
Department Notes



ROSE MARIE HEAD LEAVES LEGACY AT THE ARBORETUM

IN THE BUSY years before her untimely death on April 21, Rose Marie Head set many long-range goals for herself. As she was being installed as the first woman president of the California Landscape Contractors Association in 1984, Ms. Head listed among her ambitions the desire to "... walk through a life not wasted ... to leave a remembered, worthwhile legacy so that my contributions justified my existence." The Los Angeles State and County Arboretum today has several new features because she often chose projects at the Arboretum as part of that legacy.

Ms. Head could draw upon a formidable store of energy and resources when she set out to accomplish a project. One of the few women in California to hold a landscape contractor's license, she was president of Four Seasons Gardens, a nursery, landscape construction and tree moving operation which she founded in 1973. For many years she was active in the California Landscape Contractors Association, and teamed with her husband Henry C. Soto, as the first couple to serve in the CLCA presidency.



Rose Marie Head

Her varied interests also took her outside the association where she was active with the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce, the Horticulture Committee for Los Angeles Beautiful, Inc., and the Los Angeles Olympic Organizing Committee.

When a steering committee met at the Arboretum to plan the first Los Angeles Garden Show in 1982, Ms. Head was vitally involved. The time and ideas she contributed in subsequent years were important in establishing the annual show as a nationally recognized gardening event.

The Stairway Garden that now links Ayres Hall and the Sunset Demonstration Home Gardens was built by the Los Angeles-San Gabriel Chapter of the California Landscape Contractors Association during Ms. Head's term as president. She and Mr. Soto helped organize the CLCA volunteers who donated much of the supplies and plants and spent thousands of hours transforming a difficult slope and eyesore into a transitional garden.

Until his death, Mr. Soto was actively planning the Water Conservation Garden with the Arboretum Director and was about a month short of breaking ground. The project then lay dormant until Ms. Head picked up the plans and spearheaded the drive to establish the Henry C. Soto Water Conservation Garden at the Arboretum. She donated the intricately shaped Brazilian pepper tree that is the centerpiece of the garden, and other members contributed plants, labor, and building materials to make the area both colorful and educational.

In recognition of the impact this remarkable couple had upon the Arboretum, a scholarship fund has been established in the names of Rose Marie Head and Henry C. Soto. For more information, call the California Arboretum Foundation Development Office at (818) 447-0184.

SOUTH COAST VOLUNTEER ROWE PRIDEAUX HONORED

ROWE H. PRIDEAUX a volunteer for five years at South Coast Botanic Garden, was the Department of Arboreta and Botanic Gardens volunteer of the year for 1988. He had only been a volunteer for a few months when he became involved in the annual plant sale and fund-raiser, Fiesta de Flores.

In 1983 Mr. Prideaux coordinated more than 100 volunteers from El Camino College who helped with the Fiesta from preliminary plans through the days of the sale. The following year Mr. Prideaux assisted Rene Merlander, general chairman of the Fiesta. In this new position he organized all the activities and schedules for the volunteers.

As general chairman for the next three years, Mr. Prideaux coordinated all facets of the Fiesta de Flores. He directed 600 volunteers and worked over 4,125 hours over the three years.

One of his main objectives was to increase attendance and profits. Before the Fiesta Mr. Prideaux wrote a weekly column in *Palos Verdes News '87* and solicited support from

garden clubs, the California Association of Nurserymen Centinela Chapter, and local business and media, to name a few.

In 1984 Mr. Prideaux became a member of the Board of Trustees. In 1986 he served as fourth vice-president on the Executive Board, the second year as first vice-president. In 1986 and 1987 he was a member of the Executive Board.

Other organizational involvement included serving on the South Coast Botanic Garden Foundation Support Committee for the Palos Verdes Community Art Association's Arts for FUNDS Sake in 1987.

Referring to his years as a volunteer, Mr. Prideaux feels he has gained as much as he has given. "It means a dual benefit for me. One, it affords me the opportunity to give something back to the society I have enjoyed for many years," he said. "Then secondly, I have personally benefited from wonderful associations, new friends and increased knowledge in areas of botany, gardening, and conservation, which interest me greatly."



Rowe Prideaux (left) receives a scroll from Supervisor Deane Dana as he is honored as Volunteer of the Year for the Department of Arboreta and Botanic Gardens. His wife, Patricia, stands center.



1988. "Rose Marie Head leaves legacy at the Arboretum." *Garden* 12(4), 5–6.

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