March 3, 2014

Countdown to Riverside City College's 100th Anniversary

World War II officially ended when Japan acknowledged defeat and signed the documents of surrender on September 2, 1945. After that, U.S. soldiers began their return stateside and to civilian life. 1945-46 was the first school year for Riverside City College (which was then known as Riverside College) to be impacted by their homecoming. After a few lean years when only token volumes of the “Tequesquite” yearbook were published, the 1946 edition marked the return to a full-fledged publication. The opening page declared:

“With the end of war and the beginning of peace the world is gradually “reconverting” to happier times. Customs and traditions long denied are coming to life once again with more material things. At Riverside College we swing from nostalgic memories to pleasurable duties as members of a large and active student body. The year 1946 welcomes back the yearly student publication the “Tequesquite”. In the last four years Riverside College has been without a full yearbook. In its stead however, the students organized one that did faithfully depict classroom and “Quad” life. The purpose of the “Tequesquite” this year is to reintroduce the college – its administrators, faculty, students, and activities to you. Those who attend Riverside College now and plan to graduate will want to remember the college as it was when they went there.”

Below left is the cover of the 1946 yearbook. On the right is a drawing of an RC student leaving his service uniform on the chair and dressing for college. This sketch accompanied the above text.

Directly below is a photo of the 1946 “Tequesquite” yearbook staff. The Editor of the yearbook was John Vidnic, seen in the upper left corner. Below that is a photo of the RC Student Administration. Vidnic (seen in the lower right corner) was a member because of his status as Editor of the “Tequesquite.”
Vidnic was a 1941 graduate of Riverside Polytechnic High School. He was a talented artist and created many of the drawings seen in the 1941 “Poly High Koala” yearbook. With the December 7, 1941 bombing of Pearl Harbor, the United States entered World War II. Vidnic’s higher education was postponed as he served in the United States Marine Corps aboard the aircraft carrier USS Enterprise in the Pacific from 1943 to 1945. Upon his return to Riverside, he enrolled at RC and joined the yearbook staff. Below is a photo of Vidnic and one of his many illustrations that appeared in the yearbook.
Below are other examples of his artwork seen in the 1946 “Tequesquite” yearbook.

The next two illustrations depict life in the Quadrangle and two techniques male students could use for getting the attention of an RC co-ed. The first method (not recommended) was to trip them. The second method was to impress the female with the fact that the male was in possession of an extra ticket to a sporting event, movie or concert. In either case, judging by the look on the co-eds’ faces, they were probably unsuccessful.

The next set of drawings portrays RC sports teams.
As June approached it was time for final exams and Commencement speeches. The test appeared to be overwhelming and the speech was underwhelming judging by the graduate’s appearance.
After John Vidnic left RC he attended the prestigious Chouinard Art Institute in Los Angeles. He eventually entered the commercial art field where he worked for some 35 years as a commercial designer and cartoonist. Below is an example of his work. Below is a Capitol Records LP cover that he sketched.

It is 2 years and 1 week 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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