



FRIENDS OF
SHORE ACRES

©

Volume V, No. 4

Quarterly Journal - Summer 1992

One Dollar

A Special Sunday

Rose
Sunday
on
Father's
Day drew

hundreds to the All America Rose Display Garden, where George Guthrie, and Rose Society volunteers Ray Duskin, Helen Doving, Alice Hobbs, and Helen Harris answered visitors' questions about roses.

A typical question at Shore Acres is "How can you grow such beautiful roses this close to the ocean?"



The fragrance of a rose is hard to resist.



Dads, moms, and families enjoy the All America Rose Display Garden.

George's typical answer is, "You can't." *But they do.*

Besides getting their questions answered, visitors enjoyed refreshments in the Garden House where volunteers had created a "Where Were You in '42" display in anticipation of Shore Acres State Park's upcoming 50th anniversary.



Photos by Luis Velasquez

FRIENDS OF SHORE ACRES, INC.

Quarterly Journal
published fall, winter, spring, summer

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Connie Eslinger, President-Elect
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Editor's notes



ummer has evaporated! As I look at the calendar, I realize we have less than 90 days until we begin stringing holiday lights in the Garden. And before that happens, there will be more digging, more wiring, more garden night lights installed in the Oriental pond area, a new Gift and Information Center under construction - and if I'm lucky - this *Journal*, and one more, published and sent to you.

Throw in the Friends of Shore Acres annual meeting September 8th (our year runs from September to August); the annual State Parks' Co-op Conference in October; on-going projects like the viewbook and interpretive signs; new lights sculptures to create; and all those lights to check - we are going to be very, very, very busy! Keep your phone lines open. We will be calling you for help.

A couple of weeks ago, we sent our annual *lights pledge letter* to supportive businesses and organizations in the community. The first pledge checks - and some very nice notes - arrived by return mail. (Names will be published in the Autumn *Journal* and in the display window next to the Gift and Information Center.) We are very gratified that so many people are willing to help support the Holiday Lights and Open House. Without the help of the whole community, what has become a *community tradition*, would not happen. The number of volunteer hours is awesome - about 4500 hours last year.

Not only are we getting ready for December's holiday lights, we are also preparing for Shore Acres State Park's 50th Anniversary, which just happens to fall on December 10th, the date we open the 6th Annual Holiday Lights and Open House. *Look for the golden garden this season..*

WE (all of us who live on the south coast and those who visit) are so fortunate to have such wonderful parks. The *dedication* of Ron Hjort and Andy LaTomme and all who work and volunteer for the parks in the Sunset Bay Park District *makes our part* of Oregon Parks and Recreation *truly remarkable*.



Don't miss . . . Volunteer Picnic . . . Park Notes . . . Garden Concert . . . Adventures in Garden Wonderland . . . What's New at Shore Acres . . . Cape Arago/Shore Acres Memories . . . Shore Acres Memorials . . . Calendar . . . Gift and Information News . . . and Membership.



Picnic for Members and Volunteers



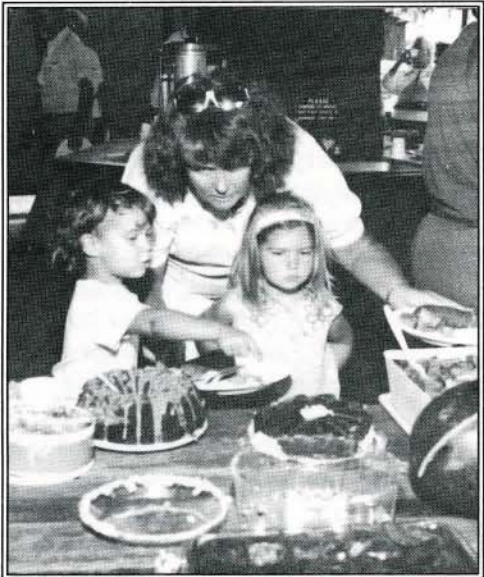
While Doris Emmett (right) hurries for more supplies, and Dick Van Natta looks on, Glenn Stone explains the mysteries of Andy LaTomme's grill to Claire Kinman, who is patiently waiting for a hamburger. Phyllis Shelly, in the background, enjoys the sun and visiting with other volunteers.

Doris, Claire and Phyllis are all part of a hardworking core of volunteers that work in the Gift and Information Center on weekends. They also help with the annual holiday lights and many other activities, as does *Friends* board member Dick Van Natta.

Glenn and Dorothy Stone of Arab, Alabama, were volunteer park hosts for Sunset Bay Campground during June. They joined the *Friends* and volunteered weekdays at Shore Acres -- she ran the G.a.I.C. while he showed the multi-image slide program, *The Shore Acres Story*, five times a day, to visitors in the Garden House. When the Stones heard about the *Friends* picnic for members and volunteers, Glenn said, "I'll help cook." He got the job!



New member Glenn Stone cooks hamburgers and hot dogs for the picnic.



What to choose?!



About 40 people attended the picnic, which was held at the Sunset Bay Gazebo, and everyone had a good time visiting and comparing volunteer stories. According to some of the volunteers, "if you want to hear some interesting questions and comments from visitors, just spend a day volunteering in the Gift and Information Center."

The *Friends* provided the hamburgers, hot dogs, condiments, soft drinks, potato chips, coffee, and table service. *Members and volunteers brought scrumptious salads and delectable desserts.*

Dick and Mary Jo Jamsgard, who volunteer in the G.a.I.C. and help during the holidays, were taking care of the Stinchfield grandchildren that day. Mary Jo (left) tries to help Megan and Annie decide on dessert. It was tough - so much to choose from!

A special thanks to all who attended, all who helped, and to Luis Velasquez for taking pictures.



Thank you, summer camp hosts.

June - Dorothy and Glenn Stone

July - Julie and Arch Brown

August - Virginia & Louie Thiring

PARK NOTES

by Andy LaTomme, Sunset Bay Park District Manager



just finished reading a book with the ponderous, uninspired and bureaucratese title

Oregon's Highway Park System, 1921-1989, An Administrative History.

Fortunately, the contents are more exciting than the title. Larry Merriam, a volunteer historian, and David Talbot, our former director, have combined efforts to update Chester H. Armstrong's long-out-of-print *History of Oregon State Parks*. They do it well, managing to leave out the long lists of permits, expenditure tables and plaque texts which Mr. Armstrong felt were so necessary in 1965.

Some of the most interesting reading was the section containing Mr. Talbot's personal views of the park system. It is filled with anecdotes, insights into his park philosophies which guided our agency into national prominence and his observations and reminiscences about thirty years with Oregon State Parks. Of the restoration of Shore Acres, he writes in part :

In the 1970s, I looked at the once outstanding formal garden of the Louis Simpson estate known as "Shore Acres" and said to myself, "We ought to do this one right." . . . We decided to pour a lot of money into bringing it back, and I'm glad we did.

The book will be on sale in the Friends' new Gift and Information Center in time for Christmas giving.

Next year, those park visitors who court the literary muse may well write: "This was



the summer of our discontent."

The proposed fee increases, which will raise \$6 million in revenue for the 1993-1995 budget, should provide their inspiration: A \$3 per night campsite fee increase plus a \$2 per night additional fee at selected destination-type campgrounds (like Sunset Bay); a \$2 increase in the reservation fee; and a \$3 per vehicle day use entry fee at 34 parks.

Does \$18 a night seem like a lot of money, even for a great camping experience in a superb park like Sunset Bay? I can't argue with you about that. However, let me share some important but possibly obscure facts:

Camping has increased 40% and day use attendance is up 12% since 1980, yet there are fewer employees now than in the 1970s.



Summer park conservation

aides - Jon Myhre and Aaron McNeill - at Shore Acres provide some of the all important care needed to keep the Gardens in superb shape. Both are college students -- Jon at South-western Oregon Community College and Aaron at Oregon State University.

Outdated buildings and utility systems are failing and do not meet current structural, plumbing, electrical and accessibility codes. (Come out to the park sometime and ask me for a tour.)

For the present, the Parks Commission rejected other budget control options such as closing parks because of the resulting overcrowding of other parks and reduction of the State Parks' \$350 million annual economic impact to Oregon's tourism industry; and asking the legislature to increase the RV registration fee which already provides 28% of our revenue.

Two years ago the state General Fund supplied 22% of our revenue -- now it provides only 15%. State financial support to our parks system declined long before Measure 5.

Continued page 5



PARK NOTES

(Continued from page 4)

Oh, there is one more fact that you should know:

The additional \$6 million revenue that these proposed fee increases will raise brings our 1993-1995 budget up to a level which is \$2.4 million *below* the current budget.

Well, perhaps when the next Oregon State Parks' history is written, the author will have to plagiarize Charles Dickens: "It was the best of times, it was the worst of times . . ."



If you'd like to take quill in hand, we'd appreciate your comments. Write to: Public Relations, Oregon State Parks, 525 Trade St. S.E., Salem OR 97310.

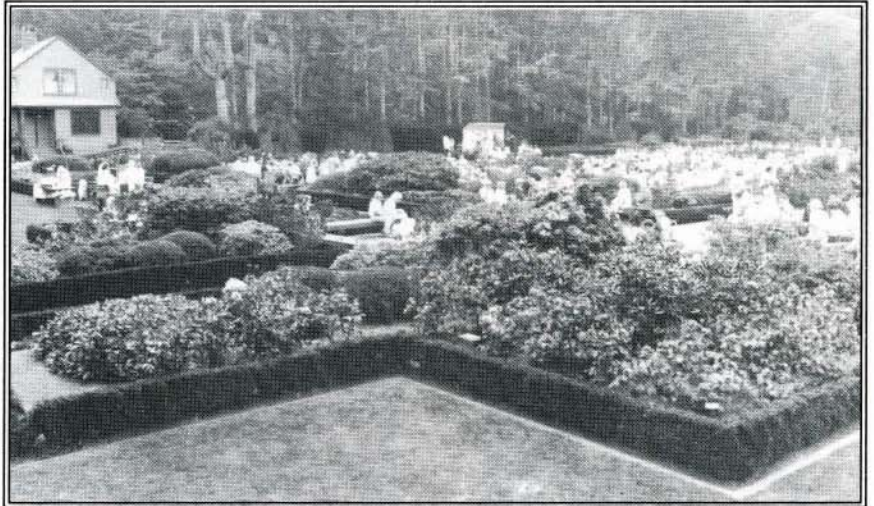
Randy

All Time High

416,000 visitors at Shore Acres State Park in the period between July 1, 1991 and June 30, 1992 - a 21% increase over the previous year

*How many times
did you visit?*

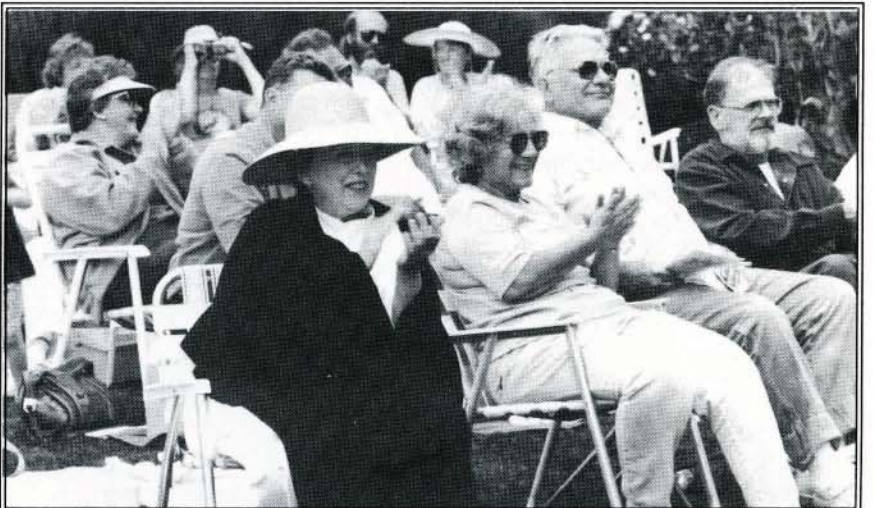
Garden Concert at Shore Acres



A perfect day for the Oregon Coast Music Festival Garden Concert.



Friends sold raspberry and chocolate sundaes, lemonade, coffee.



Enjoyment of the concert was evident!

Adventures in Garden Wonderland

by George Guthrie, Landscape Maintenance Superintendent



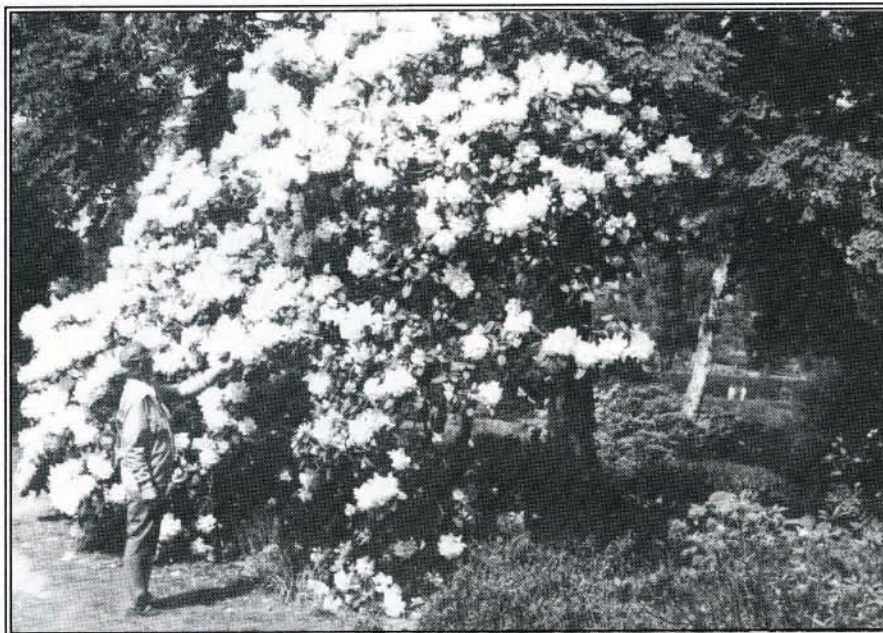
Some random thoughts on my recent trip to England or "George's

Adventures in Garden Wonderland."

First of all, some personal misconceptions that I unlearned while "on holiday" (as the 'Brits' call vacation) in the United Kingdom.

1.) Traditional wisdom to the contrary - just like in Oregon - it does **not** rain all the time over there. In fact, just like here, the whole country was in the middle of a hot dry spell, which the media constantly referred to as the worst drought in two centuries - so much for all the rain gear and sweaters we brought. Nevertheless, it made for some very nice (if somewhat sticky) weather to go tramping about the countryside.

2.) Despite the fact that England is a small country with a large population, it does not seem overcrowded. At least in southern England (Devon and Cornwall) we drove through miles of *beautiful* farmland, woods, meadows, etc., which looked and "felt" a lot like western Oregon. The coastline itself was not unlike parts of Coos and Curry Counties - except not so heavily forested. Actually, I felt very much at home there except that the country roads were **very** narrow, people



Giant rhododendron in Royal Horticulture Society's Garden at Wisley.

drove the "wrong" side of the narrow road **very** fast (all rather unnerving to fainthearted tourists from *Orygun*) and, worse still, the beer was *warm* - cold drinks of **any** sort being an apparently suspect innovation.

Well, enough of my "colonial" carping. It was the gardens I came to see and they were generally fantastic in quantity

and quality. Public and private gardens of Shore Acres caliber were all over the place - very well tended by their gardeners and equally well attended by visitors, both foreign and domestic. One big difference - you do pay to get in - about \$6 American - and that fee is in place every day. Garden hopping in merry olde England is definitely not a *cheap date* as we say in the States.



Yes, it's a rhododendron!

What was my favorite garden? Well, every one I saw had something super to scope out, but the one that really impressed me most was the Royal Horticultural Society's display garden at Wisley (about 40 miles from London). It was **incredible**. Imagine Shore Acres Gardens multiplied by **10** and you would get some impression of its size and quality. In a full day of **fast** walking, we only touched the surface of all there was to see in greenhouses, rock gardens, herbaceous borders, rhododendron displays, etc., etc. - **too much**.

(Continued page 7)



Adventures . . .

(Continued from page 6)

Speaking of size, the Society's new "gift and information" center is about the size of an American supermarket - with all the books, pictures, and similar goodies you'd ever want - an absolutely fantastic place to buy expensive articles at unfavorable exchange rates - but that's what vacations are for!

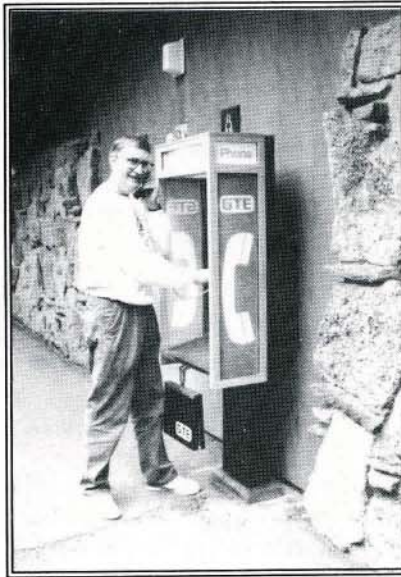
Like Shore Acres, many of the gardens in England started out as private estates, which later became open to the public. Because the climate is similar, most of the basic plants in cultivation are very similar to those you see here - escallonia hedges, English holly (naturally), rhododendrons, azaleas, camellias, Monterey pine and Cypress windbreaks (gorse and Scotch brooms along the roadways, too). Our native "Doug fir" and Sitka spruce are widely planted for forestry purposes, as well as other natives like Oregon grape (which they call "mahonia") and ceanothus (our "deer brush").

One other Oregon native, which they especially love and which almost every garden worthy of the name displays for its "*magnificent green foliage and noble yellow flower*" (I'm quoting what one garden guide says), is - what else? - our own delightful and delicious Skunk Cabbage!! No kidding - they love that sucker. If I had thought to bring over a few truckloads from Sunset Bay, I probably could have paid for the trip several times over. In addition to the familiar stuff though, there were beautiful plants of all kinds from through-out the world - many that are rare or non-existent in cultivation here. We hope we can find ways of introducing some to our neck of the woods.

George

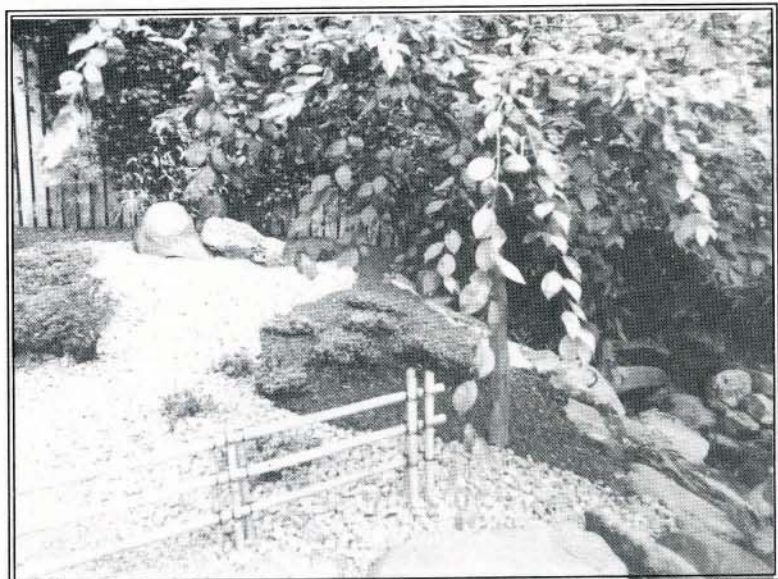
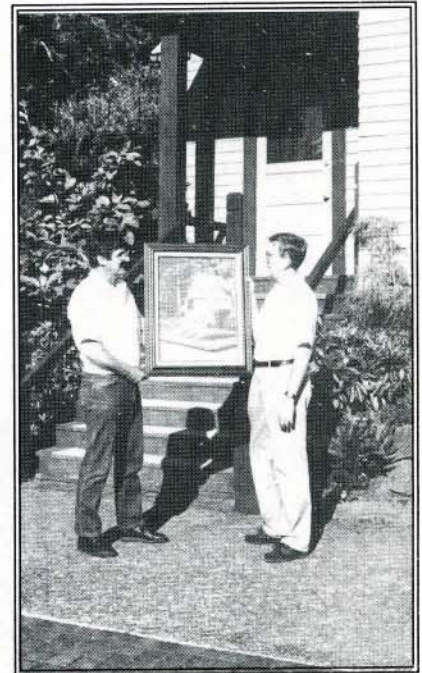
P.S. Watch for *More on English Gardens* - in our next issue.

What's new at Shore Acres?



A new public phone near the restrooms will make it easier to handle visitors' needs and emergencies. It also will make it possible to install a private phone in the new Gift and Information Center.

Local artist Jim Davenport has given the Friends and Shore Acres State Park an original oil painting of the Garden House. The painting is on display in the house and may be viewed during the week when the house is open.



Check out the new landscaping in the Oriental Garden.

Cape Arago / Shoreacres Memories

by Grace Lark



I married Leo Cooper on April 26, 1937 and we came to the Coos Head CCC (Civilian Conservation Corps) camp where he was in charge of about 50 men. L.J. Simpson had donated the land at Cape Arago to the Oregon State Parks Department.

On a knoll above the park, a beautiful log cabin was under construction. It had a full basement made of hand hewn rock. In the middle of the circular drive-way was a concrete fountain, fashioned after a stump of a large tree. The log house had an enclosed back porch, a kitchen with space for a small dining table, a living room, a back hall, one bathroom and two bedrooms. The master bedroom had a very large walk-in closet with a window. There was no fireplace -- only a wood cook stove with a coil in the fire box to heat water.

We moved into the cabin on September 29, 1937. On October 28, 1938, I gave birth to a baby girl -- Charlene Anita Cooper (now Mrs. Don Messerle, who lives locally at West Catching Inlet, Coos Bay).

My first encounter with Mr. L.J. Simpson and Lela Simpson was when they came to visit my house. I was paring vegetables at the sink and had to dry my hands. Louis Simpson kissed by hand when I opened the door -- this completely unnerved me.

I really was fond of the Simpsons and their children, Geraldine and Barbara. They were avid readers and so was I. They got *Look* and *Life*. I bought *Colliers*, *Saturday Evening Post*, and *Good Housekeeping*. Mr. Simpson was well educated and liked to discuss

current affairs and political issues and items of interest in community.

Charlene and I visited the Simpson Mansion every week. They had electricity and a phone and we did not. Lela insisted that I bring my ironing down there to do. (My washing machine was a gasoline powered one, so I could do my washing.) I went each week and ironed -- a lot of little white dresses. Mrs. Simpson and I would visit as I ironed and I really liked her.

Mansion #2 was lovely, but sparsely furnished. In the living room was a massive fireplace and very large davenport -- Mr. Simpson was a large man and required large furniture. I remember the beautiful entrance hall. The dining room was beautiful too because the sea was just *there*.



Charlene Cooper Messerle on the front porch of Mansion #2 with Pam, Ginger and Kurt Von Appenzell.

The gardens were wild and unkempt -- beautiful like a fantasy secret garden. They had a gardener who took care of a vegetable garden and assisted Mrs. Simpson with firewood. If she entertained the Oregon State Highway Commission, he helped her a lot. She was an enterprising woman and an

excellent cook - at times serving mussels and garden vegetables. There were no servants. She and L.J. and the girls did the work. It was a very large house. I saw beautiful bedrooms and was most impressed with the closets of Port Orford cedar. One could hang a garment that smelled of heavy smoke in the closet and it would smell clean in two or three days. Unlike mansion #1, there was no ballroom or swimming pool and the Simpsons seldom entertained.

I do not know if Lela worked in the gardens, but she loved flowers as did L.J. They were a perfect compliment to each other. I was very happy to be in their presence.

The CCC did many activities at Cape Arago: tree planting, trails to the South, Middle, and North Bay; construction of outdoor stoves, tables and chairs; restrooms; and construction of a lookout that you can still see the base of. When they had a full compliment of CCC men, there could be as many as 250 working on those nice trails. They accomplished a great great deal.

I saw some terrific storms while we lived at Cape Arago. The Bandon light was an active working light that I could see. Three sides of my house faced the ocean. I saw lights on the ships disappear with high seas, and later reappear. Sometimes we even had chunks of light brown foam on our windows.

One of my visitors was Samuel Boardman, a huge man who was the Oregon State Parks Superintendent. He brought Jessie L. Honeyman as a guest--a tiny woman about 4'10" and under 100 pounds from Glasgow, Scotland. She endowed the land for Woahink and Cleawox Lake. He was quite a charmer who wooed people who had money to donate land for parks.

(Continued page 9)



Shore Acres Memorials

John Bergen

Ellen Garner
Dick & Catherine Lauer
David & Shirley Bridgham
Robert & Shirley Williams
Peggy Maguire
Dorothy Vaughn

Joe Dronzek

Elizabeth J. Dronzek

Bill Grant

Anita Grant

Bea Hall

Howard Hall

Robert Hobbs

Alice Hobbs

Viola Larson

David & Shirley Bridgham

Earle Livingston

Brecke Family

Mr. Pennington

Beti Pennington

Ward Robertson

David & Shirley Bridgham

Phil Ryan

Don & Margaret Burdg

Ellen Stinchfield

David & Shirley Bridgham

Memorial funds will be used for a Memorial Fountain in the center of the Gardens.

CALENDAR

-  **September 8**
Annual Meeting - Election/ Board Garden House - 7:30 p.m.
-  **September 19**
Bay Areas Fun Festival Parade
Watch for *Shore Acres 50th Anniversary Float*
-  **October 9-11**
Annual State Parks Co-Op Conference Flying M Ranch
-  **October 13**
Board Meeting - Election/Officers SWOCC - 7:30 p.m.
-  **October 25**
Open House / Refreshments Garden House Noon - 5 p.m.
On Display - Shore Acres Commemorative Quilt
-  **November 10**
Board Meeting SWOCC - 7:30 p.m.
-  **November 21 and 22**
Preliminary set-up Holiday House and Garden 10 a.m. - dusk
-  **November 27, 28, and 29**
Continue Holiday set-up 10 a.m. - dusk
-  **December 5 and 6**
Complete Holiday set-up 10 a.m. - dusk
-  **December 10**
50th Anniversary of Shore Acres State Park
and Opening Night of Holiday Lights
-  **December 10 - January 3**
6th annual Holiday Lights and Open House
More than 100,000 Lights
4 p.m. - 10 p.m. every night (including Christmas Eve,
Christmas, New Year's Eve, and New Year's

Cape Arago / Shoreacres Memories (Continued from page 8)

Cape Arago was a lonely place, but I would walk to the beach every day and I was surrounded with beauty. I know Louis and Lela Simpson would be overjoyed at the beauty of the parks and how well they are kept up.

We moved away December 7, 1941, the day our world turned around. There were many men stationed at Shore Acres. My husband was stationed at Camp Coos Head at Charleston. ■

***If you want to help check
holiday lights, call
756-5401
and leave a message.***

Gift and Information Center News

by Tony Mason, Manager



new item at the Gift and Information Center is available for *Friends* members only. It's

a forest green ceramic mug (10 oz.) with the Friends of Shore Acres logo etched into it -- bringing out the white color of the ceramic. The mug sells for \$7 (with the member discount already figured in the price). It's not on display, so you need to ask for it and show your *Friends of Shore Acres* membership card. In the coming year, I hope to develop at least two more *Friends Only* items. Watch this *Journal* for announcements.

Speaking of new, if you haven't read Andy's column, make sure you do. There's some exciting news concerning the future of the Gift and Information Center, or as we call it -- the G.a.I.C.

Also, we have in stock the 50th anniversary, etched clear

glass mugs -- in 10 oz. and 20 oz. sizes -- and a 24% lead crystal vase. You have to see them!

Six historical postcards are now printed and on display. They show the first mansion (on the cliff) in its two phases, two interior photos, one of the second mansion (on the cliff, so it can be compared to the cards of the first home) and one of the gardener's cottage. With all six, you have a quick history of L. J. Simpson's Shoreacres Estate.

In the next issue of this *Journal* I will give a brief report on how the year went for the G.a.I.C. and what to expect for the holiday season.



Rose Slevoigh helps visitors from Tokyo - Sumie Kanahara and Masami Yamamoto.

So, come on out to the park and see what's going on. Our volunteers will be looking forward to seeing you.

50th Anniversary Poster

On December 10th, Shore Acres State Park will celebrate its 50th anniversary. A beautiful commemorative poster has been designed by State Parks' graphic artist Kevin Kohler. The four-color poster is a limited edition and each one is signed by the artist. It is on display at the Gift and Information Center and sells for \$25.

You can get a poster two ways.

You can buy the poster at the GaIC or order it by mail.
(GaIC Mail Order, P.O. Box 1172, Coos Bay OR 97420)

Or you can send a memorial contribution in the name of a loved one (\$25 or more) to the Friends, and you will receive, by mail, a poster as a personal token of remembrance.

Poster sales proceeds and memorial contributions will go toward a new fountain in the center of the Gardens.

G.a.I.C. Hours *

Mon - Fri 11 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Sat - Sun Noon - 5 p.m.

An excellent selection of garden books, children's books, cook-books, notecards, postcards, coffee mugs, audio/video tapes, posters, t-shirts, sweatshirts, holiday items, etc. - all available at "favorable" exchange rates!

* Hours are dependent on available volunteers; if you'd like to help, call Ellen Garner at 888-3484.

**Welcome New and
Returning Members** ☆
☆ Since the Spring *Journal*

Your mailing label is coded.

If you have a "2" your
membership is current until
December 31, 1992.

If you have a "3" your
membership is current until
December 31, 1993.

SPONSOR

Bechtold & Laird, P.C.
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Keith & Darlene Wingfield

INDIVIDUAL

Olga Ann Crnkovich
Dorothy E. Curtis
Carol J. Knapp
Tony Mason



There's still time to see the glorious dahlias at Shore Acres.



**Be sure to try out the new garden guides
created and published by the Friends
in cooperation with Sunset Bay Park District
this summer: "A Guide to the Annuals"
which also includes a map of the Gardens;
and a "Dahlia Guide" that "keys in"
the names the dahlias.**

**You will find the guides in the brochure rack
next to the Gift and Information Center.**



MEMBERSHIP

Friends of Shore Acres, Inc. is a
private non-profit organization
with tax-exempt status. Its
purpose is to participate in
interpretive, educational and
physical development programs
with Sunset Bay Park District.

**Membership runs from
January 1st to December 31st.**

As a member, you will receive a
membership card, *Friends* decals
and our quarterly *Journal*. You
also receive a 10% discount on
sales items if you show your
membership card at the *Gift and*

Information Center. To become a
member or to renew your
membership, fill out the
application form and return with
your check or money order to
Friends of Shore Acres, Inc., P.O.
Box 1172, Coos Bay OR 97420.



☐ \$10 Individual

☐ \$25 Patron

☐ \$100 Benefactor

☐ \$500 Life

☐ \$15 Family

☐ \$50 Sponsor

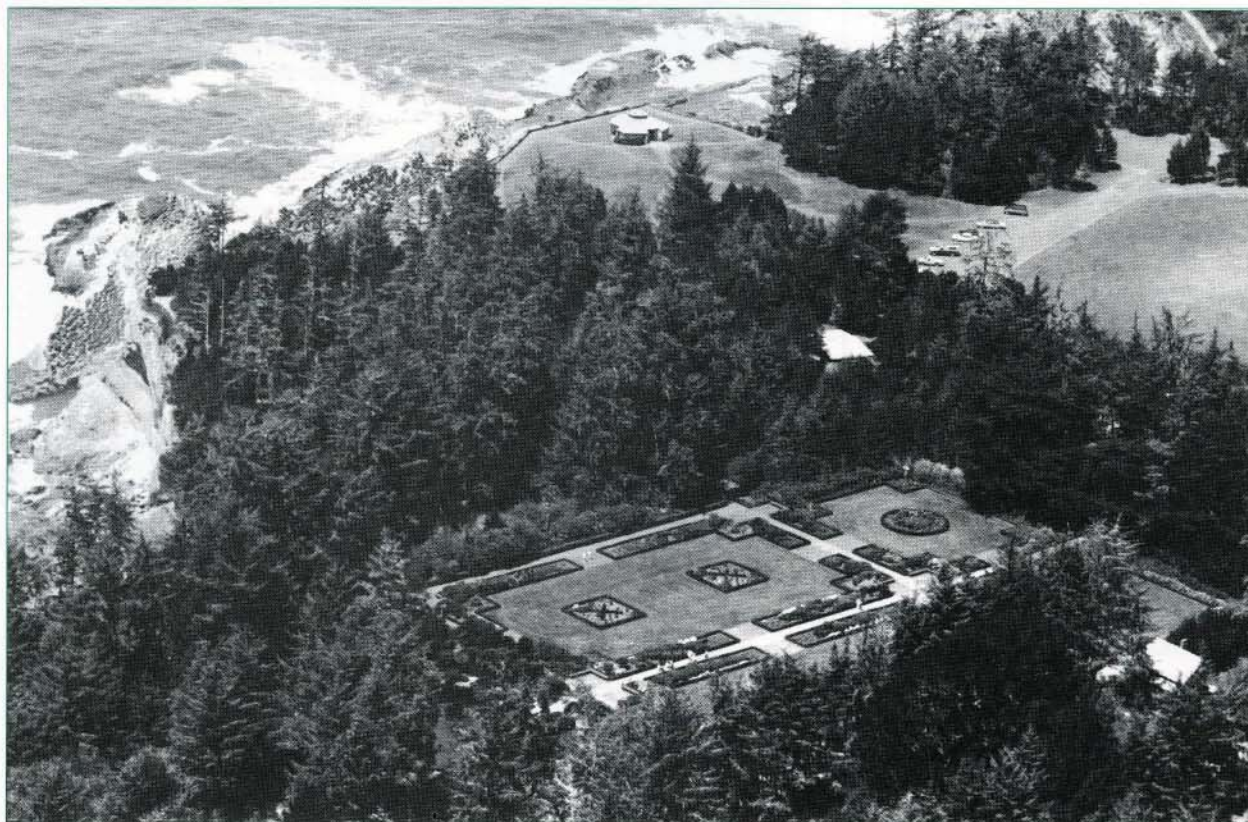
☐ \$250 Sustaining

☐ Gift

Name / Address / Phone _____



Printed by South Coast Printing



OPEN HOUSE - SUNDAY, OCTOBER 25
On Display - Shore Acres Commemorative Quilt
Created by Shirley Hammar - Refreshments

50th Anniversary of Shore Acres State Park - December 10
6th annual Holiday Lights and Open House
More than 100,000 Lights
December 10, 1992 - January 3, 1993

Friends of Shore Acres, Inc.
P.O. Box 1172
Coos Bay, OR 97420

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