

24/4/45

BEATRIX FARRAND
THE VALLEY CLUB OF MONTECITO
P. O. BOX 1140
SANTA BARBARA, CALIFORNIA
April 17, 1945
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Very dearest Mildred:

You are fond of doing constructive and wise work, and therefore you will be glad to know that the Botanic Garden really seems to be standing on a firm foundation and that the whole spirit of the Garden has completely changed in the last year. The meetings which used to be somewhat prickly, and where objections were raised to every improvement or alteration which implied money or effort, are now greeted with interest, and frequently are carried through with voluntary help from the Trustees who were rather doubtful and Thomas-like before. For instance, at the last meeting a survey was needed for the south end of the Garden in order to be able to place accurately a new circulatory road which should surround the whole Garden for purposes of communication and for reduction of hand labor. The Board was told that the survey would cost about \$100., and before the words were out of the speaker's mouth four promises of \$25. each assured the survey, and the group was as pleased as though they themselves had been given a present instead of helping on a machine which is now well oiled and in good running order.

It is quite touching to see Mr. Van Rensselaer's satisfaction in the whole change of the set-up, and the temper of the Board.

You also will like to know that at the party after the big meeting (which incidentally was crammed to the doors) a good many people made the trip around the Garden, and yesterday, which was Santa Barbara's own day at the Garden, all records were broken as 1147 people came to see the flowers in spite of lack of gas and the difficulty of getting about. The previous high mark had been 600. The beauty of the Garden was ravishing. Just enough white strawberry blossoms in the big central lawn to give brilliance without being spectacular or over-dressed. Then a frill around the edge of golden coreopsis and orange poppies, and behind this picture the big oaks in bud with their new leaves of tender green, and the great mountain with its gray pines finishing the picture. We wished very much you might have been there, but your spirit was there, and the Garden will carry it on as long as "grass grows and water runs".

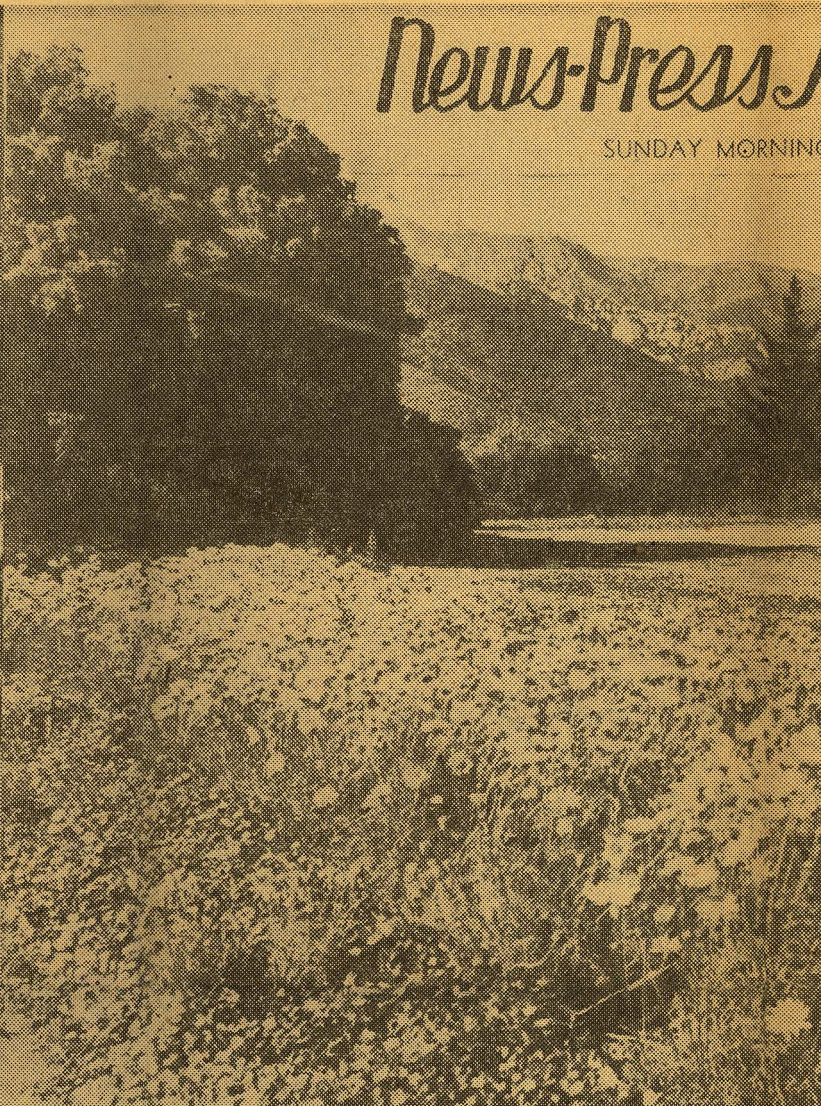
Max has not been quite so well lately so we thought it wise to spare him the long journey until he gets stronger. Excellent Dr. Wills is looking after him, and both Max and I have complete confidence in his skill and judgment. So how could we be better off anywhere?

Mr. Thacher writes me that Dumbarton was overwhelmed by visitors on the last open day, and that he and you and I must think of something in the way of paving to offset the wear on the grass walks of the rose garden, the herbaceous border and the fountain terrace.

Each night as I go out on the little terrace at our cottage a little prayer of thanks and gratitude to you goes up as I look out on the quiet slope, the wide sea and its rocky islands beyond -- and just now the new moon shining through the oak trees.

Your ever devoted -

Trix



Guests Thrill to Beauty Of Botanic Garden Visit

Santa Barbara Botanic Garden, at the height of its Spring beauty, was the gathering place Friday afternoon for the Board of Directors and members and their guests on the occasion of the annual meeting of the organization. Unusually fine weather added a filip to the reception and made a tour of the famed place memorable.

The guests had their choice of taking a personal tour of the gardens under the supervision of the director, Maunsell Van Rensselear, and seeing color pictures of California wildflowers taken and shown by Hugh Dearing in the Blaksley Library. Each one of the color pictures was a work of art, and in the garden the wild strawberry meadow, the many varieties of ceanothus in shades of blue and lavender, and the wildflowers everywhere were brilliant in the bright sunlight.

The Campbell trail led down

across the creek past the Lassiter Rock named for Maj. General William Lassiter, USA (Ret.), president of the Botanic Garden. Benches in strategic landscape positions invited guests to reverie.

Mission Creek has worn a channel so deep that great sycamores and other trees barely reach the top of the cliffs.

The mountains form a thrilling backdrop to the meadow, and pines and oaks from shelter and a border. Everywhere there is great natural beauty and what man has wrought has been harmonious.

The guests were greeted by the Trustees during the tea hour. Mrs. Frederic S. Gould, and Miss Ellen Chamberlain were hostesses. Officers besides Gen. Lassiter are Mrs. Anne Stow Fithian, vice president, Frederick B. Kellam, secretary; William Boddy, treasurer; Mrs. Robert Woods Bliss, Mrs. Beatrix Farland, Mrs. Gould, Mrs. Oakleigh Thorne, Miss Chamberlain, Walter Briggs, Sellar Bullard, Lockwood de Forest, Elliot Rogers and L. Stuart Wing.

Today is Santa Barbara day at the Garden and all are welcome. Those who have color film for their cameras will be rewarded.



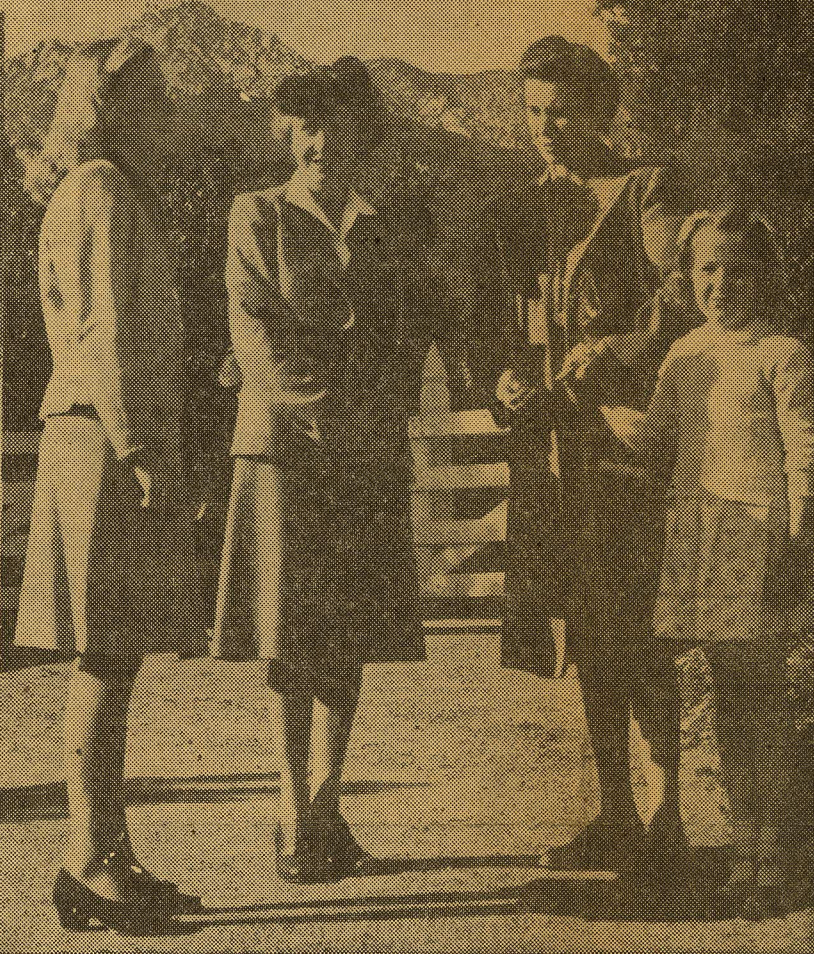
Santa Barbara's famed Botanic Garden in Mission Canyon opened today with special guides, was the setting Friday

for the annual meeting of trustees with many guests invited. Top row, left to right: Mrs. Warner Edmonds, Mrs. Sam-

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MORNING, APRIL 15, 1945



trus-
 ited.
 Mrs. Sam-
 uel B. Burnham, Col. Henry T. Bull, USA, (Ret.) and Mr. Edmonds; center, the wild strawberry meadow; right, Miss Patricia Van Rensselear, Mrs. Maunsell Van Rensselear, wife of the director of the Garden; Inglis. Bottom row: Frederick B. Kellam, Mrs. Frederic Saltonstall Gould and George Stebbins in Blaksley library; Charles Hague, Maj. Gen. William Lassiter, president of the trustees, and Mrs. Lassiter.—News-Press photos.