Frank X. Riedy photographs of the 1915 Panama-Pacific International Exposition
1915

Abstract: The Frank X. Riedy photographs of the 1915 Panama-Pacific International Exposition contains 33 photographs taken by American photographer Frank Xavier Riedy (1866-1957) at the exposition held in San Francisco, California. The photographs document examples of the art, architecture, and landscaping at the exposition and also include panoramic images of the fairgrounds and the surrounding city and bay.
Descriptive Summary

Identification: PPI 103
Creator: Riedy, Frank Xavier, 1866-1957.
Title: Frank X. Riedy photographs of the 1915 Panama-Pacific International Exposition
Inclusive Dates: 1915
Extent: .33 linear feet (33 items)
Language: Materials entirely in English.

Administrative Information

Citation: PPI 103, Frank X. Riedy photographs of the 1915 Panama-Pacific International Exposition, Special Collections, University of Delaware Library, Newark, Delaware.
Shelving Summary: Box 1: Shelved in SPEC MSS manuscript boxes (1 inch)
Location: Special Collections, University of Delaware Library Newark, Delaware 19717-5267 Phone: 302-831-2229 Fax: 302-831-6003 URL: http://www.lib.udel.edu/ud/spec/
Source: Gift of Robert C. and Mae Carter, December 2012.
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Historical Note

The 1915 Panama-Pacific International Exposition was held in San Francisco, California, to celebrate the completion of the Panama Canal and also served to showcase the progress the city of San Francisco had made since the 1906 earthquake. International expositions, or world fairs, have been hosted in various cities around the world since the first world fair, London's Great Exposition, was held in 1851. Historically, world fairs have proven to be effective in promoting industry, progress, and diplomacy, as well as promoting and displaying general advancements in the arts and sciences.

Chief of architecture George W. Kelham (1871-1936) and his council developed the plan for the layout of the exhibition, which included hundreds of buildings prominently featuring domes, towers, sculptures, and Greek columns. In addition to the impressive sights, visitors to the fair also encountered demonstrations of revolutionary technologies still in their infancy, such as airplanes, cars, telephones, and motion pictures. Most notably, Henry Ford (1863-1947) took advantage of the opportunity the fair provided for him to showcase Ford Motor Company's Model T automobile in an exhibit that featured a full Model T assembly line.

The exposition lasted nine months (February 20-December 4, 1915), attracted millions of visitors, and helped to strengthen both San Francisco's economy and trade relations among countries all over the world. Nearly all of the buildings were torn down after the fair ended; however, the Palace of Fine Arts, designed by architect Bernard Maybeck (1862-1957), was saved from demolition and eventually restored.

Sources:


Scope and Content Note

The Frank X. Riedy photographs of the 1915 Panama-Pacific International Exposition contains 33 photographs taken by American photographer Frank Xavier Riedy (1866-1957) at the exposition held in San Francisco, California. The photographs document examples of the art, architecture, and landscaping at the exposition and also include panoramic images of the fairgrounds and the surrounding city and bay.

The collection showcases the architecture of several of the fair's major structures, including the Palace of Fine Arts, Palace of Education, and Palace of Horticulture. There are also photographs of notable features such as the forty-story Tower of Jewels at the fair's north entrance and the Column of Progress at the south entrance. Most of the photographs depict examples of the architecture found at the fair, and there are also photographs of two fountains: "Wind and Spray," by sculptor Anna Coleman Ladd (1878-1939), which was located in the lagoon of the Palace of the Arts, and "Fountain of the Earth," by sculptor Robert Ingersoll Aitken (1878-1949), which was located in the Court of Abundance.

The collection also includes three panoramic photographs of the fair, including one photograph depicting the fair's nighttime light show, all of which feature the San Francisco Bay in the background and San Francisco's buildings in the foreground.
Selected Search Terms

Personal Names

Aitken, Robert, 1878-1949.
Kelham, George W., 1871-1936.
Ladd, Anna Coleman, 1878-1939.
Maybeck, Bernard R.
Riedy, Frank Xavier, 1866-1957.

Corporate Names

Panama-Pacific International Exposition (1915: San Francisco, Calif.)

Topical Terms

Exhibitions--United States--History--20th century.

Geographic Names

San Francisco (Calif.)--History--20th century.

Form/Genre Terms

Panoramas.
Photographs.

Occupation

Photographers.

Related Materials in this Repository

MSS 93, Item 15: Richard W. Davids Centennial Exposition scrapbook
MSS 93, Item 17: World's Columbian Exposition scrapbook
MSS 630: World fairs and expositions collection
Detailed Description of the Collection

Frank X. Riedy photographs of the 1915 Panama-Pacific International Exposition, 1915 [Box 1 F1]