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**The Newberry Library Acquires World-Famous Collection of 2.5 Million Postcards**

*The Curt Teich Postcard Archives Collection, representing a century of American visual myth-making and storytelling, to be transferred from Lake County Discovery Museum over the next six months*

Through an agreement with the Lake County Forest Preserves District, the Newberry will become the new home of the Curt Teich Postcard Archives Collection, widely regarded as the largest public collection of postcards and related materials in the United States. The postcards, about 2.5 million in number, feature a range of subjects and genres: rural vistas and urban skylines, tourist attractions and emergent industries, domestic scenes and global conflicts. Standing at the intersection of American commerce and visual culture, they demonstrate the country's evolving conception of itself—and its place in the world—during the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

The Curt Teich Postcard Archives Collection comes to the Newberry from the Lake County Discovery Museum, where it has been housed since 1982. Transferring the postcard materials will ensure their continued preservation and public availability as the Museum prepares to move from its current location in Wauconda to the Lake County Forest Preserves' General Offices in Libertyville.

“For over 30 years, the Lake County Discovery Museum has stewarded and expanded this remarkable postcard collection with curatorial expertise, skill, passion, and creativity,” said Newberry President David Spadafora. “We intend to build upon this legacy with the same commitment to connecting scholars and the general public with the tangible evidence of the past.”

“The Teich Collection is a fascinating and unusual body of material, widely regarded as significant for twentieth-century cultural studies,” said Lake County Forest Preserve President Ann B. Maine.

“Transferring it to the Newberry will place it in a broader context with their wonderful collections, and expose it to wider recognition as a scholarly resource. We are pleased that we were positioned to create it 35 years ago, and to develop it into the important collection it is today. Transferring it to the Newberry strengthens the missions of both organizations. In our case, it allows us to focus resources



on preserving and telling Lake County's rich natural and human story when the new museum opens in Libertyville."

At the heart of the Curt Teich Postcard Archives Collection are the industrial archives of the Curt Teich Company itself. The company operated in Chicago from 1898 to 1978 as the world's largest printer of view and advertising postcards. Consisting of over 360,000 images related to more than 10,000 towns and cities in the U.S., Canada, and 115 other countries, the Teich industrial archives also contain photographs, prints, sketches, and other layout materials documenting the creation of many of the company's postcards. The range of themes aligns with several subject strengths in the Newberry collection, including local and family history, travel and exploration, Chicago and the Midwest, and the history of printing, publishing, and typography.

"The transfer of the Teich Archives Collection to the Newberry Library validates my late husband Ralph D. Teich's vision," said Beth Teich. "Ralph [Curt Teich's youngest son] understood, as no one else did in 1981, that the Teich Company archives were important as a collective document of twentieth-century history, and that they should be made available to the public. The commitment of the Forest Preserves over 35 years to develop the company archives into a world-class collection, and to find it such a prestigious new home fulfills his vision."

From the original acquisition of the Teich industrial archives, the Lake County Discovery Museum built the Curt Teich Postcard Archives Collection with additional gifts. These include the Leonard A. Lauder Raphael Tuck Collection of over 35,000 postcards known as "Oilettes"; the John I. Monroe Collection of postcards printed by Paul Finkenrath of Berlin; and the James R. Powell Route 66 Collection.

"We are very excited by the many interconnections our users will be able to make between the Curt Teich Postcard Archives and the Newberry's distinctive areas of strength," said Alice Schreyer, the Newberry's Roger and Julie Baskes Vice President for Collections and Library Services.

Schreyer is leading the Newberry's effort to integrate the postcard materials into the library's collection, a process involving both the physical relocation of materials and the digital migration of catalog records and inventories. By April, the Newberry expects to be able to provide reference service to anyone interested in knowing more about the contents of the archives. Access to the materials themselves at first will be by appointment only while the Newberry incorporates the Curt Teich Postcard Archives Collection into the library's discovery and access systems. Users will have uninterrupted access to more than 30,000 digitized postcard views available through the [Illinois Digital Archives](#).