

World's Fair--Centennial Exhibition

- The United States hosted the World's Fair in 1876, naming it the Centennial Exhibition in honor of the 100 year anniversary since the country's Declaration of Independence.
- The event lasted 6 months and took place in Fairmount park, with many new buildings constructed to hold the exhibits.
- Countries from across the globe sent representatives, exhibits, and objects of cultural interest to be put on display.
- Material remaining from the Centennial Exhibition can tell researchers not only what types of cultures or countries a visitor may have discovered, but also the effect of the event on the city of Philadelphia.

*** NOTE--The Centennial Exhibition can appear under a few names. Here are a few you might come across: Centennial Exhibition, Centennial Exposition, International Exhibition/ Exposition, World's Fair, 1876

Primary Sources:

Historical Society of Pennsylvania collection of Centennial Exhibition records

The collection covers many aspects of the Exhibition. Most important in the collection is the Documentary Record of the Centennial. This is a group of scrapbooks that primarily focuses upon the United States Centennial Commission. The Commission was responsible for soliciting support through its Board of Finance, organizing the centennial celebration and exhibits, and building the extensive exhibition grounds. There are reports, pamphlets, form letters, lists of regulations, and news releases. Information on the various Bureaus of Administration (Agriculture, Horticulture, Transportation, Machinery) and foreign and state exhibits is present. Most correspondence consists of form letters to legislators, supporters, and exhibitors. There are architectural plans submitted in the Centennial building competition with descriptions by the architects. Ephemera (trade cards, visitors' cards, invitations, programs, and newspaper clippings) fills out the collection. There are many photographs and stereoscopic views of the exhibition grounds, buildings, and exhibits. The Centennial Exhibition oversized graphics collection consists of one architectural plan for Memorial Hall and a partial, unbound brochure from the German exhibit, of mechanical drawings of various engines and train cars. The design of the Memorial Hall plan was not the one selected, as it is for a star-shaped building with a dome similar to the U.S. Capitol. The Centennial Exhibition scrapbook pages consists of 13 pages from a scrapbook of Centennial Exposition ephemera apparently created by George W. Houghton, who may have been a carriage maker in Philadelphia. There are images, flyers, maps, handbills, articles, as well as a few handwritten documents, such as an anonymous "Letter to the Editor of the Hub."

Call Number: Collection no, 1544

Finding Aid: http://hsp.org/sites/default/files/legacy_files/migrated/findingaid1544centennial.pdf



Image of the *Centennial Opening* (2403)

Centennial Opening [electronic resource]

Published 1876

Record Source: Digital Records

Call Number: 2403

Digital Library link: <http://digitallibrary.hsp.org/index.php/Detail/Object/Show/idno/2403>

Guide to Philadelphia and the Centennial Exhibition grounds

By: H.J. Schwarzmann, Henry Pettit, Joseph M. Wilson, James H. Windrim

Call number: Wr* .2815 v.2

Centennial guide : 1776 and 1876 : advertising medium

By: Amzi Pierson, Bro. & Co., 1876, Newark, NJ

Call number: Wr* .299 v.2

Centennial Exhibition miscellaneous papers

This is a collection of miscellaneous souvenirs, printed form letters, invitations, relating to the Centennial Exposition held in Philadelphia, 1876.

Call Number: Collection no. 0119

Centennial Exhibition : Philadelphia, 1876

Frankfort: Printed and pub. By Ph. Fry and Co., 1876

Call number: Wr.29542

The Centennial Exhibition

By: Elisha W, Davis

Call number: Wr* .262 v.2

Women's Centennial Executive Committee minutes

The Women's Centennial Committee of Philadelphia was organized to secure monies for the "purpose of celebrating the Centennial Anniversary of American Independence (July 4, 1876) by a Grand Exhibition of all the Arts, Sciences, and Mechanisms of the world." Mrs. Elizabeth Duane Gillespie served as president. The papers, 1874-1877, include one bound volume containing minutes, lists of names of committee aids, absence reports for committee aids, and a list of shareholders of stock in The Centennial Board of Finance for Philadelphia's 26th Ward. Also among the papers are three weekly reports of stock subscribers and a subscription book for 1874-1876. Minutes, 1875-1877, note wards present at the meeting, resolutions proposed and accepted, fundraising ideas and income, ticket price information, and costume propositions.

Call Number: Am.3415

Secondary Sources:

H.H. Moore's Almel and the Politics of the Centennial Exhibition

by Orcutt, Kimberly.

Published 2007

Call Number: N 6505 .S56 v. 21 no. 1

Philadelphia's 1876 Centennial Exhibition

by Gross, Linda P.

Published 2005

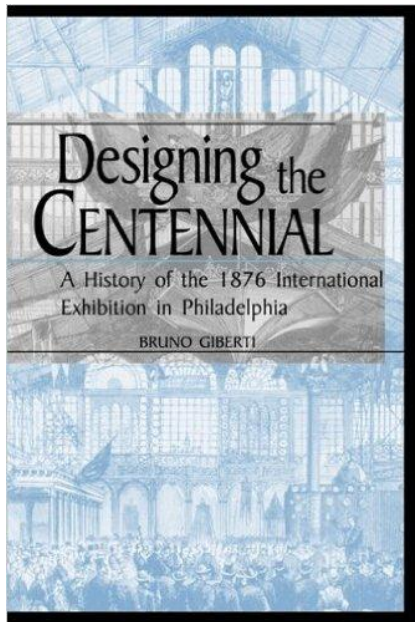
Call Number: UPA/Ph T 825.C1 G76 2005 (Open Stacks)

China's Presence at the Centennial Exhibition, Philadelphia, 1876

by Pitman, Jennifer.

Published 2002

Call Number: NK 1 .S78 Vol. 10 no. 1



Designing the Centennial: a history of the 1876 international exhibition in Philadelphia

by Giberti, Bruno.

Published 2002

Call Number: UPA/Ph T825.B1 G53 2002, T 825.B1 G53 2002

"The City of Sisterly Love": Women and the 1876 Centennial Exhibition

by Curran, Ruth E.

Published 1989

Call Number: UPA/Ph HQ 1391.U5 C8 1989

Located: Pennsylvania Room (open stacks)

Designing the Centennial: a history of the 1876 international exhibition in Philadelphia.

By Bruno Giberti