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## Inventory of the American Revolution Bicentennial Commission of California Records

### Collection number: F3776

California State Archives  
Office of the Secretary of State  
Sacramento, California

Processed by:

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### Descriptive Summary

**Title:** American Revolution Bicentennial Commission of California Records

**Dates:** 1968-1977

**Collection number:** F3776

**Creator:** American Revolution Bicentennial Commission of California

**Collection Size:** 6 Cubic Feet237 Items

**Repository:** California State Archives  
Sacramento, California

**Abstract:** This record group contains the records of the American Revolution Bicentennial Commission of California, 1968-1977. As prescribed by law, the purpose of the Commission was to provide for, assist, sponsor, and promote Statewide and local celebrations, ceremonies, and observances, and to encourage the creation of exhibits and publications, with the expressed purpose in mind of commemorating and publicizing the Bicentennial of the American Revolution.

**Physical location:** California State Archives

**Languages:** Languages represented in this collection: English

### Access

Collection is open for research.

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### Preferred Citation

[Identification of item], American Revolution Bicentennial Commission of California Records, F3776:[folder number], California State Archives, Office of the Secretary of State, Sacramento, California.

### Acquisition Information

The California State Archives acquired the records of the American Revolution Bicentennial Commission of California through an agency transfer.

### Agency History

The American Revolution Bicentennial Commission of California (ARBCC) was officially established in 1967 by ( *Stats.* 1967, ch. 1425). Under the law passed, the Commission was to be comprised of twenty members, ten of which were to be appointed by the Governor, five by the Speaker of the Assembly, and five by the Senate Rules Committee. The Chairman of the Commission Charles Conrad (1968-1973) and

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later Richard Pourade (1973-1976) was also selected for that position on the basis of an gubernatorial appointment.

In order to handle the day-to-day operations of the Commission, as well as to brief the Commissioners on the nature and contents of program proposals being constantly submitted, an Executive Director, Albert Johnson, was selected by the ARBCC in November of 1972. Until Director Johnson assumed his duties, ARBCC Chairman Charles Conrad, from 1968-1972, directed the proceedings of the Commission from his Assembly office in the State Capitol Building.

As prescribed by law, the purpose of the Commission was to provide for, assist, sponsor, and promote Statewide and local celebrations, ceremonies, and observances, and to encourage the creation of exhibits and publications, with the expressed purpose in mind of commemorating and publicizing the Bicentennial of the American Revolution. A further reading of the statute makes the point clear that in regards to local Bicentennial observances, the Commission was to serve not in a managerial capacity but simply as an advisory group that would lend assistance and expertise when called upon.

The ARBCC officially closed its doors due to lack of funding on December 21, 1976; programs still in the process of winding down after that time were delegated to the State Department of Parks and Recreation.

### **Scope and Content**

This record group contains the records of American Revolution Bicentennial Commission of California. The records were created between 1968 and 1977 and contain organizational records, administrative correspondence, meeting minutes, publications, reports, and some artifacts and audiovisual materials. See the series descriptions for further details.

### **Indexing Terms**

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the library's online public access catalog.

American Revolution Bicentennial Commission of California

folder F3776:1-3Series 1 **Organizational Records 1970-1972**

**Physical Description:** 3 file folders

**Arrangement**

Arranged chronologically.

**Scope and Content Note**

Letters received and copies of letters sent.

Before 1972, the ARBCC was directed from the office of then-State Assemblyman Charles Conrad. This series includes background correspondence pertaining to State and Federal ARBCC organization set-up (chief correspondents include Chairman Conrad and the National Office); Congressional replies regarding Federal grants to the California ARBCC (1971-1972); and samples of replies sent regarding private citizens' inquiries about the ARBCC's programs.

folder F3776:4-2 Series 2 **Organizational Records 1972-1977**

**Physical Description:** 25 file folders

**Arrangement**

Arranged by subject and chronologically thereunder.

**Scope and Content Note**

Letters received and copies of letters sent.

Contains policy guidelines (from the National Office) and guidelines generated in house. Series also includes correspondence between the Executive Director and members of the Commission regarding decisions to be made on project proposals and their suggestions regarding possible projects and copies of amended legislation setting up the Commission. Biographical information on Commission members is also included in this series.

folder F3776:28 Series 3 **Meeting Agendas 1972-1977**

**Physical Description:** 1 file folders

**Arrangement**

Arranged chronologically.

**Scope and Content Note**

Agendas for meetings held.

folder F3776:29-35 Series 4 **Minutes of Meetings 1968-1977**

**Physical Description:** 6 file folders

**Arrangement**

Arranged chronologically.

**Scope and Content Note**

Meeting from December 14, 1968 - February 8, 1977. Summaries include Commission members present; statements regarding financial status of the Commission and new projects undertaken. The minutes themselves deal primarily with projects submitted, including touring art exhibits and publications such as a time-line, showing historical events in California that paralleled comparable events occurring simultaneously on the East Coast. For transcripts of some of these meetings see also Series #5.

folder F3776:36- Series 5 Transcripts of ARBCC Meetings 1972-1977

**Physical Description:** 2 file folders and 39 Cassettes and 2 Reels

**Arrangement**

Arranged chronologically but not inclusive.

**Scope and Content Note**

Includes full transcriptions from ARBCC meetings December 14, 1972 and October 16-17, 1973, and for meetings held between 1974 and 1977. For an indication of content see under descriptive paragraph of preceding series entry. See also Series #4 for minutes of ARBCC meetings.

folder F3776:78 Series 6 Annual Reports to the Legislature 1968-1976

**Physical Description:** 1 file folder

**Arrangement**

Arranged chronologically.

**Scope and Content Note**

These reports consist of summations of year's activities, dealing with such matters as number of projects endorsed, cities accepted as Bicentennial communities, number of meetings held in the past year, and statements regarding future goals and activities of the Commission.

folder F3776:79-8 Series 7 Project Updates 1970-1975

**Physical Description:** 3 file folders

**Arrangement**

Arranged chronologically.

**Scope and Content Note**

Includes formal reports consisting of project proposals in summary form submitted to the National Office of the American Revolution Bicentennial Commission in Washington on a periodic basis (on the average of 2-3 a year). Examples of projects submitted include the designing and selling of commemorative medallions, the creation of a Statewide Speakers' Bureau, travelling art shows, and certificates of congratulations for Californian Senior Citizens who were celebrating their 100th birthdays during the Bicentennial period.

folder F3776:82 Series 8 **The Dispatch 1973-1974**

**Physical Description:** 1 file folder

**Arrangement**

Arranged chronologically.

**Scope and Content Note**

Newsletters, published irregularly due to lack of funding.

Contains the seven issues published by the *Sacramento Union*.

Subject matter includes policy statements and news about local Bicentennial events and projects.

folder F3776:83 Series 9 ARBCC Quarterly 1973-1976

**Physical Description:** 1 file folder

**Arrangement**

Arranged chronologically.

**Scope and Content Note**

Published irregularly by the *Sacramento Bee* owing to funding difficulties on the part of the ARBCC. Subject matter parallels but does not duplicate information found in the newsletter: subject matter also deals with new programs and summaries of Bicentennial events occurring throughout the State.

item F3776:530-537 Series 10 **Non-Manuscript Materials 1976**

**Physical Description:** 8 items

**Scope and Content Note**

Includes a master set of commemorative Bicentennial medallions struck by the Lincoln Mint of Chicago, depicting important personages in California history (e.g. John Muir, the Pony Express, and John Marshall's Discovery of Gold). In the master set included here, each medallion, struck in silver, is encased in an acrylic plastic base in the shape of California and marked with a serial number. (The Lincoln Mint also struck these medallions in bronze for sale to the public).

Other materials contained in this series include a children's game entitled Blue Backs (officially recognized by the ARBCC and designed to teach economics to young people kindergarten through twelfth grade); a plate of china with the ARBCC logo imprinted upon it; and a Bicentennial flag of California used in official ceremonies.

item F3776:538-540 Series 11 Videotapes 1976

**Physical Description:** 3 items

**Arrangement**

Arranged by subject.

**Scope and Content Note**

Includes presentations on the following subjects: Bicentennial Fleet (Costa Production Company--producers; no other information exists in the records as to whether this was a State or a National Program); The Young Saints (a broadcasting school for minority children; a project officially recognized (endorsed) by the ARBCC; no other information known); Kern County Historical Minutes (officially recognized project, 1976).

item F3776:541 Series 12 **Film Strip 1976**

**Physical Description:** 1 item

**Arrangement**

Arranged by subject.

**Scope and Content Note**

The name of the strip, The Liberty Tree pertains to a redwood tree planting program commemorating the original trees used as meeting places by the Colonists. This strip was a funded project, approved by the ARBCC in 1973 and produced by the Department of Parks and Recreation. See also under Audiotapes series for accompanying reel.

item F3776:542-548 Series 13 **Movie Films 1976**

**Physical Description:** 7 items

**Arrangement**

Arranged by subject.

**Scope and Content Note**

Most of the items in this series are inadequately identified as to content, and information concerning production, and length of running time. The four films are: one 3½" reel color film (unidentified as to title, content, and date produced); 7" reel, color film Right To Be Right (no further information as to date, content, or producing agency); 7" reel, color film, Many Voices (date produced, content, or producing agency not known); and 5" reel, Television Advertisement (unidentified in terms of content, date produced, or creating agency). Also included are three films submitted by the ARBA in Washington: The Third Lantern For The Third Century, Bicentennial U.S.A., and We Hold These Truths (no other information submitted by the ARBA).

item F3776:549-552 Series 14 **Audiotapes 1976**

**Physical Description:** 1 file folder and 1 cassette and 3 reels

**Scope and Content Note**

Contains the accompanying audio portion of the ARBCC funded project The Anza Trek (consisting of two 7" reel-to-reel tapes and one cassette) and the audio portion of the funded project The Liberty Tree.

item F3776:553-554 Series 15 Slide Presentation - The Impossible Dream 1976

**Physical Description:** 1 file folder and 167 color 35mm slides

**Scope and Content Note**

Slide show prepared by the ARBCC in conjunction with the Arizona Bicentennial Commission (no other information exists in the records).

item F3776:555 Series 16 **Photographs 1974-1976**

**Physical Description:** 1 color and 54 black and white prints

**Arrangement**

Arranged by subject.

**Scope and Content Note**

Subject matter dealt with includes: The Pilgrim (a replica of the famed Baltimore Clipper ships; for written documentation see also under Funded Projects, F3776:199) (5 8x10 black and white prints); Railroad Car Restoration Ceremony (Old Sacramento, September 24, 1976; see also under Funded Projects, F3776:201) (1 5x7, 1 4x5, and 2 8x10 black and white prints); The Dingley Spice Building (Old Sacramento, ca. 1974; for written information see also under Funded Projects, F3776:196) (4 8x10 black and white photos); Francis Scott Key Monument (cast July 4, 1888, restored ca. 1976; for supporting written material see also under Funded Projects, F3776:191) (1 3x4 color print); Plaque Presentation Ceremony Commemorating Work of American Revolution Bicentennial Commission of California, October 1976 (F3776:172) (1 8x10 black and white print); Bicentennial Medallion Design Winners' Presentation, June 28, 1974 (Sacramento, Capitol Building) (2 3½x3½ black and white prints); Time Capsule Ceremony, October 12, 1976 (California State Archives) (6 8x10 black and white prints); Harvey House Restoration (ca. 1975, Barstow, California) (See also under Projects Officially Endorsed by the ARBCC, F3776:344) (1 5½x10 black and white print); Camron-Stanford House (ca. 1975) (See also under Projects Officially Endorsed by the ARBCC, F3776:348) (1 8x8 and 2 8x10 black and white prints); and photos of the schooners Perseus and Prince Louis (ca. 1975) (See also under Projects Endorsed by the ARBCC, F3776:234) (2 8x10 black and white prints).

**Records of the Executive Director**

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folder F3776:84-91 Series 1 **National Conference Correspondence 1970-1975**

**Physical Description:** 8 file folders

**Arrangement**

Arranged chronologically.

**Scope and Content Note**

Contains letters received and copies of letters sent.

Before enabling legislation was passed in late 1973 the National body directing the Bicentennial effort was known as the American Revolution Bicentennial Commission. Late in 1973 the 93rd Congress passed Public Law 93-179, allowing for a restructuring of this organization at the National level. Effective April 11, 1974, the Commission was formally changed to the American Revolution Bicentennial Administration. With policy direction and implementation now to be in the hands of a Chief Administrator, it was the function of that office to appoint advisory committees and a staff to help carry-out his liaison work with the ARBA Board and ARBA Council. Ex-Secretary of Navy John Warner was its Administrator.

The correspondence of this series centers around new projects, programs, and guidelines emanating out of Washington, covering the period 1973-1975. National program guidelines, press releases, and memoranda are the major components of this file. Chief correspondents include Charles Goodspeed, Director of Field Services for the American Revolution Bicentennial Administration, and Albert Johnson, Executive Director of the ARBCC. This series also includes the correspondence of the Commission with the Western Regional Office of the ARBA in San Francisco and the minutes of regional conferences of the Southwest Regional Alliance of the American Revolution Bicentennial Commission (of which California was a member) held between 1971 and 1973.

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folder F3776:92-146 Series 2 **Subject Files 1972-1977**

**Physical Description:** 55 file folders

**Arrangement**

Arranged alphabetically by subject.

**Scope and Content Note**

Includes letters received and copies of letters sent. Record types include letters, memoranda, guides, press clippings, and project reports.

Subject matter dealt with includes correspondence with State Departments and Commissions (e.g. Art Commission, Attorney General's Office, and the Finance Department) relating to project proposals submitted by these agencies; correspondence pertaining to the State-wide Bicentennial Workshop held May 30 - June 1, 1975 in Fresno; ARBCC press releases from 1974-1976; Time Capsule Ceremony held October 12, 1976; and correspondence relating to medallions given to private citizens on behalf of the Commission.

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folder F3776:147-159 Series 3 **Correspondence With Licensed Commercial Organizations 1971-1976**

**Physical Description:** 13 file folders

**Arrangement**

Arranged chronologically.

**Scope and Content Note**

Includes letters received and copies of letters sent.

Because the ARBCC received no State funding, other means had to be developed to raise revenues for projects the Commission felt were worthy of financial sponsorship. In order to do this, the Commission granted commercial licenses to a half-dozen firms in return for royalties received from the purchase of such items as souvenir coins and medallions (e.g. the Lincoln Mint of Chicago), bumper and decal stickers (Designers Decal, Inc.), and Bicentennial chinaware (the De Vault Noble Company). An integral part of each file is a copy of the contract (license) enabling these organizations to engage in commercial activity on behalf of the Commission. Of special note is a brief submitted to the State Attorney General's Office against the Lincoln Mint of Chicago, who had been contracted to handle orders for Bicentennial medallions on behalf of the ARBCC. This brief contains daily reports, a diary, and letters of complaints prepared by C. Edward Shelton, the Lincoln Mint's Marketing Director for California on behalf of the ARBCC.

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folder F3776:160-164 Series 4 **Nationally Funded Projects 1974-1976**

**Physical Description:** 5 file folders

**Arrangement**

Arranged alphabetically by project and chronologically thereunder.

**Scope and Content Note**

Letters received and copies of letters sent.

Series contains applications and supporting documents (e.g. formal proposals and written reports).

Included here are those projects sponsored and directed by the National American Revolution Bicentennial Administration and incorporated into the overall program directed at the State-level by the Executive Director of the ARBCC, Albert Johnson. Projects include: the Armed Forces Bicentennial Installation and Commands Program (a travelling tour of musicians representing the various branches of the Armed Forces), the Johnny Horizon Program (litter pick-up), and the Horizon On Display project (involving the restoration or building of structures that encouraged community involvement). Examples in California include the Atascadero Solar House and the East Los Angeles Community Union. These projects included here were federally funded.

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folder F3776:165 Series 5 **Projects Approved Under Title X, Federal Emergency Employment Act Of November 1975 1975**

**Physical Description:** 1 file folder

**Arrangement**

Arranged alphabetically by project.

**Scope and Content Note**

Letters received and copies of letters sent. File contains copies of applications submitted to the National Office and replies sent indicating total monies allocated for each approved project. Series includes formal application and supporting materials consisting of written proposals or reports.

This program was used to finance construction projects that could be tied-in to the Bicentennial. California projects include the building of the following complexes: the Cortina Indian Community Center (Colusa County); restoration of an historic schoolhouse in Los Angeles (not identified); and the creation of the Susanville Indian Community Center.

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folder F3776:166-207 Series 6 **Bicentennial Projects Funded by the ARBCC 1971-1976**

**Physical Description:** 42 file folders

**Arrangement**

Arranged alphabetically by project and chronologically thereunder.

**Scope and Content Note**

Letters received and copies of letters sent. Also included are movie scripts, prospectus, project proposals (formal reports), and chronological histories of the projects as they proceeded through the grant review process. Examples of projects include the Crescent City Lighthouse Museum Rehabilitation Project, the rehabilitation of the Dingley Spice Building in Old Sacramento, and a physical reenactment of a Conestoga Wagon Train to Pennsylvania. These projects were funded by annual allocations made to each of the fifty state commissions by the National Office in Washington.

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folder F3776:208-400 Series 7 **Projects Officially Endorsed by the ARBCC 1973-1977**

**Physical Description:** 192 file folders and 1 volume

**Scope and Content Note**

Sampled and arranged alphabetically by project and within each project chronologically.

Letters received and copies of letters sent.

Series contains the formal application and supporting written documentation plus publications produced as Bicentennial projects. Included here is a photographic folio of the last ship remaining from the Gold Rush Era (called the Vicar of Bray) (for written documentation see title under Endorsed Projects).

Projects officially endorsed (i.e. projects given official approval but not funded) include restoration projects [e.g. Camron-Stanford House (Oakland), and the Peralta Adobe (San Jose)]; publication projects [e.g. *Rancho Cucamonga* (San Bernardino County) and *Camping Around California* (San Francisco)]; historic re-creations [e.g. Columbia Pageant (Tuolumne County)]; touring bands and musical groups (e.g. UC Berkeley and Cal Poly San Luis Obispo); and conferences [e.g. Conference of California Historical Societies and Contemporary California Issues Consortium (Costa Mesa)].

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folder F3776:401-431Series 8 **Rejected Projects 1972-1977**

**Physical Description:** 31 file folders

**Arrangement**

Arranged alphabetically by project and chronologically thereunder.

**Scope and Content Note**

Letters received and copies of letters sent. Sampled.

This series is comprised of those projects submitted to the ARBCC that were either tabled (and never decided upon by the Commission) or turned down because they did not meet the Commission's criteria for acceptance. Examples include proposals for films (e.g. History of California Railroading), publications (e.g. *California Bicentennial Magazine*) and community projects (history exhibit, Long Beach Museum). Includes applications and written justifications in the form of proposals or reports.

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folder F3776:432-529aSeries 9 **Applications Submitted for Recognition as Bicentennial Communities 1970-1977**

**Physical Description:** 60 file folders

**Scope and Content Note**

Sampled.

Includes letters received and copies of letters sent. This series is further divided into the following sub-series: applications submitted by County and City Commissions (sampled), by Educational Institutions (sampled) and by Indian Reservation. Within each sub-series arrangement is alphabetical; and further by region (County, City and Indian Reservation applications); or by type of Educational Institution (University, State College and Junior College). Also included within this series is a calendar of events, listing by City or County, the major events that occurred there during the Bicentennial year and a State Handbook/Information Manual listing the criteria used by the Commission (via the Executive Director) in accepting these Cities, Counties, Indian Reservations, and Educational Institutions as Bicentennial Communities.