

LASCA NEWS

A periodic report from the Los Angeles State
and County Arboretum to the members of the
California Arboretum Foundation, Inc.
Arcadia, California

June 1954

The Queen Anne Cottage became Historical Landmark No. 367 upon unveiling by Aubrey Neasham, the Historian for the State of California, in ceremonies on the afternoon of May 18. Another highlight of the day was the first use of the entrance to the Arboretum at 501 North Baldwin Avenue. For those unable to attend the annual meeting and the dedication, a few notes on the day's events may be in order.

The 125 persons present at the meeting could have desired no more inspiring setting than the semi-circle beneath the fine old English white oak, with its gracefully swaying boughs filtering the sunlight and touching the shoulder of President Ayers as he rose to conduct the meeting. Superintendent George Spalding's report on the extensive planting within the year, and Doctor Seibert's promise that the Arboretum will be opened to the public on Sunday afternoons this coming autumn, gave proof of real progress. Preparation for the opening has included the graded forecourt and main public entrance to the Arboretum at 301 North Baldwin Avenue, where parking for 150 cars is provided, with the forecourt parking area extending north along the Arboretum to Colorado Boulevard, with space for parking 250 additional cars. Public restrooms, soon to be under construction, are scheduled for completion by fall.

At four o'clock the guests assembled outside the gleaming red and white Cottage, where Mrs. Richard Y. Dakin and Mrs. John R. Mage, co-chairmen of the Historical Committee, with Maurice Block, who had charge of restoration, Supervisor John Anson Ford, and Dr. Russell Seibert participated in the rites which marked the first triumph in this preservation of the romantic and colorful past. A great granddaughter of "Lucky" Baldwin, granddaughter of Anita, was present to view the splendor of the Cottage as it stood in its heyday. Lavish furnishings of the period, with restoration of some of the original marble, made the rooms opulent and resplendent, all that might be expected to be found within such a dazzling exterior. The Victorian garden, bringing memory of Charles Gibbs Adams who planned and planted it, was charming in the light and shadow of late afternoon. The pretty sight of the red-and-white costumed young girls offering songs of the "Lucky" Baldwin era, and the regalement at an attractively appointed out-door table, under the sponsorship of Mrs. Stanton and others of the Historical Committee, revived an atmosphere of hospitality akin to that of the entertaining for which the Rancho was renowned in earlier days.



The Hugo Reid Adobe by the lake is next on the restoration program. Mrs. James Greer, on behalf of the Santa Anita Chapter of the D. A. R., presented the Historical Committee with its second \$50 contribution toward the fund.

In his dedication remarks, Mr. Neasham expressed deep concern over the mass destruction of so many of our California historic sites, warning "The bulldozers are on the march in California." Special point to his statement is instanced in the bulldozer march now threatening the Arboretum in the form of the proposed Arcadia Wash system of drainage channels. When the Arboretum was master planned the question of placement of the Lima Avenue and Baldwin Avenue channels was taken into consideration with the Flood Control District. At that time the channel was routed down Baldwin Avenue, with County provision for sufficient land to provide for the channel and for screen planting on both sides. Now a critical situation arises with the discovery that the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers, in their preliminary plans, show the cut routed through the Arboretum grounds, virtually bi-secting the most important display area with an open channel 12 feet deep and 24 feet wide. Such a channel would not only destroy the unity of the grounds, but would create a hazard making the Arboretum unsafe for public enjoyment. On the eve of opening, hope is strong that such a catastrophe may be prevented.



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