October 7, 2013

Countdown to Riverside City College's 100th Anniversary

To conclude this short series on the dormitories of Riverside Junior College is the only dorm that was located on what eventually would become Riverside City College property. The “Lovekin Cooperative House for Women of Riverside Junior College” or “Lovekin Dormitory” for short, was located on the property that now is the site of the Cosmetology Building. In an earlier “Countdown” the story of how “Lovekin Field” became the property of the college was told. In short, the property was originally owned by Mr. and Mrs. A.C. Lovekin who donated the two and one-half acres of land in the Tequesquite Arroyo to the junior college in May of 1932. Below is a photo of the Lovekins along with a 1932 article from “The Arroyo” student newspaper which announced the gift to the college.

The Lovekins retained ownership of their house which overlooked the property but rented it to the college which used it as a dormitory. In the 1928 photo below the arrow points to the approximate location of the Lovekin home. The heavily wooded area below it is the property that was donated to RJC.

Lovekin Dormitory opened in the spring of 1933 with 16 women, two house mothers and a cooking supervisor. The women paid $16.50 a month for room and two meals a day. Riverside merchants sold at cost, loaned or donated furniture including a grand piano. The photo below appeared in the 1934 “Tequesquite” yearbook.
The text that accompanied the photo was as follows:

“A new organization has appeared in the many improvements and advancements which feature the curriculum of the Riverside Junior College, and it is destined to take its rightful place as part of real college life, as well as to answer one of its most pressing problems. Through the earnest endeavor of Miss Fraser, Dean of Women, the Lovekin Dorm has come into being. Students who are thus benefited by a new opportunity, and others who realized the necessity of such an institution show their appreciation by the generous support they have given it. Sixteen women reside at the dorm, which is under the supervision of two house mothers, Miss Gladys Buell, and Miss Helen Kerl. The girls have sponsored a number of social events including teas, bridge parties and dances, which were successful not only in their own individuality, but in adding something new to the year's social program.”

House mother Helen Kerl can be seen in the middle of the top row of the photo. The second house mother, Gladys Buell is pictured on the extreme right of the bottom row. Dean of Women Frances Fraser (1923-1956) is also on the bottom row on the extreme left. Below is a photo of the residents of Lovekin Dorm from the 1935 “Tequesquite” yearbook.

Lovekin Dormitory was in use until 1937 when it was converted into the Art Center for the Extension Division. In addition to Lovekin and Fraser Hall (discussed here two weeks ago), there was one other women’s dormitory, Hennessey House. It opened in 1934 housing eleven students. Located at 4450 Lime Street, it closed after only one year of use.

It is 2 years and 22 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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