April 28, 2014

Countdown to Riverside City College's 100th Anniversary

In 1946, Riverside College (as RCC was then known) and the Quadrangle were at a crossroads. For the college, soldiers were returning from World War II, beginning the post-war student boom. Also construction was in the planning stages for the southwest corner of the Quad, to realize President A.G. Paul’s dream of finishing the project before his retirement. The first two buildings of the Quad (located on either side of the northeast corner) were completed and in use by 1924. The southwest corner was completed by early 1951. The 1946 yearbook carried a considerable amount of Quad photos. Below is an aerial view of the college. A house can be seen still located in the southwest corner. The small structure to the right of that house was an early incarnation of the “Tigers Den”.

Below left is a photo of how the college appeared when viewed from a distance looking east. On the right are ornate gates that greeted students as they entered the Quad from the southeast corner. Note the tiny “Lamps of Learning” on either side of the word “Library”. Just inside of those gates and to the right was the college library which served RCC students for some 45 years. By the end of the 1950s, the gate was removed and replaced by wooden doors. During the 2007 Quad renovation, the wooden doors were removed and replaced by new iron gates to somewhat replicate the original look.
As a student walked through the gates, the photo on the left reveals the view. The north corridor today looks the same except for the fact that the “Outdoor Stage” (which can be seen behind the columns) no longer exists. The photo on the right is the view of the north corridor from the northwest corner of the Quad.

The two photos below are of the “Outdoor Stage” which was part of the Quad from 1932 until it was removed during a late 1960s Quad renovation. Assemblies, Pep Rallies, Concerts and Commencement Ceremonies were once held here.
The next two photos are easterly views of the Quadrangle. The photo on the left is the northeast corner which currently houses the offices of the “Study Abroad” program. The trees are in the space today occupied by the Faculty Emeriti Court. Almost 70 years later, except for the foliage, the views are remarkably unchanged.

Below are two views of the north entrance of the Quadrangle. The photo on the right was taken on “Sadie Hawkins Day”.

The below top photo shows a wider angle of the same area. The north Quad entrance is to the left and the Library is to the right. The space formerly occupied by the Library is now called “Singletary Hall”, dedicated in 2008 to Barbara and Bart Singletary for their support of the college and the RCCD Foundation. The second photo below demonstrates that, as today, the interior of the Quadrangle was and is a gathering place for students.
Below, the somewhat subdued photo of the north entrance was dedicated to the fallen soldiers of World War II. The text read:

“Taps… This page is respectfully dedicated to the memory of the former Riverside College students who gave their lives in World War II so that we could return to this familiar scene.”

It is 1 year and 45 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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