

September 3, 2013

Countdown to Riverside City College's 100th Anniversary

In an earlier "Countdown" the origin of how the Quadrangle's "Pit" got its name was discussed. In short, an October 24, 1975 "Viewpoints" newspaper article told how Robert Patton (Professor of English, 1931-61) took a look at the area in December of 1950 and remarked, "It looks just like a snake pit". The word "snake" didn't stick and eventually the area became known simply as "The Pit". Fifty years ago, the 1963 "Tequesquite" yearbook demonstrated what a social, study and activity center "The Pit" had become by featuring no fewer than nine photos taken in and around the location. Below, Instructor of deaf students Arthur Washburn conducts a study session with his students.



Other uses of "The Pit" were for pep rallies and small talk before going to class.



Pep rallies would draw large and boisterous crowds of students being readied for an upcoming big game.



In the photo below taken next to “The Pit” are the RCC song leaders. Later on in 1963, the “March on Washington” for Civil Rights took place. It is interesting to note that the college already had a diverse squad.



SONGLEADERS
pose for a quick
photo. Left to right
are Gail Chamberlain, Irene
Stephens, Dottie McClaren, Linda
Adams, Daisy Williams and Barbara Drake.

John Guin (Associate Professor of Music, Business and English 1957-1979) would, at times, pull double duty. In the photos below he is seen directing the band during a pep rally and singers during a presentation of Christmas carols.



College professors were also a common sight in “The Pit”. Below are RCC Nursing Instructors taking a break. Seen (left to right) are Associate Professors of Nursing: Altha Winchester (1958-65), Chiyo Sasaki (1958-60, 1962-4, 1974-92), Marie Donaldson (1960-76), Gertrude Dubbe (1960-73), June Saunders 1960-77), Henrietta Jurgen 1960-74), Hilda Bixler (1959-1973), and Margaret Nagle (Chairman Nursing Division 1959-69).



Meanwhile the photo below is probably more indicative of the typical day-to-day usage of “The Pit” in 1963. It was a meeting place, greeting place, eating place, social center and study area.



Fast-forward 50 years, when torrential rains hit the Riverside area on August 29, 2013 and “The Pit” found itself the subject of area news crews. The volume of water that fell, overwhelmed the drainage system, and “The Pit” became “The Pool”.



It is 2 years and 27 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.

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