



SEAVER CENTER FOR WESTERN HISTORY RESEARCH



Notes From the Archive

February 2021

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California Adventure... California Revealed

By Kim Walters and Betty Uyeda

The above title alludes to two featured online collections about Cars and Taxes. Read on!

A donation of business records from the Greater Los Angeles New Car Dealers Association (GLANCA) was made possible through Darryl Holter, the dealer at Felix Chevrolet and an adjunct professor of history at USC. "The documents had been sitting in boxes in a back room for many years until someone decided they might be important," said Holter. "We decided to donate them to the Seaver Center for preservation and processing so researchers and historians could utilize them."

The records came to us in two parts. The photographs were delivered in August 2018 and digitized in 2019. Once the remaining portion of business documents was received last August, the goal was to get it fully processed by the end of 2020.

There were two challenges to reaching the project finish line: a pandemic and a wildfire. Kim Walters, processing archivist, made arrangements with the Registrar's Office to bring batches of material home on a scheduled basis. Her Monrovia neighborhood was on high alert from the Bobcat Fire for several weeks in September, but she prevailed and managed to scan over 2,000 pages of business reports while quarantined from home.

Because of COVID-19 the Los Angeles Auto Show scheduled in November 2020 was then postponed until May 2021. During the show's more than one hundred years history there have been only two other hiatuses. The first time was in 1918 because of World War I but not due to the Spanish flu pandemic. The second disruption was prolonged because of the Second World War and delayed the show's return until 1951.

The public can readily peruse 800 photographs (bulk 1917-1972), including auto show stills. Reports of the Directors of the Annual Auto Shows are digitized and available in PDF files. These are all accessible at <https://collections.nhm.org/seaver-center/>.



Los Angeles Auto Show, 1935, Pan Pacific Auditorium, Sponsored by the LA Motor Car Dealers Association, Art Streib Photographer (GC-1377-14-027-002)

Kim's neighbor is the Disney architect who designed the entryway to the Anaheim theme park, Disney California Adventure. He experienced

resistance because the other designers did not feel people would recognize the building. He based its features on the Pan Pacific Auditorium's iconic Art Deco entrance – the familiar approach for countless auto show attendees between 1935 and 1972 until the Convention Center was opened.



Los Angeles Auto Show "Program Girls," undated, Sponsored by the Motor Car Dealers Association of Los Angeles, W. A. Hughes Photo (GC-1377-14-021)



Los Angeles Auto Show, 1926, Sponsored by the Motor Car Dealers Association of Los Angeles. The show was held at Washington and Hill Streets in tents (GC-1377-14-023-001)



Los Angeles Auto Show, 1955, Golden Anniversary, Sponsored by Motor Car Dealers Association of Southern California (MCDA). This is a Ford 1995 Concept car, maybe the Lincoln Futura, Experimental automobiles, Art Streib Photographers (GC-1377-02-042)



Los Angeles Auto Show, 1956, crowds, Sponsored by Motor Car Dealers Association, Art Streib Photographers (GC-1377-03-027)



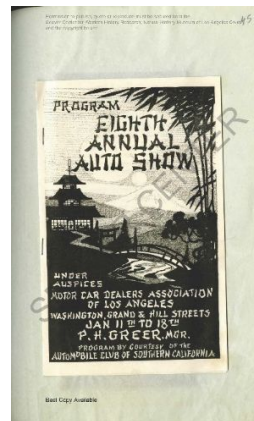
Los Angeles Auto Show, 1957, crowds, Sponsored by Motor Car Dealers Association, Art Streib Photographers (GC-1377-04-029)



LA Auto Show 1968/1969, 1969 Buick Century Cruiser, Experimental automobiles, Art Streib Photographers. Sponsored by Los Angeles Motor Car Dealers Association (LAMCDA). This was a self-driving concept car by Buick, it was conceived for the automated highways of the future, where steering wheels would be unnecessary. The vehicle had swiveling contour seats, a refrigerator, and a TV set. The idea was, when you pulled onto the freeway, a punch card with programmed routes would take over, piloting the car to the destination by information transmitted from electronic highway centers. The car's progress would be shown on a map projected on a radar-like screen (GC-1377-12-018)



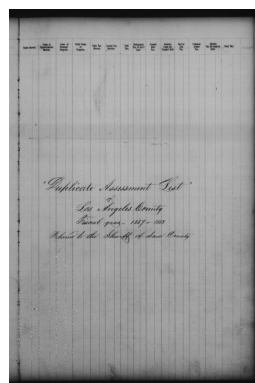
Tickets and a program from the Eighth Annual Auto Show, 1919 (GC-1377-18-002)



GC-1377-11-046 Los Angeles Auto Show 1967/1968, Sponsored by Los Angeles Motor Car Dealers Association (LAMCDA), Color panoramic view of the exhibition hall showing Lincoln Mercury and Ford Automobiles, Art Streib Photographers

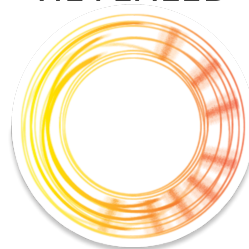
California Revealed

The Seaver Center participated in California Revealed, a State Library-funded initiative and digitization effort supported by the U.S. Institute of Museum and Library Services. Yolanda Bustos, Museum Archivist, secured a digitization award in 2019 for the entire museum, and the Seaver Center contributed five microfilm reels. The pandemic delayed and hampered the project. A select group of Los Angeles County tax assessment records for the 1850s, 1860s and 1870s are now freely viewable through the [Internet Archive](#). The print editions for these volumes as well as for additional years are housed in the Seaver Center.



A sample page, tax assessment book, 1857-1858

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REVEALED





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The collections are a part of the History Department of the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County

The Seaver Center opened in 1986 through a generous grant from the Seaver Institute

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