

Centennial Exhibit Descriptions

1. San Francisco City Seal

Handcrafted wood carving 1972

Rendition of the San Francisco City Seal

Artist: Sun Flower Rainbow

Presented to Mayor Joseph L. Alioto, 36th Mayor of San Francisco

2. Bakewell & Brown

The architectural firm of Bakewell & Brown was formed in 1905 by John Bakewell, Jr and Arthur Brown, Jr in San Francisco, California. Bakewell and Brown had been students together at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris from 1897-1901. Arthur Brown, Jr. acted as the design partner in the firm, while John Bakewell, Jr. handled the administrative and financial tasks.

The firm thrived in its early years, largely as a result of the opportunities afforded architects in the rebuilding efforts after the 1906 San Francisco earthquake and fire. Early architectural projects include Berkeley City Hall (1907), the interiors of the City of Paris department store (1908), and several residences in Oakland. In 1912, Bakewell & Brown won a major competition for the design of San Francisco City Hall. Completed in 1915, San Francisco City Hall remains the masterwork of Bakewell & Brown. Brown went on to create other magnificent works in San Francisco, including the San Francisco War Memorial Opera House and Veteran's Building in 1932.

3. The Groundbreaking of the New City Hall - 1913

A Groundbreaking ceremony held on April 5, 1913, marked the beginning of construction on the new San Francisco City Hall. This ceremonial silver shovel was used by Mayor James Rolph Jr. to commemorate turning the first mound of dirt. Construction was completed and the doors of the new City Hall were opened on December 28, 1915.

4. Henri Crenier – Master Sculptor

The work of Henri Crenier (1873-1948), graces both the Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett, Place and Van Ness Avenue sides of City Hall. Crenier was born in Paris, France, and studied at the Ecole des Beaux Arts. A sculpture on the façade of the building that faces the War Memorial Building on Van Ness Avenue features a figure representing Wisdom. Wisdom stands between the figures of Arts, Learning and Truth on the left and Industry and Labor on the right. A sculpture on the façade that faces the Civic Center Plaza represents California's agriculture and riches on the left and navigational skills on the right. Both sculptures symbolize San Francisco's role in the link between the riches of California and the mercantile needs of the rest of the world.

5. Key Exhibit

Display of ceremonial keys from the administrations of mayors Angelo Rossi, Joseph Alioto, and George Christopher. Since Mayor James "Sunny Jim" Rolph began gifting metal keys to honor distinguished visitors, hundreds of keys, in varying designs and materials, have been distributed over the years. Some key recipients are Stephen Curry of the Warriors, Matt Cain of the San Francisco Giants, performer Tony Bennett, and "Batkid" Miles Scott.

6. Wall with Brown and Rolph

While the accomplishments of many of the forty-two past mayors of San Francisco can be discussed considerably, one common achievement connects Mayors James Rolph and Willie L. Brown in a unique way. Mayor Rolph was the driving force that led to the construction of a new City Hall building in 1915; while Mayor Brown championed the restoration of the building to equal its original beauty in 1999.

7. Centennial Logo – Small Vault

Generations of San Franciscans have visited City Hall for business, education, and pleasure over the past 100 years. In its 100th year, the building has received the prestigious LEED Platinum Certification from the U.S. Green Building Council, making it one of the most energy efficient buildings in the

country. City Hall is truly a 'people's palace' that serves the residents of San Francisco and beyond.

8. Historical Vault

Take a step back in time to imagine how City Hall was used in the past. This vault was used by the Office of the Treasurer to safely store documents and other valuables such as gold coinage. A representation recreates how the original vault of 1915 might have looked as citizens arrived to deposit a bank draft or gold coin.

9. Weddings in City Hall

People come from all over the world to get married in historic City Hall in San Francisco, California. City Hall has been the chosen venue for many celebrity weddings, one of the most famous being the ceremony of Marilyn Monroe and Joe Di Maggio on January 14th, 1954. San Francisco City Hall was the location for thousands of same sex weddings. On February 12th, 2004, Mayor Gavin Newsom directed the county clerk to issue marriage licenses to same sex couples. During the few short weeks before the California Supreme Court ended the practice, over 3,400 same sex marriages were performed in City Hall.