

# LASCA NEWS

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

March, 1957

Cypripediums instead of Carrots! The new membership drive is sparked by the incentive of a lovely Cypripedium plant for each person who secures a new member for the Foundation. This offer is subject to the supply of plants on hand - so - hurry, hurry, hurry!

This month the glory of azaleas and camellias on the North Slope of Tallac Knoll is under vivid color competition from other sections, not only our Acacia collection on the Baldwin-Colorado corner and the Australian section, but also the wild flowers of the South African section (due west of the Gatehouse walk). Here the seemingly endless color combinations of composites, lilies, legumes and honeysuckles are dazzling hundreds of daily visitors at this geographical section. Most interesting is the Orange Greya. Flowering within the next two weeks will be the ice plants, aloes, puyas, and corals on Baldwin; the cymbidiums on Tallac Knoll; the bulb collection near the bird-feeding station, and the late winter annuals at the test and display section. Do not miss the ever-pungent Herb Garden with its pleasing formality of design. Even the peacocks are staging their yearly spring dance. Their exquisite plumage has a metallic appearance as though they might have stepped out of a rare Chinese brocade.

The "Flower Carpet" research project was launched in January. Its objective is to develop materials and techniques to allow growing of dwarf flowering plants on some material to provide a "carpet of flowers." The flower carpets may then be used in lieu of cut flowers for table decorations, weddings, and possibly even on floats in the Rose Parade. Promising results have been obtained from the first six weeks of study. The idea for this unique project originated with Dr. Went. The research is supported by a grant of \$8,860.00 from the Longwood Foundation, Inc. and Longwood Gardens.

Mr. Arthur Freed, the well-known producer of outstanding pictures at Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, and an enthusiastic orchid hobbyist, has accepted appointment to the Board of Trustees of the California Arboretum Foundation, Inc. and has become a Life Member. Mr. Freed is warmly welcomed by our Governing Board.

The Douglas Memorial Orchid Propagating House is nearing completion and should be filled with plants next month. It matches the Casamajor Orchid House which now houses the Arthur Freed Cypripedium collection. We are longing for the proposed orchid display house so that these beautiful flowers can be shown to the public.

A three-dimensional relief model of the Arboretum is being constructed to serve as a guide for the increasing number of visitors walking through the grounds. The model also will be used at Flower Shows, Fairs and Exhibits. The Arboretum has been invited to participate in the International Flower Show, the Palmdale Lilac Festival, and the State Convention of California Garden Clubs.





The Planning Committee has been holding meetings to consider schematic plans for the new Arboretum Administration Building Wing. This facility will provide space in the full basement for class rooms which can be converted to a lecture hall accommodating about 250 persons by opening folding partitions. This floor will be entered from the Gatehouse. The upper floor, on a level with the present Administration Buildings, will house the library and herbarium. Hopes are high that funds for this much-needed facility will be provided during the coming fiscal year.

The final Master Plan for the new Demonstration Model Home Gardens is now in sight. Following the landscape design contest in December, 1956, the four winning architects have held numerous sessions and combined their best ideas into one excellent final plan. It is hoped construction will be initiated on these gardens for home owners within a few months.

The Boy Scouts led the Arbor Day ceremonies on Thursday, March 7, honoring Luther Burbank's birthday. The Arbor Day ceremonies were presented by the Girl Scouts last spring.

At the request of the Palmdale Chamber of Commerce and the Palmdale Garden Club, the Arboretum expects to establish a test plot in that area this spring. Available land and water was located at the Sanitation District plant. The test plot will not only beautify the district plant, but will serve to determine new plants which can be successfully grown in the Mojave desert - a climate completely different from Arcadia. Palmdale, as many other sections of Southern California, is rapidly being sub-divided. In five years the population has climbed to 12,500 from 2,500. Predictions are for 16,000 by the end of this year. This all means more homes, more yards, and more need for diversity in planting material.

California Garden Clubs, Inc. has been granted office space in the former Administration Building for its State Headquarters. District 12 of this organization is planning a spring flower show at the Arboretum.

The "Death Valley Days" TV program will present the life of "Lucky Baldwin" in the near future, exact date still not known. The title is "The Man Who Was Never Licked." The time for this program is 7 P.M., Saturday, Channel 4. So watch for it - some background scenes were taken at the Arboretum.

In May two additional colored post cards will be added to the four now on sale. The subjects will be the Jeep Train and the Flower of a banana tree. Also available for sale this month will be a packet of eight color slides covering two each of historical, general, lagoon and horticultural subjects. These will sell for \$1.95 per packet, plus sales tax. These color packets of the Arboretum will provide not only a worthwhile addition to your own slide collection, but will make an outstanding gift for your friends from this locality.

The Educational section of the Arboretum is again offering courses for the public. There has been considerable popular interest in our Tree Identification class. This course is designed to acquaint children, Scouts, high school students, adult leaders of youth groups, and



people new to Southern California with many of the more common trees of this area. The nature of instruction is popular in style, the technical vocabulary explained by pictures and living examples. A feature of the 1957 Spring Session is that the course is divided into three age sections: February 4 to March 11 for children 10-14; March 18 to April 22 for high school level; April 29 to June 3 for adults. Weather permitting the class is held out of doors.

"Plants for Nature Study" is the title of Wednesday night class, held in the Administration Building lecture room. This course concerns fundamental botany. Youth leaders and biology teachers are encouraged to attend. It is hoped that in time the communities of Southern California will have trained leaders they may call upon to carry on nature study problems of their own, using the facilities of the Arboretum.

Dr. Louis B. Martin conducts the classes. Enrollment for all except the current Tree Identification class is still open.

Mr. Gerry Patten conducts two Botanical Sketching classes as another phase of the program. On Wednesday afternoons the class meets for high school students. Thursday mornings finds Mr. Patten instructing his adult members. The purpose of this course is two-fold: the students learn to sketch free hand and to "see" plants for the first time. Student drawings have been on display in the Administration Building entrance foyer.

Coming educational attractions include a course in herb gardening and the use of herbs. The course will be conducted by the Southern California Unit of the National Herb Society. This class will start near the end of April. Details of registration have yet to be completed.

Miss Frances Miner, Curator of Education for the Brooklyn Botanic Garden, will be with us in April to conduct nature study classes for children and also demonstration classes for adult leaders and teachers. The complete schedule for this outstanding educational opportunity is under consideration at the present time.

It is our plan to have several other special short courses or lectures of horticultural nature before the summer season. Each program will be announced in all newspapers. Please continue to watch for these news releases.

Bouquets and sincere thanks to the following for their ever-present interest in the Foundation:

Abbey Rents  
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Mr. James Giridlian  
Las Jardineras Garden Club  
Mrs. Ralph D. Sparks  
Simpson's Garden Town  
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