

City of Arts & Innovation

News Release

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The Museum of Riverside Reopens Heritage House with the New Exhibition *Quackery & Cures in the Victorian Age*

Riverside, CA – The Museum of Riverside’s Heritage House will reopen after its summer break on Sept. 5, 2025, with a new fence, fresh paint here and there, and a look back at Victorian medical practices with the exhibition *Quackery & Cures in the Victorian Age*. The Museum of Riverside’s newest exhibition explores the nonsense born out of the invention of confusing new medicines to address the pain of incurable diseases.

The exhibition examines a period that saw an explosion of scientific and industrial progress that led to an increase in population and, perhaps not coincidentally, an increase in medical maladies. Amid all this change, the line between cures and quackery was blurred. The struggle to find relief from incurable, painful, and deadly ailments hit home in Heritage House.

Catharine Bettner, the original owner, suffered the deaths of her husband, daughter, and two of her three sons, losing them to various illnesses. By the time Catharine moved into Heritage House in 1892, she lived with just one servant. The Bettners and other Riversiders, like so many across the nation, risked treatments that could cause unpleasant side effects, long-term damage, addiction, and even death.

Throughout Heritage House, amber bottles are the cues to an illumination of local history. Visitors can delve into the larger landscape of Victorian life, in sickness and in health. Features include nineteenth-century medicine, photographs, medical textbooks, and a set of lancets used for bloodletting.

Diving deeper into this history, a series of events will take place this fall. The exhibition will be on view during regular house tours Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, September 5th through November 23rd, 2025. It's recommended to book your tour in advance. For more information and to keep up to date on all Museum of Riverside activities: <https://linktr.ee/museumofriverside>

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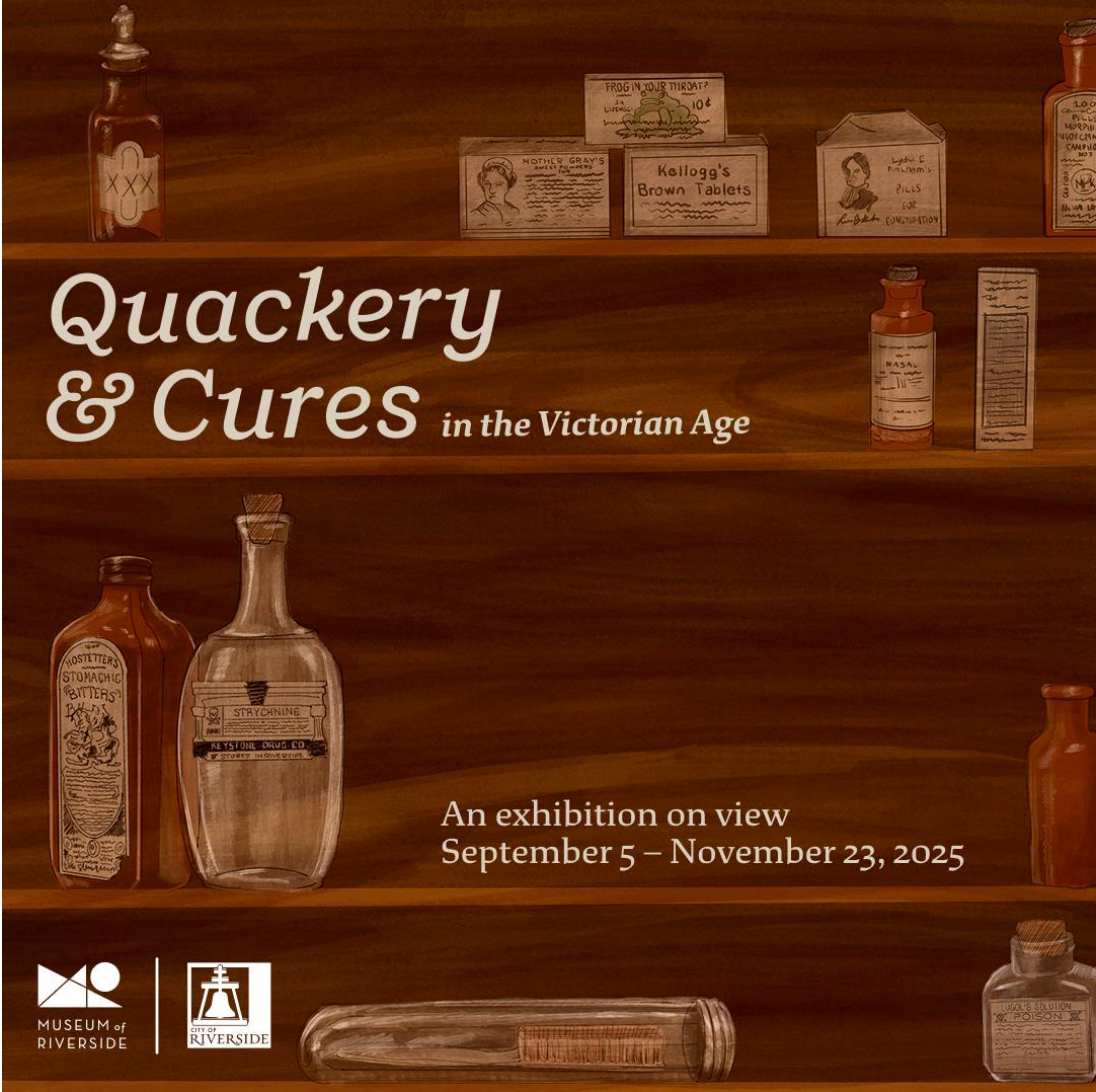
ABOUT THE MUSEUM OF RIVERSIDE

The Museum of Riverside, a department of the city of Riverside, holds a large multi-disciplinary collection relevant to the history, culture, and natural science of the region. The Museum has a proud history of exhibitions, programs, and publications foregrounding local and regional achievement. Sites include the downtown Riverside main museum, Heritage House, Harada House, and the Harada House Interpretive Center (forthcoming). All sites except Heritage House are temporarily closed for renovation or rehabilitation. Heritage House is open Friday-Sunday for guided tours; pre-registration for tours is required via Eventbrite.

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YEARS



Medicines in the Heritage House bathroom (Collections of the Museum of Riverside)



Quackery & Cures

in the Victorian Age

An exhibition on view
September 5 – November 23, 2025

