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Finding Aid for the Banning Family and Residence Museum Collection, 1860-2020

Collection Overview

Title: Banning Family and Residence Museum Collection

Dates: 1860-2020

ID: BRM

Primary Creator/Collector: Wilmington Historical Society (Calif.)

Physical Extent: 3.37 linear feet

Digital Extent: 471KB

Arrangement: Arranged at the collection level, alphabetically by subject.

Forms of Material: Artifacts, documents, maps, photographic materials, publications

Language of materials: English

Abstract

The Banning Family and Residence Museum Collection documents the activities, programs, and events of the General Phineas Banning Residence Museum, located in Wilmington, California between 1860 and 2020. The Collection also contains a small amount of materials related to the personal and professional life of Phineas Banning and other Banning family members.

Biographical and Administrative History

Phineas Banning was born on August 19, 1830, to parents John Alford and Elizabeth Banning (née Lowber), on a farm near Wilmington, Delaware. He arrived in California in late 1851, after securing passage as a clerk aboard a cargo ship bound for San Pedro. Banning established a ship-to-shore transportation business, The Wilmington Transportation Company, followed soon thereafter by a shipyard and his namesake wharf at the end of Avalon Bl. (formerly Canal Street).

In 1854, Banning married Rebecca Sanford, and they had eight children, three of whom survived to adulthood: William (1858-1945), Joseph Brent (1861-1920), and Hancock (1865-1925). Rebecca died in childbirth in 1868 giving birth to a fourth son, Vincent, who also died. In 1870, Banning married heiress, Mary E. Hollister (1846-1919), and they had two surviving daughters:

Mary Hollister (1871) and Lucy Tichenour (1876-1927). A third child died in infancy. Although both daughters married, neither had children.

In the late 1850s, Banning and a group of Southern California investors purchased 640 acres of land adjacent to San Pedro for port expansion. He first named the area New San Pedro and later changed it to Wilmington, after his hometown. In 1865, Banning was elected to the state senate. In 1866, he introduced a bill for construction of a Los Angeles to San Pedro railroad, but it was defeated. In 1868, the railroad bill passed, and in 1869 southern California's first railroad, from Wilmington to Los Angeles, opened on October 20.

Phineas Banning died on March 8, 1885 at age 54 at the Occidental Hotel in San Francisco. He is interred in the Angelus-Rosedale Cemetery, in the West Adams neighborhood of Los Angeles, California. Phineas Banning is considered the Father of the Port of Los Angeles.

The Banning Residence was lived in by three generations of the Banning family until it and the surrounding land were acquired by the City of Los Angeles in 1927. Since that time, the Department of Recreation and Parks of the City of Los Angeles has managed the buildings and gardens and currently does so in cooperation with the Friends of Banning Park, a private, non-profit foundation.

The Phineas Banning Residence Museum consists of a twenty-three-room house built in 1864 in the Greek Revival style. Eighteen rooms of the house containing furniture and decorative elements added during 60 years of Banning family residence in the house are shown to the public during regular tours of the house and grounds. On January 11, 1935, Banning Park was officially made California Historical Landmark #147 and the residence was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1971.

The Museum currently offers a variety of educational programs, permanent and rotating exhibits, annual events, and special activities. The Banning Archives and Library includes a historic photograph collection, maps, blueprints of the Banning residence, and hundreds of rare books from the 19th century as well as guest books, scrapbooks, postcards, and ephemera.

Scope and Contents

The Banning Family and Residence Museum Collection primarily documents the activities, programs, and events of the Residence Museum, with a small amount of materials related to the personal and professional life of Phineas Banning and other Banning family members. The collection consists of a broad range of materials.

Publications include issues of *Banner* and *Banning and Company*, newsletters intended for museum volunteers, Friends of the Banning Museum, and Residence Museum staff, with content regarding docent and other training opportunities, special activities, board meetings, general membership meetings, lectures, local school programs, auxiliary committees, and a calendar of events. Documents consist of historical sketches, research notes, and biographical information about Banning family members, as well as flyers, handouts, and other promotional material related to the Museum. Also included are photographs depicting Museum events such

as Floriade and the Wisteria Festival, and images of the interior and exterior of the Banning Residence.

Highlights include Wilmington Transportation Company steamship and railroad passes, signed by Hancock Banning, Joseph Brent Banning, and William Banning between 1897 and 1918; reproductions of maps associated with property belonging to Phineas Banning and the Banning family between 1860 and 1891; and the 1992 Historic Structure Report for the General Phineas Banning Residence. The Collection is arranged at the collection level, alphabetically by subject.

Subject Headings

Creator

Organization Name:

Wilmington Historical Society (Calif.)

Subject Headings

Topical Terms:

Community education

Greek revival (Architecture)

Historical museums

Port of Los Angeles

Personal names:

Banning, Hancock, 1865-1925

Banning, Joseph Brent, 1861-1920

Banning, Phineas, 1830-1885

Banning, William, 1858-1945

Organization name:

Banning Residence Museum

Geographical locations:

Los Angeles County (Calif.)

Wilmington (Los Angeles, Calif.)

Documentary forms:

Artifacts

Documents

Maps

Photographic materials

Publications

Administrative Information

Processing Information: Holli Teltoe, 2023

Processing of this collection is made possible by generous donations from Marathon Petroleum Corporation, Wilmington Neighborhood Council, Fast Lane Transportation, I.L.W.U. Credit Union, Wilmington Chamber of Commerce, Avalon Arts and Cultural Alliance, Russell and Laura Mohberg, and Lendistry.

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Conditions Governing Access: The collection is open for research use.

Preferred Citation: Banning Family and Residence Museum Collection. Wilmington Historical Society.

Acquisition: This collection has been acquired and assembled by the Wilmington Historical Society from a variety of sources. The sources and dates of acquisition are unknown.

Collection Contents

Box 1

Folder 1: *Banner, Published Monthly for the Banning Museum Members, April-May 2014*

Folder 2: *Banner, Published Monthly for Banning Residence Museum Volunteers, February-December 1994*

Folder 3: *Banner, Published Monthly for Banning Residence Museum Volunteers, January-September 1995, November -December 1995*

Folder 4: *Banner, Published Monthly for Banning Residence Museum Volunteers, January-December 1996*

Folder 5: *Banner, Published Monthly for Banning Residence Museum Volunteers, January-August 1997, October-December 1997*

Folder 6: *Banner, Published Monthly for Banning Residence Museum Volunteers, January-April 1998, June-September 1998, November-December 1998*

Folder 7: *Banner, Published Monthly for Banning Residence Museum Volunteers, January-December 1999*

Folder 8: *Banner, Published Monthly for Banning Residence Museum Volunteers, February-August 2000, October-November 2000*

Folder 9: *Banner, Published Monthly for Banning Residence Museum Volunteers, January-April 2001, June 2001, August 2002, October-November 2001*

Folder 10: *Banner, Published Monthly for Banning Residence Museum Volunteers, July 2004*

Folder 11: *Banning and Company, the News Gazette of the Banning Residence Museum, Spring 1995, Winter 1995, Spring 1996, Summer 1997*

Folder 12: *Banning and Company, a Publication of Friends of Banning Museum*, Fall 2009, Spring 2010, Winter 2018

Box 2

Folder 1: Banning Family Genealogy

Folder 2: Banning Family, Historical Wilmington Cemetery, 1988

Folder 3: Banning Family, Rosedale Cemetery, 1998

Folder 4: Banning, Hancock, 1897

Folder 5: Banning Heritage Days, 1995-1997, 2000-2001

Folder 6: Banning House Exteriors, 1977-1978, 1984-1989, 1993, 2001, 2004

Folder 7: Banning House and Grounds Restoration, 1984, 1995, 2000-2001

Folder 8: Banning House Interiors, 1975-1976, 1980

Folder 9: Banning, Joseph Brent, 1914, ca. 1920

Folder 10: Banning, Phineas, 1865, 1873, 1936, 1957-1958, 1964-1965, 1987-1988

Folder 11: Banning School Program, 1983, 1988-1995

Folder 12: Banning, William, 1902, 1918, 1927

Folder 13: *California Herald, Wilmington Centennial Issue*, March 1958

Folder 14: Docents and Volunteers, 1975, 1982, 1997, 1999

Folder 15: Floriade II, May 1989

Folder 16: Floriade III, April 1993

Folder 17: Floriade IV, April 1996

Folder 18: Floriade V, October 1999

Folder 19: Friends of Banning Park, 1979

Folder 20: *General Phineas Banning Residence Historic Structure Report (1 of 2)*, 1992

Box 3

Folder 1: *General Phineas Banning Residence Historic Structure Report (2 of 2)*, 1992

Folder 2: Historical Sketches, Publications, and Notes, 1904, 1958, 1979, 2020

Folder 3: *A Miracle of a Muddy Tideflat*, Port Admiral Society, Junior League of Los Angeles, 1980

Folder 4: Newspaper Articles, 1982, 1990

Folder 5: Old Fashioned Summer Sociable, 1990-1994

Folder 6: Programs, Events, and Exhibits, 1976, 1983, 1989-1990, 2000-2001, 2013

Folder 7: Residence Museum Brochures

Folder 8: Residence Museum Tour Booklets, 1984, 2008

Folder 9: Victorian Christmas, 1985-1990, 1993-1994, 2000-2001

Folder 10: Wisteria Festival, 1956, 1958, 1966-1968, 1972-1973, 1976, 1986, 1989

Box 4

Folder 1: *Banning and Company*, Spring 1998, Fall 1998, Spring 1999

Folder 2: *Banning and Company*, Fall 1999, Spring 2000, Fall 2000

Folder 3: Banning Family, Rosedale and Historic Wilmington Cemeteries

Folder 4: Banning, Phineas, 1863, 1868, 1877

Folder 5: *Banning Residence Museum*, Booklet Reprinted with Permission from *Antiques Magazine*, October 1980

Folder 6: Floriade IV, 1996

Folder 7: *The Irresistible*, Winter 1987-1988, Winter 1989-1990, Winter 1990-1991

Folder 8: *The Irresistible*, Fall- Winter 1992, Spring-Summer 1993, Fall-Winter 1995

Box 5

Item 1: Banning House Nails

Map Case 8

Flat File 1: Map of New San Pedro, According to the Partition Made by the District Court...in the Case of Phineas Banning et al. v. John G. Downey et al., Copies, 1862 November 17

Flat File 2: Map of Property in Wilmington Belonging to the Estate of General Phineas Banning, Deceased, Copies, 1887

Flat File 3: Map of the Town of Wilmington and Adjacent Tide Land, Banning vs. Banning, Copies, 1890-1891

Flat File 4: San Pedro Navigable Waters of Inner Harbor at Request of Phineas Banning, Copies, 1860 March 9

Digital Box

Folder 1: Banning, Phineas, Wilmington Wharf, Photographs

[end of box list]