



Perris Press Release

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Thousands Visit Perris History Exhibit

The creators of the Perris Centennial Exhibit at the Southern California Fair said they wanted to design a display that would link the City's past with present while connecting with people through a series of photographs, documents and mementos from Perris' first 100 years.

By all accounts, they succeeded beyond their wildest dreams. More than 4,000 visitors passed through the exhibit in Harrison Hall during the nine days of the fair. More than 1,200 visited the exhibit on Saturday, the day before the fair ended.

"This turned into a massive undertaking and we all got very, very invested in it," said Project Manager Dave Stuart. "We did not have any idea about how many people would visit the exhibit. But it was not on this scale.

Several visitors spotted themselves as children in pictures taken years even decades ago. Riverside County Supervisor Marion Ashley saw himself as a 5-year-old boy in a family photo taken in 1940.

Perris Mayor Daryl Busch saw a picture of his home taken about 50 years ago before he and his wife purchased it. Tom Warren, some of former Mayor Bob Warren, got a glimpse of himself as a child during a Christmas Hollow celebration organized by legendary actor Clarence Muse, who lived in the Perris Valley.

Ernestine Peters, a member of the pioneer Mora family, saw a picture of herself with her sisters and cousin taken before they attended church in the 1950s. She could tell because off the young women wore hats, an essential part of a wardrobe in those days.

And Christina Perris, great-granddaughter of Fred T. Perris, the railroad engineer who surveyed the city that bears his name, was on hand to photograph and videotape the exhibit as part of her duties as the City's archivist.

"This has exceeded anyone's expectations," said Ashley as he walked the exhibit before it officially opened one day.

"They've done a great job of connecting all the dots of Perris' history in a comprehensive and connected way. If not for this effort, much of our early history would have been lost."

The exhibit consisted of 150 panels, each about eight feet high detailing Perris history from before the City existed. There were tributes to the Good Hope Gold Mine, the native people who left behind stone carvings, the Sherman Indian High School (since moved to Riverside) who walloped the USC football team 28 to 0 in 1902 and pioneering families who made Perris an agricultural breadbasket and fruit basket in the early 20th Century.

There were tributes to prominent Perris residents like educator Nan Sanders, Dr. Bruce Reid and Clarence Muse, a founding member of the Screen Actors Guild who appeared in more than 200 films. The City's churches, shops, the Perris

Theatre, Bank of Perris and Depot Building and recreational diversions all received attention in the exhibit, which took seven months to conceive and create. The exhibit also announces the City's future with projects like the Big League Dreams sports complex set to open next year.

Local historian Katie Keyes said the visitors included representatives from other historical groups wanting pointers on how the City developed its exhibit. Mayor Laura Roughton, of the newly incorporated city of Jurupa Valley, dropped by and said she was overwhelmed by the exhibit. Her city recently celebrated three months since incorporation.

"We've just passed 100 days, you've got 100 years!" Roughton said. "This is an incredible display."

Mayor Busch visited the exhibit several times. Each new visit, he said, revealed more about the City he's called home for more than 40 years.

"This is fantastic," he said. "Every time you come back here, you see something else that's new and exciting. This is a marvelous, marvelous exhibit. It does the City proud."

Tom Warren grew up in Perris when his dad was mayor. He lived the City's history as a kid. But even he was impressed by the breadth and scope of the Centennial Exhibit.

"To be able to look at all this history is incredible," he said.



Riverside County Supervisor Marion Ashley, a Perris resident, points to a picture of himself as a boy during a tour of the Perris Centennial Exhibit.



Sisters Mary Ashley, Katie Keyes and Betty Walker found themselves in a family portrait taken when they were small girls.



Jurupa Valley Mayor Laura Roughton speaks with exhibit Project Manager Dave Stuart. Roughton's city has been incorporated for just a few months.



Tom Warren grew up in Perris as a kid. Here, he stands in front of a picture of himself taken with famed actor Clarence Muse, a Perris Valley resident and founder of the Christmas Hollow festival. With Warren is his daughter, Reese, 2.



Christina Perris, great-granddaughter of Fred T. Perris, the man Perris is named for, photographs the Centennial Exhibit as part of her duties as a City archivist.