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The Fresno County Historical Society and The Fresno Bee Save History Together

Fresno, California...May 1, 2020...For over 100 years, the Fresno County Historical Society has been gathering and preserving our past and, for nearly as many years, the McClatchy-owned *Fresno Bee* has been documenting the stories of the Valley in newsprint and photographs. Today, these two venerable organizations have embarked on a collaboration to ensure that the history of our region will be protected for years to come.

This past February the *Fresno Bee* relocated to new offices at Bitwise 41 which positioned the media outlet to adopt a multi-platform service model. As the paper left its 19th & 20th century space behind, the immense catalogue of history, that had been held safely in the newspaper's morgue, was in immediate need of a secure home.

This vast assembly of photos, negatives, clip files, newspapers, as well as a library of hundreds of books, chronicles over a century of unfathomable local, national and world moments - from the founding and growth of many Valley communities to every conflict since the Spanish-American war through 9/11 and beyond. Volumes of *The Fresno Morning Republican*, which served the region prior to the birth of the *Bee* in 1922, are remarkably well-preserved and intact. Achievements, momentous and small, include everything from the installation of streetlights in Fresno to the moon landing to the birth of the world wide web. All are represented within the pages of this irreplaceable archive.

Upon learning that this chronicle of our collective past would require relocation, the Fresno County Historical Society stepped up to request the privilege of housing and preserving the *Bee* archive for future generations to learn from and enjoy.

Fresno County Historical Society President, Elizabeth Laval said, "No other collection thoroughly brings to life the growth of our Valley than the pages of the *Fresno Bee*. Prior to radio, television and the 24/7 world of the internet, people relied on their daily paper to inform and educate them about everything from, literally, cradle to grave. Our responsibility to preserve such a true Valley treasure was clear and we are grateful to the *Bee* for working with us to ensure not a single document is lost. The value of this endeavor cannot be overstated."

"What's important to me is the long legacy of The Bee's journalism, which dates back nearly 100 years. Retaining that history is important and I'm thrilled to partner with the Historical Society in this effort," said *Fresno Bee* Publisher Tim Ritchey.

The Society will be reaching out immediately to community members to assist with locating secure space that will provide appropriate interim storage for the materials.

“If ever there has been a need to join together to help us make this move possible, now is that time. We really are relying on the generosity of the public to assist - so, if we call you, please do what you can,” Laval implored.

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