

PART I. Activities of the Department

During the past two year period, the Department has undergone substantial organizational changes. Effective July 1, 1961 these informal reorganizational changes will become official. There will then be five (5) major divisions -- Administrative Services, Education, Arboretum Development, Research, and Descanso Gardens. Therefore, all information in this report will be based on the new organization plan.

Descanso Gardens completed its three year probationary period and on February 28, 1961 the Board of Supervisors officially proclaimed the Gardens a part of the Department of Arboreta and Botanic Gardens. Additional information on this Division is described in Part II.

Initial grading for the Arboretum Entranceway Development began in February 1961. As of July 1, 1961 all grading had been completed and two pools constructed. Remaining work involves construction of the East-West walls and providing electricity. This project and other Arboretum development work is discussed in Part II under the Arboretum Development Division.

The Hugo Reid Adobe was completely restored and furnished and a formal dedication was held on May 5, 1961. The Old Fashioned Rose Garden was completed in the Spring of 1961 and additional plantings made in the Historical areas. This work is discussed in Part II under the Arboretum Development Division.

Attendance at both the Arboretum and Descanso Gardens has increased significantly over the preceding years. Total attendance for both installation for the 1960-61 fiscal years was 732,092, an increase of 20% over 1959-60. Attendance to educational courses has likewise experienced sharp increases. Additional information on these subjects can be found in Part II under the Education Division.

Research projects and activities including the Slow Burning Plant project are shown in Part II listed under the Research Division.

The Department activities and attendance have continued to increase markedly although the total budget and staff has had only a very nominal increase. See Part IV for Financial Report.

South Coast Botanic Garden

In response to numerous requests from the citizens of Los Angeles County, the Board of Supervisors took the following action which resulted in formation of the South Coast Botanic Garden.

"At the meeting of the Board of Supervisors on March 1, 1960, on motion of Supervisor Burton W. Chace, an order was adopted approving a recommendation of the Regional Planning Commission, as set forth in letter dated January 21, 1960, copy of which is attached, designating County Landfill No. I parcel in the Rolling Hills area of the County Sanitation District for use as a Coastal Botanical and Marine Garden. The designation is being made at this time even though it will be approximately four years before the area can be used for this purpose."

Accordingly on April 20, 1960, a tree planting dedication took place on the 87 acre future site of the garden. This will be the first coastal botanic garden in Southern California devoted to introduced plants.

In April of 1961 the Sanitation District completed fill on 3 acres of slope and turned this embankment over to this Department for test planting of ground covers. These have been made under the supervision of the Chief Horticulturist and planting ceremonies were held on April 8, 1961.

On April 28 the South Coast Botanic Garden Foundation, Incorporated was formed by a group of public spirited citizens to assist the Department in the development of the gardens. This is a non-profit organization which already has provided much support and help in making the earliest plantings.



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