

Library Services Provide Education and Outreach

It was a very good year.

1950 proved to be an exhilarating year for The Arboretum staff as interest in the institution grew and areas of research were initiated. W. Quinn Buck came aboard bringing his extensive collection of *Hemerocallis*. After this, test planting of *Eucalyptus* and *Acacia* was established on the grounds, and cooperative research projects were undertaken. The first cooperative project was with the United States Department of Agriculture for testing of potential cortisone-producing plants. Other agencies included the

United States Soil Conservation Service, the University of Southern California School of Pharmacy and the California Highway Department for freeway planting research. Earlier in the year, education and outreach were identified as an important focus of The Arboretum. A library committee, to serve the library that opened in 1948, was appointed by the California Arboretum Foundation (CAF) with an initial concentration on subtropical horticulture.

Library services became more and more important to Arboretum staff members during this period. Frans Verdoon, the first Arboretum Director, had procured the first 1,000 volumes to stock the shelves in 1948. By 1951 the library, in addition to other books and periodicals, boasted 46 volumes of photocopies of all the literature on begonias published throughout the world, donated by author Helen Krauss. The collection consisted of the entire body of work that served as research for her book, *Begonias for American Homes and Gardens*.

Today, the library is seen as an incredible resource by members of the general public. Primarily horticultural and botanic, the collection also includes smaller selections on related sciences, such as natural history and California history. Home gardeners looking for cultivation information, writers researching specific plants and ornamental horticulture and landscape architecture students are just a few examples of people who use the library as a primary resource.

The instant a visitor walks through the doors of the library, there is that glorious feeling, known only to committed library users, of being confronted with almost unlimited knowledge spread on tables and resting in the stacks. Presiding over this seemingly bottomless store of information is Plant Science Librarian, Joan DeFato.

For more than 20 years she has kept up with the fast mounting flow of information using every possible resource to service Arboretum staff and visitors.

DeFato keeps up with her profession and her constituents by serving on the Board of Directors of the Pacific Horticultural Foundation, publisher of *Pacific Horticulture*. She is a Past President of the Council on Botanical and Horticultural Libraries, and is on the board, and membership secretary, for the Southern California Horticultural Society. She is also on the board, and Membership Director, of the Southern California Chapter of Special Libraries Association. The Library is of significant benefit to those in the community with or without a special interest in botany and horticulture," said CAF Board President Donald R. Deise. "The Arboretum is fortunate in the fact that we have so much talent in our professional staff, and Joan DeFato is a prime example of this talent."

Beyond the call of duty is the way Joan DeFato works. If there is a question she will probably have an answer, and if she doesn't, she will help you find it.

1997 is a very good year at The Arboretum. Make it the year to enjoy all of the benefits of this great institution by using it as a primary learning opportunity in your life.

"We are the children of our landscape; it dictates behavior and even thought in the measure to which we are responsive to it."

Lawrence Durrell

The library is open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday and Saturday from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. To contact Joan DeFato call 818/821-3213. Or e mail at Callcafarb@aol.com

Environmental Education Fair

The 17th Annual Environmental Education Fair is held at The Arboretum on Saturday, March 15, from 9 am to 4 pm. It is sponsored by state environmental education grant funds in conjunction with Conservation Week and draws more than 3,000 visitors annually.

The day includes an extensive program beginning with an academic competition.

More than 60 educational and environmental exhibitors will entertain and inform visitors of all ages with hands-on natural science projects.

Presentation of the Green City Grant special recognition awards funded by the Oak Tree

Foundation and sponsored by the California Arboretum Foundation will be given for planting trees in schools and public areas.

The Environmental Education Fair provides a rare opportunity to share a day of outdoor beauty at The Arboretum while becoming environmentally aware. Don't miss it! (Arboretum fees apply - reference calendar)





Durrell, Lawrence. 1997. "Library services provide education and outreach." *Arboretum News* 1997:spring, 10.

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Holding Institution

Missouri Botanical Garden, Peter H. Raven Library

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Los Angeles Arboretum

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