

History of ARC Buildings, Monuments, and Named Areas

Community Relations Office, American River College

Bill J. Priest Administration Building

Completed in 1957, the building is named after the first president of American River Junior College, Dr. Bill J. Priest (1955-1964). In 1964, he became the first superintendent of the Los Rios College District. The following year, he became the first chancellor of the Dallas County Community College District. He retired from Dallas in 1981. The Bill J. Priest Institute for Economic Development, located in Dallas, is a partnership between the Dallas County Community College District and the private business sector to support economic development in Dallas County. In 2006, Dr. Priest recorded in a video message for the celebration of the 50th anniversary of American River College.

Davies Hall

Designed in 1964 as the college's main classroom and office building, the three-story facility was completed in the spring of 1967. The first new building after ARC became part of the Los Rios Community College District, it was named after ARJC Board of Trustees member Evan W. Davies, who represented Town and Country, part of the ARJC service area. (The current Town and Country shopping center, at Marconi and Fulton, bears the name of that same area.)

Guthrie Grove

The grove of valley oak trees adjacent to the Counseling Center is original to the site (most of the other trees on campus were planted after the college was established here). The grove is named after Adin L. Guthrie, of Rio Linda, member of the American River Junior College Board of Trustees.

Howard Hall

Named after Joe Howard, Mathematics Professor (1980-1984), Dean of Mathematics & Engineering (1984-1987), Dean of Instruction (1987-1995) and Vice President of Instruction (1995-1999). He died of cancer in 1999, and the building was dedicated in his memory in 2004. The waterfall/study area outside the Instructional Technology Center also bears his name.

Hutchison Gymnasium

Named after ARC physical education instructor and coach Woodrow "Woody" Hutchison, who began teaching in 1955 when the college (then called American River Junior College) was located in temporary quarters across from Grant High School. He came to the main campus when it opened in 1958, and became Director of Athletics in 1960, serving in that role until 1976. He retired in 1980.

Kenneth D. Boettcher Library

Named after Kenneth D. Boettcher, who began as Assistant Superintendent in charge of instruction at American River Junior College. before it moved to its present location in 1957. He became president/superintendent of ARJC in 1965 and served until 1978. Opened to the public in 1973, the library was dedicated as the Kenneth D. Boettcher Library on November 8, 1978.

James Kaneko Art Gallery

James Kaneko served with distinction in the art department for 43 years—the longest tenure of any ARC faculty member at the time of his death in 1999. A widely recognized artist in his medium of ceramics, he also was instrumental in establishing and developing the ARC Art Gallery. In 1995, he designed and installed a tiled mural in the college cafeteria to commemorate ARC's 40th anniversary. (That mural was safely dismantled when the cafeteria was demolished in 2011, to be relocated at some future date.) In addition to his teaching at ARC, Jim had, for many years, operated a hand-painted ceramics studio in Virginia. His interest in Virginia dates back to 1964 when he first became involved in a government-financed project to improve the depressed Appalachian area. During his frequent visits to this area, he became familiar with the native crafts, arts, industries, and schools, and taught art classes to teachers in the area. In 2001, the college art gallery was officially named the James Kaneko Art Gallery at American River College.

Raef Hall

Doris Raef was Dean of Women at ARJC from 1958 to her death in 1962. The building that bears her name was nearing completion at her death, and it was decided to dedicate it to her memory.

Ranch House

The majority of the college's 153 acres were owned by Robert "Larry" Cameron, a Sacramento automobile dealer, and used as a cattle ranch called the Cameron Ranch (the area immediately to the east of the campus is still called Cameron Ranch Estates). Though he didn't live on the property, Cameron oversaw the management of the cattle breeding business that was operated on the property. He and his wife visited the ranch on weekends to conduct business and ride their horses. They stayed in a house which was occupied otherwise by a caretaker who remained there a year or so after the campus was constructed, as part of the agreement between the Camerons and American River Junior College, at the time the college acquired the property in 1955. (Cameron Park, a foothills community off Highway 50, is another California landmark that bears Cameron's name. Cameron purchased that property to continue his business of raising award-winning Angus cattle.) Based on the architecture and fittings of the Ranch House, it is assumed that it was built about 1950. The concrete-block structure includes a large main gathering room with fireplace, a kitchen, a bathroom with shower, and two former bedrooms, now used for storage. Today, the building is used primarily as a meeting space.

Rose Marks Quad/Pavilion

Rose Marks taught English at ARC and the quad and pavilion were funded by a gift from Mrs. Marks husband, Sid, and completed in 1980, in time for the college's 25th anniversary celebration.

Corrections? Additions? Contact the ARC Public Information Officer at (916) 484-8647, or by e-mail at PeithmS@arc.losrios.edu

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