

## President's Message



*Richard A. Grant, Jr., President, California Arboretum Foundation*

### New Times – New Ways

In this time of reduced government support it is vital to look for new ways to build support for the Arboretum's programs and plant collections. Three elements are critical to making these new directions happen:

- Increasing attendance by making more people aware of the Arboretum's uniqueness as a horticultural, educational and historical resource.
- Increasing private sector support by giving private support groups more say in the governance of the garden.
- Achieving better operating efficiencies through greater cooperation among staff, volunteers and the CAF.

Thanks to the leadership of our new Director Ken Smith there are already some initiatives underway:

A brochure is being developed to promote visits to the County gardens.

An attendance survey is in the works to determine who visits the Arboretum and why.

A series of monthly lectures by Arboretum staff members is underway to better acquaint visitors with the significance of the Arboretum collections.

Finally, a most important ingredient is the current effort to add 1,000 new Arboretum members by June 1992. This project has been sparked by a \$25,000 challenge grant. Every Arboretum member is asked to help meet this challenge by inviting a friend to join today!



*Kenneth C. Smith is the newly appointed director of the Department of Arboreta and Botanic Gardens*

### Welcome to Mr. Kenneth C. Smith!

Mr. Kenneth C. Smith was named the new director of the Los Angeles County Department of Arboreta and Botanic Gardens in June.

"I am pleased to be part of such a great organization," he said. "The gardens of Los Angeles County have unlimited potential. Each with its own personality, and together they reflect the attention and care that have been lavished upon them throughout the years."

"I am totally committed to supporting the efforts to make this group of gardens one of the finest botanic organizations in the United States," he added.

Mr. Smith, 58, worked at Cypress Gardens in Winter Haven, Florida, from 1950 to 1990, the last eight years as president. He became executive vice-president in 1972 at the time the company became publicly held. He is credited with the attraction's expansion which doubled the size of the park in 1979.

While in Florida, he served as vice-president of the Southeast Tourism Society and president of the Florida Attractions Association.

Ken and his wife, Bette, maintain two homes, one in Arcadia and the other in La Jolla.

A true southern gentleman, Ken has quickly earned the respect and friendship of staff, volunteers and guests alike with his broad smile and vast knowledge.

*Coloring California, continued from page 1*

The Pink floss-silk tree (*Chorisia speciosa*) is native to Brazil and Argentina. It may reach 50 feet after many years of growth. The trunk is similarly dull greenish, more or less bulbous to conserve water and heavily armed or almost thornless. Like the White floss-silk tree, it has compound leaves comprised of five to seven leaflets. The trees shed their leaves with the onset of cold weather. The flowers are 3 to 5 inches in diameter; the petals may be variously colored from white or yellow to a more typical pink or red. The inner side of the petals is usually streaked with colored markings and a creamy-yellow shade towards the center. The large fruits are up to eight inches long and shaped somewhat like an avocado. They split open in the spring exposing masses of the cottony white fibers that cling to each black, pea-shaped seed. These downy puffs carry the seeds by air some distance from the mother tree. As young trees the pink floss silk may grow at the rate of four to six feet per year. The tree is certainly a conversation piece and attracts more than its share of visitor attention from August or September through February. The same precautions apply here as to the White floss-silk tree.

Over the years, outstanding forms of the Pink floss-silk tree have been selected and named at the Arboretum. 'Arcadia' has deep pink flowers from November through February. It was introduced by the Arboretum in 1978 and was promptly offered to the City of Arcadia for street planting as well as to the members of the California Arboretum Foundation. 'Lasca Beauty' was introduced by the Arboretum in 1976. It has five-inch deep rose-pink flowers in mid- to late autumn. In 1974, 'Los Angeles Beautiful' was introduced by the Arboretum for its unusually beautiful dark red flowers produced from October through November. It is almost thornless. 'September Splendour' is a 1976 Arboretum introduction which is the earliest to flower.

A fall or winter visit to the Arboretum will certainly include the enjoyment of discovering again or for the first time, the large, eye-catching flowers of the floss-silk trees.





1988. "Welcome to Mr. Kenneth C. Smith!." *News* 1991:fall-winter, 2.

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