MANUSCRIPT COLLECTIONS
Beauties of the World’s Fair and St. Louis 1904 Photograph Booklet

Abstract: One booklet of published photographs of the 1904 St. Louis World’s Fair Louisiana Purchase Exposition and of sites in St. Louis

Extent: 1 volume

Physical Description: Paper

Location: Missouri State Archives; Stacks

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Alternative Formats: None

Access Restrictions: None

Publication Restrictions: None

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HISTORICAL AND BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

Preparation for the St. Louis World’s Fair began in January 1899 when St. Louis was chosen as the next city after Chicago to host a world’s fair. Former Governor David R. Francis was elected Chairman of the Executive Committee planning the fair. Other Committee members from Missouri were John Perry (Kansas City), E.W. Stephens (Columbia), and Howard Elliott (St. Louis). Soon Walter B. Stevens would become Secretary and his name appears on many of the St. Louis World’s Fair – aka Louisiana Purchase Exposition – documents.
The theme of the Fair was to be the 100th anniversary of the Louisiana Purchase and a goal of Winter 1903 was set for the opening. Eventually the opening was shifted to April 1904. The Fair remained open until December 1, 1904.

George Kessler was the Fair’s primary designer and the plan he came up with required approximately 1,200 acres of land and water in the area that would later become Forest Park and Washington University in St. Louis. Architects included Isaac S. Taylor, Emmanuel Louis Masqueray, Paul J. Pelz, and many others.

Participants from all over the country and the world were recruited to design and build exhibits and buildings representing their native lands and cultures. Forty-three (of 45) states built exhibit space as well as 50 countries. Native peoples from across the world were brought to St. Louis where they would be required to appear in their native clothing and accouterments for the attendees to observe. Photographs of these native groups make up the bulk of the images in this manuscript. William H. Rau was the official photographer for the Fair and he is likely the individual who took the photographs featured in this book.

Overall, almost 20 million people attended the Louisiana Purchase Exposition.

ADDITIONAL DESCRIPTIVE INFORMATION

Related Collections

MS105 St. Louis 1904 World’s Fair Photograph Book  
MS193 St. Louis 1904 World’s Fair Photograph Books  
MS270 The Universal Exposition Book  
MS279 George Kessler Papers  
MS305 Meet Me At the Fair  
MS393 Early Photo Album  
MS398 Missouri Postcard Collection  
MS423 Tim Williams Collection  
MS435 Souvenir Postcards of St. Louis  
RG550 General Assembly

Available in the Archives’ Reference Book Collection:


**Additional External Resources**


The Library of Congress has nearly 1,000 photographs and other records on the World’s Fair: [https://www.loc.gov/](https://www.loc.gov/).

The Missouri History Museum in St. Louis has extensive collections devoted solely or partly to the World’s Fair. In particular, see collection #A0934 Louisiana Purchase Exposition Company Records, 1898-1925 and #A0816 George E. Kessler Papers, 1886-1923. [NOTE: The Archives has the Kessler papers on microfilm, manuscript collection MS279.] They have also digitized both volumes of David R. Francis’s *The Universal Exposition of 1904* and placed them on Missouri Digital Heritage: [http://cdm16795.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/landingpage/collection/expo](http://cdm16795.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/landingpage/collection/expo).


The State Historical Society of Missouri in Columbia has many collections involving the Exposition. In particular, see collections #C0806, #C4123, #P0093, #C0051, #C1228, #S0085 and an online photograph collection.
SERIES

St. Louis 1904 World’s Fair Photograph Booklet

Scope and Content

This is an 8x10 booklet containing black and white photographs of the 1904 St. Louis World’s Fair and also of sites in St. Louis City. It is 48 pages long.

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