trujillo School District was formed, and the Trujillo School was built across from the Trujillo Adobe in the La Loma hills.

Antonino G. Trujillo in front of the Trujillo Adobe in a horse and carriage. Also working the land in La Placita de los Trujillos (Author's collection).

With the creation of Riverside County in 1893, La Placita became the first supervisorial district in the county. Although given the honor of becoming the first supervisorial district, the voting power of La Placita/Agua Mansa was cut in half, with Agua Mansa located in San Bernardino County. However, the Trujillo Adobe remained as the center of activity in La Placita.

John W. North and a group of wealthy gentlemen farmers headed west, and they were welcomed by the residents of La Placita. As the City of Riverside took shape, La Placita de los Trujillos remained a distinct community. It was often referred to as Spanish Town, because of the dominant language spoken. North Orange Street was called Spanish Town Street, because it connected the mile square of the new city of Riverside to La Placita. The La Placita area and the Trujillo Adobe were in the unincorporated area of Riverside County, and remained so until the area was annexed by the City of Riverside in about 2005.

Juan Trujillo purchased the Trujillo Adobe from Antonino Trujillo for $10 in 1918. This was the first recorded sale of the adobe within the family since the Bandini Donation. The adobe remained with Trujillo family descendants until 1957 when Juan and Sarah Trujillo wanted a "modern house," so they sold the adobe to the Snyder family. The 1957 sale to Mr. & Mrs. Robert G. Snyder necessitated all living descendants of Lorenzo Trujillo to relinquish any ownership rights before Juan and Sarah could complete the sale.

Antonino Trujillo built a smaller adobe structure adjacent to the Trujillo Adobe in the early 1900's. It served several purposes, but was most remembered as the Cantina. The Cantina remained an active social center throughout Prohibition, but was closed after World War II. It collapsed in the late 1960's/early 1970's.

The Snyders lived in the house until 1969, when they sold the Trujillo Adobe to JoAnn Dreesen, a Trujillo descendant. Dreesen gave the Adobe to Riverside County, with a proviso that the County would maintain the structure and build a park around it. Sadly, history repeated itself in the form of a very rainy year before any work was done to preserve the adobe, and it was seriously damaged.

Today the three remaining walls of the 1862 Trujillo Adobe are protected by a wooden structure, and it is not visible to the public. The adobe was designated a Riverside County Historical Landmark #009 and was designated a site of historical significance by the California Office of Historic Preservation (plaque 75). A sign and plaque noting these significant tributes were celebrated with a large sign and a bronze plaque at the Trujillo Adobe in the 1980s. The sign and bronze plaque became the victims of vandals and are no longer on the site. (The County of Riverside will be installing a new sign at the site.)

Family members worked with the County and with a University of California Riverside graduate student, Joyce Vickery, to share the story of La Placita de los Trujillos and the Trujillo Adobe. Olive Trujillo Vlahovich read stories to children inside of the adobe prior to its demise, and Joyce Vickery published "Defending Eden," a wonderful history of La Placita. (Vickery died in 2010.)

The Riverside Tamale Festival was created in 2013 by family members to reach out to the broader community and tell the story of Lorenzo Trujillo, the Trujillo Adobe, La Placita de los Trujillos, and other early Hispanic families who lived in the region. The festival accomplishes this by gathering people together, sharing a meal, and enjoying music, art, and dance much as one would have enjoyed them in La Placita. The Tamale Festival, along with a broad ranging presence on social media (Facebook: Save the Trujillo Adobe, Riverside Tamale Festival, Spanish Town Heritage Foundation) (websites: www.rivtamalefest.com and www.spanishtownhf.org) has brought to the forefront the stories of Lorenzo Trujillo, the Trujillo Adobe, La Placita de los Trujillos, and their importance in the formation of the City of Riverside. In December of 2015, the City of Riverside's Cultural Heritage Board recommended to the City Council that the Trujillo Adobe be designated as City Landmark #130. The City Council voted unanimously to accept the recommendation.

The Riverside Tamale Festival was also the impetus in the formation of The Spanish Town Heritage Foundation, which was incorporated in 2013 as a non-

profit charitable foundation whose mission is to restore the Trujillo Adobe and La Placita de los Trujillos. The Foundation continues its work to share the Hispanic legacy of the Inland Empire's earliest settlers by developing a Trujillo Adobe history curriculum for the region's third and fourth graders, upgrading the Trujillo Adobe's California historical status, and applying for National Historical status.

For further information:

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Hurt, Suzanne. "Riverside: Settlers' Descendants Seek to Protect Adobe." Press-Enterprise, Oct. 25, 2014, updated Feb. 15, 2016.

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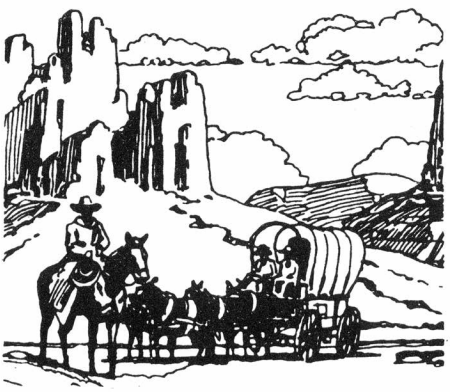
Patterson, Tom. *Landmarks of Riverside and the Stories Behind Them*. Press-Enterprise Co., 1964.

Robinson, Alicia. "Riverside: Descendants Hope to Save Historic Site." Press-Enterprise, Dec. 23, 2011.



San Bernardino County Museum. *The Agua Mansa Pioneer Cemetery: California State Historical Landmark #121*. sbcounty.gov/museum/branches/agua.htm.

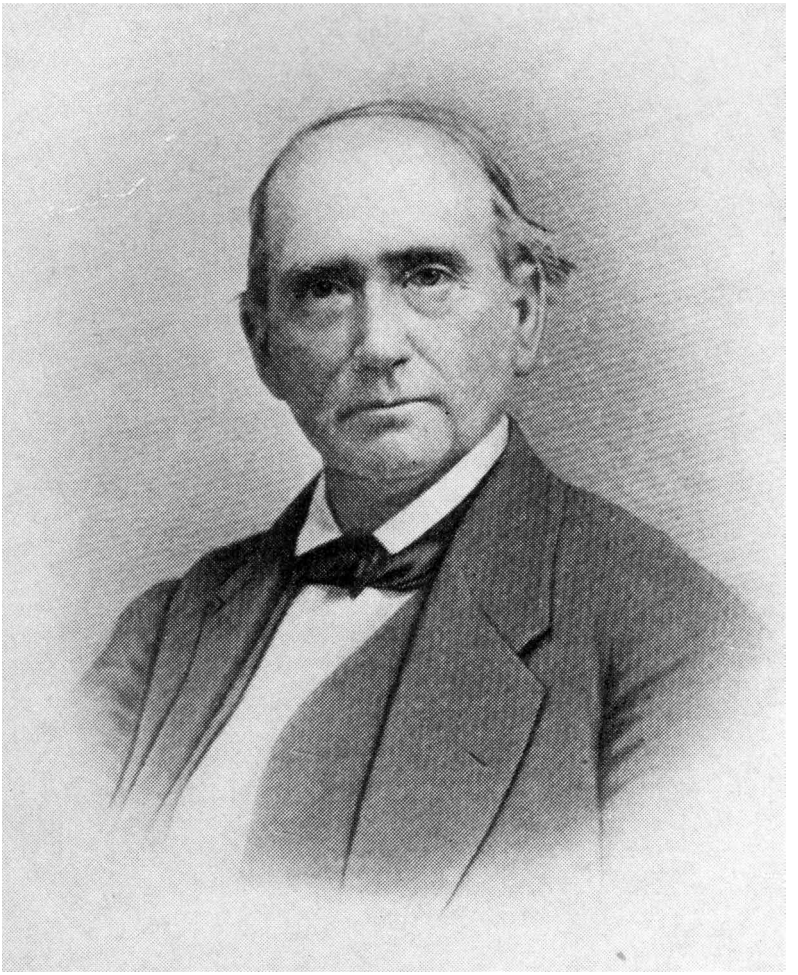
Vickery, Joyce Carter. *Defending Eden: New Mexican Pioneers in the San Bernardino Valley.* Riverside Museum Press, 1977, 2nd edition 1984.

Our Favorite Pictures of Riverside

by the RHS Board

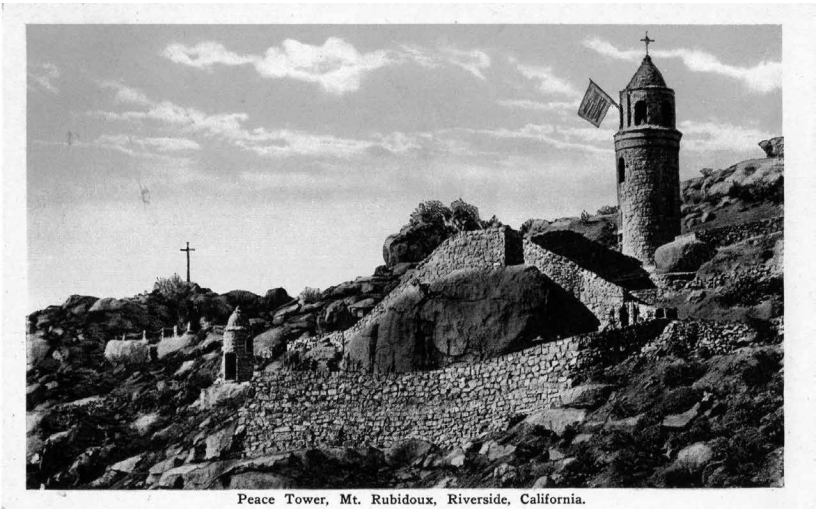
We asked members of the Board of the Riverside Historical Society to give us their favorite pictures of early Riverside, and explain why. The following pages contain those photos.

Frank and Isabella Miller and their daughter Allis attended the 1893 Chicago World's Fair. Among the 26 million attendees were many important figures in California history, including George Wharton James, Frederick Law Olmsted, the designer of New York's Central Park and Riverside's Fairmont Park. I can envision Frank Miller walking through the exhibits, talking to fellow visitors and collecting ideas that would become part of his new Glenwood Mission Inn. (Nancy Wenzel)

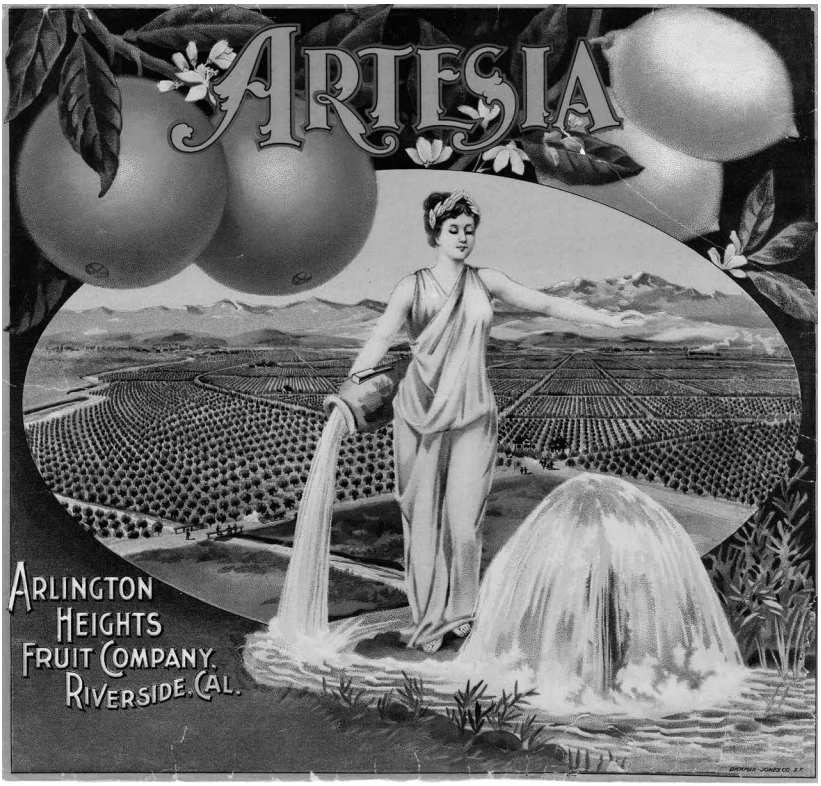


In about 1843, Benjamin Wilson purchased approximately 6,700 acres of the Jurupa Rancho, which included the land where the city of Riverside would later be founded. Wilson later sold the land, and went on to become the first mayor of Los Angeles. Mt. Wilson, where the Griffith Observatory is located, is named for him. This photo of Benjamin Wilson reminds me of how the history of our area did not happen in a bubble. It is interconnected to that of greater Southern California, our state, and even our country. (Kim Jarrell Johnson)

After looking at these Post Cards you will understand why David Starr Jordan, of Stanford University, said, 'It has been left for you, Frank Miller, a genuine Californian, to dream of the hotel that ought to be: to turn your ideal into plaster and stone, and to give us in mountain-belted Riverside the one hotel which a Californian can recognize as his own.'" I don't know who printed these, but each card has a letter and number such as C-110 at the bottom. I like collecting postcards, especially those that were written to someone, because they give you a glimpse into days gone by from ordinary travelers. The writing on the back says "Ruth dear- You would love this place I know. I am simply 'wild' about it. Of all the trips we have had I enjoyed this Riverside trip the most. The Mission to me would be an ideal place to spend a week or so. The paintings, rugs and antiques are wonderful. (Doris Ferguson)

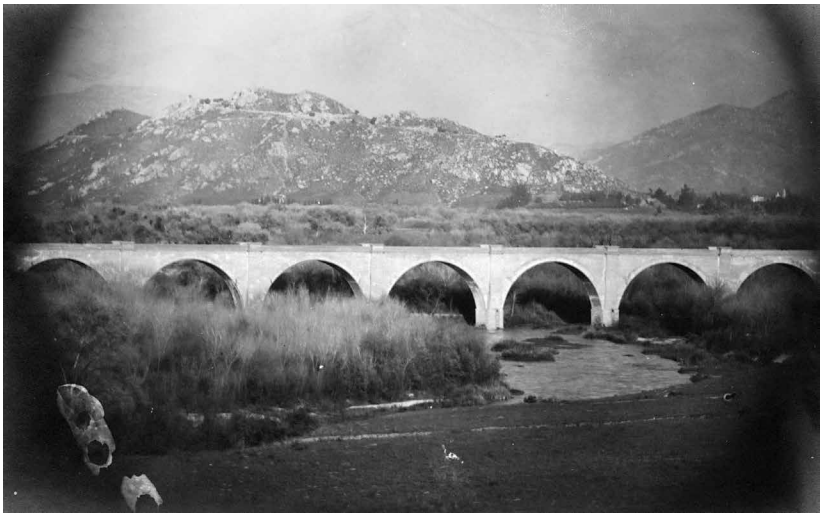


Mt. Rubidoux has always been an important visual presence in the lives of Riversiders, as well as an interesting place to visit. The Peace Tower is an attractive reminder of the significance of PEACE in our world. (Laura Klure)



I have been in the water business for more than forty years, mainly dealing with water rights in the Inland Empire. When I started my career, the primary water rights issues were related to the irrigation canals that supplied our citrus groves. My work required me to track who was taking water and where it was being used. In many cases this led to ranching individuals or companies, most of whom could trace their water rights back to the development of Riverside. I soon discovered the rich history of citrus as it intertwined with my work. Early written sources describe "...a thousand artesian wells" being the source water of the Gage Canal. Artesia, portrayed on the citrus label, is the Greek goddess of water, which reminds me of the elevated status that water held for our ancestors (and for us today). To me, water IS our local history. (Steve Mains)

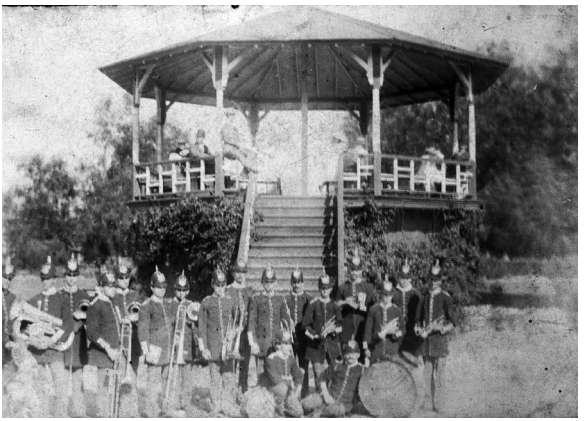
I've collected postcards of Riverside County for nearly 25 years, and this one is one of my favorites of Riverside. It is a Burton Frasher real-photo postcard of downtown Riverside looking north at Main and 8th Street (despite the incorrect title). It shows us Main Street as it was when downtown was the business hub of Riverside. Also note the signs that point to 8th Street as both Highways 60 and 395. From a planning standpoint, we see a city of small businesses, a walkable downtown, and a sense of community that is for the most part lost in today's suburban reality. Architecturally, we see a city where people cared about their built environment, and the buildings reflect it - even without the inscription on the postcard, anyone familiar with Riverside would have no problem identifying the town - something that can rarely be said today thanks to the genericization of our towns. (Steve Lech)



"Telephoto Salt Lake Bridge Santa Ana River Mt Rubidoux in Distance." This is the handwritten caption on the back of this old photo which shows two of my favorite historical sites in Riverside: Mt. Rubidoux and the Salt Lake Railroad Bridge. The bridge across the Santa Ana River at Anza Narrows was completed in 1903 by the San Pedro, Los Angeles and Salt Lake Railroad. The photos does not seem to show the cross on top of Mt. Rubidoux which was erected in 1907. (Glenn Wenzel)

Where Was It?

On page 55 of the last Journal were pictures under the title "Where Was It?" No one answered correctly for all the photos. The bandstand was built in White Park in 1883 and was the location for many concerts by the Riverside Concert Band. In 1908 upon the urging of Albert White and others this bandstand was moved to Fairmount Park where it was then used for many more years. The other photos are of the Magnolia Avenue Crossing Tower which governed the crossing of the Pacific Electric with the Salt Lake Route (now Union Pacific). Built in 1916 by the PE it was removed in 1950. The lumber sheds from the now removed Central Lumber Hardware can be seen in the background of the one photos. The Union Pacific track is now the overhead grade crossing near the Staples store on Magnolia.



Where Was It?

Here is the latest iteration of "Where Was It?"
Can you identify the two locations?
Where were they? Submit your answers to the editor at
riversidehistoricalsociety@gmail.com

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