Countdown to Riverside City College's 100th Anniversary

In 1918, Riverside Junior College and Fullerton College were the first Southern California Junior Colleges to publish yearbooks. In 1919, ninety-six years ago, R.J.C. published its second yearbook. The book was called the “Kollej Ko-ed” and was a predecessor to the “Tequesquite” yearbooks which began its run in 1920, chronicling college life until its 1966 demise. The cover and title page of the 1919 yearbook are reproduced below.

Below is the 1919 R.J.C. Faculty. The yearbook was dedicated to them with these words:

“As a token of our gratitude and appreciation for the interest which they have taken in our welfare, and for their valiant support and sympathy in all our undertakings, we the students of Riverside Junior College, lovingly dedicate this volume to the faculty.”
In the top row, second from the left is Arthur Gordon Paul who in 1920 was named the Chief Administrative Officer of the college. He was to hold this position until he retired in 1950.

The page below is the R.J.C. Class of 1919 which consisted of three individuals.
“The class which will graduate from Riverside Junior College this year entered the school nearly forty strong in the fall of 1917. On account of conditions brought about by the war and the influenza, the number of members has dwindled considerably, and there are only three of the class who will receive their certificates in June. These are Mary Herdeg, Earl McCurdy
and Florence Polkinghorn. Mary Herdeg graduated from the Girls High School with the class of ’17 and entered Junior College in September of the same year. During her two years in this school she has taken a general course of studies, including commercial work. She held the office of Secretary of the Sophomore class this year. She expects to enter the University of Southern California in the fall as a member of the Junior Class, and will take a course in Secretarial training there. Earl McCurdy graduated from Polytechnic High School with the class of 1916 and entered the Junior College the same year. He has taken a general course, including the commercial subjects, and is hoping to enter the University of California. Florence Polkinghorn graduated from the Girls High School in 1916 and entered Junior College the following year. She has pursued a general course of studies while at this institution. She will go to the Santa Barbara Normal School in August, taking a course there in Domestic Economy.”

World War I was in progress during the early years of R.J.C. Below is a photo of former R.J.C. student Lieutenant Carl Meairs who perished in the war.

The following was written in tribute to him:

“He sacrificed his life most nobly in the service of his country. With these words we bear the
memory of Lieutenant Carl Meairs who was the first of the Riverside Junior College young men to have died in the United States service in France. There must be some great rest for such great souls as he. Oh, that I knew some valley where the wind sings through bare poplars. Where the fallow fields lie dark between the hills. Where the cool rain sheets the White Mountains. Where the summers fall in scarlet flowered beauty. Where the night is living with a thousand sounds and stars! There should he lie, and dust to dust be given. And air be given to air, all silently."

As a result of the war overseas, there were a number of military training classes offered at the college. Male R.J.C. students were required to take these classes. Below is a photo of the three commissioned officers that conducted these classes.

The photo was accompanied by this text:

“Military Notes: The military training in the Junior College and the High school has made a good showing this year under the able direction of Major Gossett and the commissioned officers of the battalion. The work was hindered to some extent at the first of the year by the influenza quarantine and war conditions, but the interest shown by the number of boys in the Junior College this year is very small, but those taking the works all hold important positions. Some of those returning from the Army, Navy, or S.A.T.C. obtained permission to take physical training in the Y.M.C.A. in place of military training. The commissioned officers from the Junior College are: Edwin Kjellburg, Major of the battalion; Kilburn Atwater, captain of Co. K.; and Ernest White, first Lieutenant of Co. A. Next year a R.O.T.C. will be established here under the command of Major Tinker.”

The top photo below is of R.J.C.’s first Library. The second photo shows the buildings of Riverside Polytechnic High School where the Library and the first junior college classes were
housed.

The top photo below shows the staff of the “Kollej Ko-Ed” yearbook. The gentleman in the center is A.G. Paul who was the faculty adviser to the yearbook staff. The second photo is of the 1919 R.J.C. Student Body Officers.
There are 30 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. For copyright purposes, all images originating from Riverside City College publications and the District’s Office of Strategic Communications and Relations are the property of the Riverside Community College District.