
The 10th Anniversary Gift

"The Board of Directors of the Western Camera Museum, Inc., have voted in a regular meeting on March 11, 1973 to transfer the collection of cameras and photographic equipment now known as the Western Camera Museum, Inc. to the University of California, Riverside as a donation and contribution...It is hoped and believed that this collection will be an asset of increasing historical importance to the University and the state of California..."

In March 1973, Dr. Robert Bingham, a Riverside orthopedic surgeon, wrote a two and one-half page letter to Edward Beardsley, then Associate Dean of the Division of Fine Arts at the University of California, Riverside. In his letter, Bingham promised Beardsley that he would donate some 2,500 cameras to the University—thus beginning a chain of events which even the wild visions of these inveterate dreamers could not encompass.

Bingham did point out that the collection was the largest such public resource west of Rochester, New York. But he could not have anticipated the remarkable public response his gesture would generate over the ensuing ten years.

The transfer of the collection was actually completed in the autumn of 1973. Since that time, thousands of people sympathetic to the goals first outlined by Bingham and Beardsley have contributed museum objects, funds, and personal time in the service of those goals.

Today, the collections having expanded through the efforts of such staunch supporters as the Mast family of Davenport, Iowa; Mead Kibbey of Sacramento, California; Mr. and Mrs. Howard H Hays, Jr., of Riverside; the Western Photographic Collectors Association; and unnumbered others, the California Museum of Photography has emerged as one of this country's foremost centers for the study of photography's role in modern culture.

The photographs, cameras, and other objects pictured in this issue of the *Bulletin* have been given by these long-time friends and new ones alike, as "birthday presents" to celebrate the CMP's Tenth Anniversary. They are a testament to the continued

vigor of both local and national support for the Museum Idea.

No less a role in the CMP's growth has been played by past and present museum staff and UCR administrators. Edward Beardsley, Joe Deal, and Kirk deGooyer were, among past staff, particularly influential in shaping the museum's course. Deal continues to serve on the CMP Faculty Advisory Committee which, chaired by Harry Lawton, serves a major function in integrating museum services into the programs of the University of California generally, and UCR specifically.

Ivan Hinderaker, the former Chancellor of this campus, shared the early dream of a major photography program here, and was essential to its achievement. Today, Chancellor Tomás Rivera continues this tradition of top-level involvement in the growth of the CMP, and has appointed a 14-member Chancellor's Committee to assist him.

The CMP Members' Board, elected by the museum membership to two-year terms of service to the museum and its public programs serves a vital, continuing role. Its current leadership gives us hope of even greater achievements over the coming years.

Finally, I express the museum's recognition and my personal gratitude to the current staff, without whose intelligence and resourcefulness the CMP would be but a closet full of lifeless objects, and to David H. Warren, Dean of the College of Humanities and Social Sciences. Dr. Warren's genuine concern, helpful criticism, and material assistance may not be apparent to the general public; yet when the museum's history is finally written, his contributions will be seen as seminal.

This issue of the *Bulletin* is the product of efforts by many people. The nearly 300 important gifts listed on the last pages were made to help celebrate the museum's anniversary; the texts accompanying our reproductions were prepared by the curatorial staff with the added editorial guidance of Dan Meinwald.

Charles Desmarais
Director