October 14, 2013

Countdown to Riverside City College's 100th Anniversary

On November 14, 1952 the City of Riverside Department of Building granted permit #16488 to the Riverside City School District for a facility to be used as a Physical Education classroom by Riverside Polytechnic High School. The address for the two story building was 3575 Terracina Drive. The architect was Dowd-Hoefer Company of Fontana and the cost of the structure was given as $125,890. The building permit is reproduced below:

![Building Permit Image]
On December 22, 1953 the Riverside Daily Press newspaper carried an article under the headline “Board Accepts New Girl’s Gym At Poly High”. That story can be read below:

Polytechnic High School girls’ physical education building was inspected and accepted for use this morning. Board of Education members, accompanied by Superintendent Bruce A. Miller and other school officials as well as Don Hoefer, representing the contracting firm of Dowd-Hoefer Co. and Holton C. Moise Jr., Riverside architect made the “tour”. “We’ll be getting furniture and equipment in there this afternoon,” Harry K. Young, business assistant, said. The building includes two large classrooms of about 50 student capacity and a small gymnasium floor that the girls may use when boys occupy the larger gym. The building may also be used for small social gatherings. It is located on the south bank of the Tequesquite Arroyo near the present Wheelock Field gymnasium.

Below is a photo of the building that appeared in the Poly High Koala Yearbook. The text that accompanied the photo stated:

Six leotard-clad beauties stop a moment to pose while on the way to their morning dance class in the new girls’ gym. Not only these light-footed lasses, but all the P.E. girls are grateful to have this adequate building for their classes, and all owe thanks to the INTERNATIONAL HODCARRIERS AND COMMON LABORERS, A.F.L. LOCAL 1184, 1074 LA CADENA DRIVE. A great many of the members of this organization worked long hard hours to hasten the building to its completion and make it the wonderful construction it is.

As reported in an earlier ‘Countdown”, on February 11, 1959 the historic recommendation was made that Riverside City College take over the Poly High campus because of crowded conditions at both institutions. In 1962 the voters of Riverside approved a bond issue for purchase of the Poly high school campus by the junior college and for a new campus to be built for the high school on the corner of Victoria and Central. A timetable was set for Poly to quit the promontory on July 1, 1965 and for RCC to take possession on September 1, 1965. It was determined that none of the older Poly buildings had facilities which could be used to the college’s advantage and had to be razed for new construction to take place. The fall of 1965 saw the complete destruction of the almost 55 year old high school campus. Among the Poly buildings that survived and became RCC property was the Physical Education building. If you haven’t guessed by now, that building today is RCC’s Art Building (pictured below).
The two large classrooms described in the newspaper story above are still in use as classrooms. Below are two photos of how they appear today.

The second level "small gymnasium floor", also described in the article, is pictured below. You can see that it retains the wood floor where Poly High students first practiced their dance moves some 60 years ago when the building officially opened.
It is 2 years and 21 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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