



SEAVER CENTER FOR WESTERN
HISTORY RESEARCH



Notes From the Archive

SUMMER 2022

This is a publication of the Seaver Center for Western History Research, a section of the History Department. If you are informed by what you read here, please share it with a friend or colleague.

Our Visual Collections Take to the Streets of L.A. & Beyond

In the era of YouTube, Instagram and TikTok, iconography is more important than ever. The Seaver Center photograph collections and "mug books" (explanation coming up!) have lent their usefulness to a couple of new local history projects.

FROM OUR COLLECTIONS

Mark Tapio Kines and the L.A. Street Names Web Resource

Mark Tapio Kines set a goal to research 1,000 street names. After dedicating over two years to the project his objective was surpassed, and 1,200 L.A. County entries were released at the website's mid-July launch. Visit it here [L.A Street Names](#)



E. Avery McCarthy, 1891
(George Steckel Collection P-50-8320)



May & Thomas Bundy with daughter, Dodo, ca. 1918
(George Steckel Collection P-50-6208)

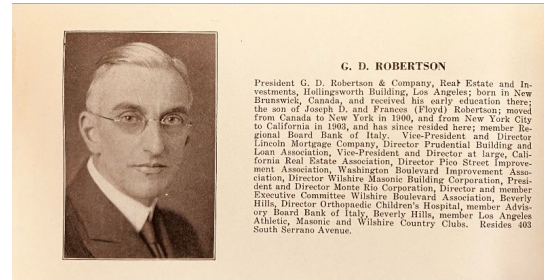
The above George Steckel portrait studio images were used to illustrate Melrose Avenue (Elmanson Avery McCarthy) and Bundy Drive (the Bundy family). Many street naming origins were an easy, straightaway cruise to track down. Others were harder to explain, and Mark took a circuitous route by uncovering family connections and business associates. His entertaining findings on boulevardiers and clever portmanteaus never left him at a dead end.



Mark utilized a series of "mug books" housed at the Seaver Center

At Dork Street in the city of Pico Rivera (Image courtesy of Mark Tapio Kines)

Mug books started out in the late 19th century as vanity publications containing biographical entries primarily of men, but also women. "Well-known citizens" were solicited by the publishers who made money from selling the books to the same individuals.



All the mug books proved useful for Mark. He wrote, "I believe I wound up using at least one photo from each and every one of them. I can tell you that Robertson Boulevard was a big find. There were zero photos online of George D. Robertson, the realtor/namesake, and it's such a major thoroughfare that I was delighted to find his photo in *Who's Who in Los Angeles County* (1927) so I could illustrate the writeup. The same with realtors Carlin G. Smith and J.D. Millar. The streets named after them are small, but they were both major figures in L.A. real estate in the 1920s and each developed several major tracts. I also found a rare photo of J. Harvey McCarthy, who developed Carthay Center and parts of Glendale (Harvey Drive is prominent there)." Mark added, "The thing is, while online resources like Google Books and Hathitrust contain a wealth of material, there remains an incalculable amount of published works that haven't yet been digitized. I'm grateful that I could access some of these valuable works at Seaver Center and introduce some of their contents to the digital universe."

FROM OUR COLLECTIONS

NHM's Beyond Becoming Los Angeles Educational Video Series

Video Coordinator Daniel Caballero produced a series now screening on the NHM YouTube Channel. Plenty of images from the Seaver Center have been included throughout the presentations.



OUR STAFF

Student Interns

This summer two outstanding students are helping out. They get positive work experiences in the museum environment, and in exchange the Seaver Center is making strides.



Chelsea Mendez wrote: *My name is Chelsea Mendez, I'm 18 years old and I*

am a Summer Intern at the Seaver Center in the Natural History Museum. Here's a little background story about my experience and how I got here.

It all started with the Expo Center. They offered me to join a program called "Teen Leadership" and that program gave me an opportunity to grow and it also gave me my first job which was at the Natural History Museum. I'm so thankful and grateful I was able to experience a job like this. It taught me how to manage my money and how to communicate. Work provides us with more than a paycheck. It gives us recognition, status, self esteem, and reinforcement of our self-concept.



Prithvi Dinesh Chandra wrote: *I am a senior at Occidental College studying History and International Relations. As my career aspirations skew towards archival and curatorial museum work, my experience with the Seaver Center has been fruitful indeed. My time has been spent working on a project to process and digitize film frames.*

*One especially engaging aspect of this project is trying to understand how and why film historian Earl Theisen acquired various items. I researched books wherein these items were used, including *The Dawn of Technicolor* by James Layton and David Pierce. In understanding the development of Technicolor technology and how this integrated with the film industry in the early 1900s, we can glean a greater understanding of the collections today. Research and problem-solving aspects like these are what continue to compel me to work in museums and collections, and the Seaver Center has been a wonderful space to develop that passion.*



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The Collections

Over 370 general collections | Over 290 photographic collections

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Digitized Collections

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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