

BALDWIN GARDENER*(Continued from Page 1)*

the carpets of wild violets of Lucky Baldwin's era, but some beautiful trees and intriguing remnants remain in the Historical Section of today's Arboretum. The next time your path leads to the Queen Anne Cottage notice the blue gum Eucalyptus in front of the house. Baldwin planted groves of Eucalyptus for timber, but this was surely a landscape tree, today the tallest and largest girthed blue gum on the grounds. Just down the walkway from the blue gum, on the south side of the Cottage, is a Chinese windmill palm (*Trachycarpus fortunei*), a rare planting in 1890 and really not so common even today. The common Mexican fan palm, on the other hand, dominates the Historical Section in uncommon profusion; the stately grove of one hundred year old specimens contains some of the tallest palms on record west of the Mississippi. Near the lake are willows, one of which may be a descendant of a cutting from a tree at Napoleon's tomb which Baldwin claimed was presented to him in Europe. True or not, period photographs do indeed attest that numerous weeping willows graced the lake shore a century ago.

It was Lucky Baldwin who dredged the natural lake near his homesite and lined the shore with granite boulders. A rustic boathouse (destroyed by vandals in 1980) sheltered a red and white gondola from which visitors enjoyed first-hand views of Mr. Baldwin's botanic handiwork. On Tallac Knoll, rising above the tower of the Coach Barn, were acres of native oaks maintained in their pristine beauty by an owner adverse to cutting a tree even for firewood. Those 100-200 year old Engelmann oaks remain yet today thanks in large measure to the foresight of horticulturist Baldwin.

Other surprises await the botanic explorer in today's Historical Section. On the lawn between the Queen Anne Cottage and the Coach Barn is a one hundred year old English oak planted by Baldwin, and all around it are younger black walnuts, descendants of a grove set out by Lucky in the early 1890's. Near the Barn are several ginkgoes of the Baldwin era and the remains of a recently felled (1980 windstorm) coast redwood which had been planted by Baldwin upon the birth of his daughter Anita in 1876. A huge silk oak no doubt planted by Lucky Baldwin towers over the gardener's tool bin near the dirt road along the lake and nearby (in front of the Cottage) is a pair of giant clam shells

brought back from the Great Barrier Reef as a gift for Baldwin along with a boatload of specimen trees. For the truly inquisitive, look carefully along the dirt path at the lake between the boathouse site and the Hugo Reid Adobe -- remnants of wax leaf privets (*Ligustrum lucidum*), once part of a manicured hedge along a ranch walkway, are now gnarled trees of considerable size and age.

Lucky Baldwin may well have been the "grey headed old libertine" one female visitor labelled him, but he was a lover of more than one kind of beauty. If young charmers could catch his eye, so too could a specimen tree newly arrived from the Far East or an oak grove which had survived the ravages of development. There were only three ways to be fired from employment on the Baldwin Ranch according to a former employee. "You dare not," he said, "mistreat a horse, hurt a peacock, or cut a tree."

PLANTS OF RANCHO ERA RECALLED

A good place to begin a list of old (historical) plants is the Historical Section at the Arboretum. I am especially fond of the summer flowers and winter berries of the Toyon (*Heteromeles arbutifolia*), and the spreading, glossy green Manzanita Bearberry (*Arctostaphylos uva-ursi*) used as a groundcover. Desert Willow (*Chilopsis linearis*), California Pepper Tree (*Schinus molle*) and California Sycamore (*Plantanus racemosa*)

will add shade and texture to your landscape. The lavender blue flowers of Ground Morning Glory (*Convolvulus mauritanicus*) creeping around the base of Lemon Verbena (*Aloysia triphylla*) is a lovely combination (everyone should brush by this shrub -- the smell of lemon drops will bring a smile to your face). Our hard-working volunteers have planted a wonderful historical herb/perennial bed in the Hugo Reid Adobe Courtyard that should not be missed.

Roses are mentioned throughout history, usually with a romantic connotation. A rose garden will add beauty and color to any style house. Many "old" roses can be found in the Adobe Courtyard and in the Old-Fashioned Rose Garden.

If your architecture calls for plants with a Victorian flair or plants Grandmother used to grow, a stroll around the Queen Anne Cottage will offer a list you wouldn't believe. My favorite is the emotional Weeping Willow (*Salix babylonica*). For fragrance and color near a door, Yesterday-Today-and-Tomorrow (*Brunfelsia pauciflora* 'Floribunda') is a delight. The Loquat (*Eriobotrya japonica*) also has fragrant but insignificant flowers and edible fruit. Tobira (*Pittosporum tobira*) is a reliable background plant and offers the smell of orange blossoms in early spring. Heavenly Bamboo (*Nandina domestica*) can be used for a soft, informal, feathery hedge while Japanese Privet (*Ligustrum japonicum*) can be kept trimmed for a more formal look.

Wendy Sekovich

E.J. BALDWIN TALKS OF THE FUTURE

You know, last evening I was on the porch of my ranch headquarters looking over beyond my little lake to the San Gabriels. What a sight!

Here it is the middle of June, the hills are dry, but I can look down eastward and see the vines coming right along. The 1887 crop ought to be a good one.

This ranch life is good. When I arrived in San Francisco all the talk was "gold." The stuff was makin' people crazy. I could see land was where the money was. So, I invested in a couple of mines. The Comstock Lode made me a rich man. I became pretty important: I was the first president of the Pacific Coast Stock Exchange.

When I found this property, the Ran-

cho Santa Anita, I knew it was special. I know I'll be remembered -- maybe someday there will be a "Baldwin Avenue" or a "Baldwin Park," or even "Baldwin Hills."

A man can't help wondering what things will be like after he's gone. I do my share of thinking on the subject. I've tried mightily to think what the place will look like in 1986-one hundred years from now. I can't figure that one. Look at the changes I have brought about: vineyards, citrus, hotel, new town, railroad, and... does it make any difference? Not really. Just as long as folks recognize the natural beauty of my ranch and take good care of it. That is what really counts.



Sekovich, Wendy. 1975. "Plants of Rancho era recalled." *At the foundation* 1986:June-July, 2.

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