

Lasca Leaves



Los Angeles County Department of Arboreta and Botanic Gardens

New Lasca Leaves

With this issue we introduce *Lasca Leaves* in its new format, the first major change since the California Arboretum Foundation started publishing the magazine nearly twenty-seven years ago.

The basic content of the magazine will continue as before: news items about Department affairs and articles about, or related to, our plant collections, our services, and our historical section. We believe that *Lasca Leaves* has taken a big step forward in its new

format. It continues to provide the basic editorial content it has in the past while bringing a new dimension in the form of authoritative articles that will deal with environmental and natural science topics of fundamental interest to us all.

Arbor Day

"A Tree Is A Friend For Life"—This is the theme of the Department's 1977 Arbor Day program, participated in mainly by elementary schools in the Los Angeles County School Dis-

trict but also by a few junior high and high schools. This year, as last, approximately 1,000 schools will take part in the program. Science curricula coordinators will receive packets of Arbor Day teacher resource material prepared by the Education Division. The material consists of a history of Arbor Day, information on forests and reforestation, a collection of tree facts (one tree has the cooling effect of five air conditioners), suggestions for indoor and outdoor games involving knowledge of trees, and a leaflet de-

Student previews seedling silk floss trees grown for schools participating in the Arbor Day program. LASCA photos by William Aplin.



*The silk floss tree, *Chorisia speciosa*, is the Arboretum's 1977 Arbor Day tree.*



scribing a national contest for teachers and schools developing the best tree program.

A highlight for most schools is a tree-planting ceremony on March 7, the traditional date for observing Arbor Day in California and most other states. The trees are a gift from the Department to participating schools. This year's Arbor Day tree is the silk floss tree (*Chorisia speciosa*), a colorful ornamental native to Brazil that puts out a brilliant display of purple-hued flowers for three months or more every fall. A thousand of these trees are growing now at the Arboretum. When the time comes for the schools to pick them up, they will be well over six feet high.

Camellia Show

The forthcoming camellia show at Descanso Gardens on the weekend of March 12th and 13th caps the camellia season in southern California so far as major exhibits are concerned. In addition to the three to four thousand varieties of cut blossoms entered in the various competitions, visitors can expect to see the 100,000 camellia bushes growing under the canopy of Descanso's famed oak forest in full bloom, a scene certain to provide a dramatic backdrop for the feature exhibits.

In this area, the major hybridizing effort is made by amateur growers, most of them members of the Southern California Camellia Council which stages this great show each year. The principal aim of these growers is to develop varieties that are cold hardy and that have different forms. Some of these new hybrids and seedlings will be displayed at the show along with such regular features as question-and-answer booths and demonstrations of propagation by grafting. A new attraction will be a flower-arranging exhibit staged in the gardens' Hospitality House.

Baldwin Bonanza VII

This year's Baldwin Bonanza, the annual plant sale at the Arboretum pre-

sented by Las Voluntarias of the California Arboretum Foundation, will be held on Sunday, May 1, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. A special preview for Foundation members and their guests will be held the previous evening (Sat., April 30) from 5:30 to 8 p.m. Members are advised to make their reservations early with the Foundation office.

Mrs. David (Joan) Malafronte, Bonanza chairman, reports a few changes in this seventh version of one of the Arboretum's most popular events. One is that the entire event will be brought together under the 12,000 - square - foot saran - covered shade area just west of the Garden For All Seasons. This will free the Demonstration Home Gardens from the pedestrian traffic jams that developed there last year from plant sales in the area. Another change calls for replacing the "Collectables Corner" with a new "Edibles Booth" offering culinary herbs and a selection of fruiting vines.

A regular Bonanza feature is the sale of Arboretum plant introductions. Plants that will be available, are Blue Hibiscus (*Hibiscus huegelii*), Crown of Gold (*Cassia excelsa*), Green Bottlebrush (*Callistemon pachyphyllas* var. *viridis*), *Combretum fruticosum*, *Stigmaphyllon affine* (orchid vine), *Beaufortia sparsa*, *Melaleuca elliptica*, and *Grevillea nematophylla*. Of particular interest will be a selection of cycad seedlings.

As in the past, visitors can choose among various kinds of ferns, sinningias, begonias, palms, pelargoniums, cactus and succulents. They will also have a choice of hanging baskets and other handcrafted items.

Library Donation

A 450-volume horticultural library belonging to a century-old seed company, Germain's, Incorporated, has been donated to the Los Angeles State and County Arboretum by Walter Schoenfeld, company president and member of the Board of Trustees of the California Arboretum Founda-

tion.

In addition to a wide range of botanical and horticultural works plus catalogs and yearbooks of various plant societies, the collection includes a number of early 19th century books containing beautiful and rare hand engravings. The library in its entirety has been valued at over \$30,000.

The library had its genesis in a trip to Paris at the end of the second world war by the late Manfred Meyberg, who was president of Germain's at the time. Visiting the great seed house of Vilmorin Andrieux, Mr. Meyberg was shown the horticultural library the company maintained for its employees. Impressed by its quality, Mr. Meyberg decided to develop a similar library for Germain's. Following his return home, he sent his vice-president, Walter Schoenfeld, on a trip to Europe that would include making contacts with firms dealing in botanical books written, or available, in English. Mr. Schoenfeld established his best contacts with London firms through which Mr. Meyberg subsequently developed the main body of his library, which he installed in the corporate office. Following his death in 1956, the company began moving toward its present activity as a manufacturer and distributor of chemicals, redwood boxes, tools and other products used by home and commercial gardeners. The selling of flower, vegetable, and field seed is still a major part of the business, but the present company is far different from the Germain's Fruit and Plant Company formed by Swiss-born Eugene Germain in 1871 in Los Angeles and owning, among other things, the city's seventh telephone installation. Mr. Schoenfeld, mindful of Mr. Meyberg's long association with the Arboretum and his innumerable contributions to the horticultural community of Los Angeles, decided the library would serve its widest purpose by being made available to the Arboretum staff and to visitors, an arrangement he was certain Mr. Meyberg would endorse.



1977. "Arbor day." *Garden* 1(1), 1-2.

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Holding Institution

The Arboretum Library at the Los Angeles County Arboretum and Botanic Garden

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