In the fall of 1940, Riverside Junior College introduced a Civilian Pilot Training Program. The curriculum prepared students who were planning to fly for the military. The class was offered by the Civilian Aviation Administration (now known as the Federal Aviation Administration). The C.A.A. supplied ground instruction, planes and instructors. In the first year, twenty students enrolled for one hundred eight hours of ground training which included instruction in civilian aeronautical regulations, meteorology, aircraft theory and navigation. Besides the ground training, the students spent about forty-three hours in actual flight. Nearby Arlington Airport was the site of these journeys which included eight hours of flying with an instructor and thirty-five hours of solo flight. At the end of the program, the students would earn their “gold wings” and private pilot licenses. As part of the course an old biplane, nicknamed “Suzie”, was acquired. It was placed next to the Quadrangle and for a short time, became a celebrated campus landmark. The photo below appeared in the 1941 “Tequesquite” yearbook.

But by 1942, the two years of usage turned “Suzie” into somewhat of an eyesore. The airplane’s deterioration plus changes in the pilot training program led to the decision to remove it. The November 18, 1942 “Arroyo” student newspaper reported on “Suzie’s” transformation into World War II scrap. In the photo accompanying the article, note the name MMACKENZIE stenciled on the curb below the plane. This was the parking place for Maurice Russell Mackenzie (Professor of Economics, Political Science, Sociology 1924-1965). Faculty members had personalized parking spaces assigned to them in the 1940s.
It is 3 years and 38 weeks until RCC’s 100th Anniversary on March 13, 2016.

The Riverside City College Instructional Media Center is bringing you this five year countdown to RCC’s 100th Anniversary. Our intention is to give everyone a weekly glance at the many people and events that have been a part of the college. Our thanks go to the RCC Digital Library Archives and the District’s Office of Strategic Communications and Relations for allowing us to use their photo and newspaper collections. Thanks as well to all of the RCC students and Faculty Advisors that were a part of the yearbook and newspaper staffs. Thanks also to Tom Johnson and Gilbert Jimenez who wrote “the book” about RCC’s history. “Riverside City College 1916-1981- A 65 Year History” is available in the RCC Digital Library. For copyright purposes, all images originating from Riverside City College publications and the District’s Office of Strategic Communications and Relations are the property of the Riverside Community College District.