



THE HISTORY OF RANCHO SANTA ANITA

Clockwise from top left: School children visit during the 1960s. A bird's-eye view of the Adobe after its 1960s restoration shows just the wingless Adobe with a walled compound. A drawing of Hugo Reid by artist Maynard Dixon. Pancho, the Arboretum's donkey-in-residence.

Dakin assembled a group of experts who oversaw the restoration. The Reid association with the Adobe was regarded as the period of significance for the project. Baldwin's wood frame wing was dismantled with the intention of restoring it in some form. But the funding dried up and the disassembled wooden wing, which had been placed in storage, was never returned to the site.

The Adobe's restoration was undertaken based on the understanding formed in this process. It included interior furnishings viewed through the windows, a walled compound, orchard, vineyard, recreated Tongva (formerly known as the Gabrielino) houses and a corral with a resident donkey named Pancho. The adobe is designated California Registered Landmark #386.

For many generations, the resulting reconstruction and Pancho were favorites of visitors and school children on field trips. The restored dwelling shaped their understanding of the history of Southern California. For them, the past, when visualized, looked like the Hugo Reid Adobe circa 1965.

By the beginning of the 21st century, the Adobe's roof was leaking, the furnishings had been removed to storage for safe keeping and the walled compound and orchard were only a memory. Well-intended maintenance efforts had accelerated the damage when cement and acrylic paint were applied to the building and compound walls trapping moisture inside them.

A new restoration will be undertaken soon with an allotment of funds for deferred maintenance. The leaking roof will be replaced and measures will be taken to stabilize the walls of the adobe for the future. The Arboretum also intends to consider how best to present the building to visitors and will seek funding to develop new interpretive material and create a landscape in the surrounding area

- 1840** Hugo Reid constructs an adobe near the lake at Rancho Santa Anita.
- 1847** Henry Dalton purchases Rancho Santa Anita from Hugo Reid for \$2,700.
- 1854** Dalton sells Rancho Santa Anita to Joseph Rowe for \$33,000.
- 1858** Rowe sells Rancho Santa Anita at a loss to Albert Dibblee and William Corbitt.
- 1865** William Wolfskill purchases 11,319 acres of Rancho Santa Anita for \$20,000.
- 1872** William's son Luis Wolfskill sells about 8,500 acres of Rancho Santa Anita, including the lakeside property, to Harris Newmark for \$85,000.
- 1875** Elias Jackson "Lucky" Baldwin purchases Rancho Santa Anita for \$200,000.
- 1877** Baldwin renovates the Hugo Reid Adobe, creating an 8-room, L-shaped home with a new wooden wing attached to the old adobe structure.
- 1909** Lucky Baldwin dies of pneumonia in his Adobe home.
- 1936** Anita Baldwin sells the remaining 1,300 acres of Rancho Santa Anita to Harry Chandler of the *Los Angeles Times*.
- 1936-47** Chandler's real estate organization, Rancho Santa Anita, Inc. undertakes subdivision of the old ranch lands.
- 1947** With urging from Dr. Samuel Ayres' Arboretum Committee of the Southern California Horticultural Institute, the State of California and County of Los Angeles jointly purchase 111 acres from Rancho Santa Anita, Inc. to create an arboretum around the Baldwin home site.

that will evoke a landscape shaped by native vegetation and characteristic plant introductions from Mission Days to the Victorian Era. The goal is a garden that can be interpreted as living history of the site. 🌿

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