

Shore Acres and Friends - A Brief History



Simpson's First Mansion - circa 1910

Some of the important dates and events in the history of Shore Acres - from Louis Simpson's grand estate to Oregon State Parks' "Showcase" and the ongoing partnerships of the Friends of Shore Acres, OPRD and others to continue and enhance Simpson's legacy. More detailed information including books and videos on the history and natural history available in the Friends' Information & Gift Center.

541-888-2472 - 1-866-888-6100
www.shoreacres.net

Friends of Shore Acres Inc. - Membership Form

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State/Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

I/We would like to volunteer for:

Information & Gift Center

Friends Monthly Activities

Holiday Lights at Shore Acres State Park

More information:

541-756-5401

bridgham@epuerto.com

www.shoreacres.net

Circle One

\$500 Life

\$250 Sustaining

\$100 Benefactor

\$50 Sponsor

\$25 Patron

\$15 Family

\$10 Individual

\$5.00 Member Discount on OPRD Permits

12 Month Permit (Member Price) \$25.00

24 Month Permit (Member Price) \$45.00

(No extra vehicle permit necessary; permit may be moved from vehicle to vehicle)

Membership: _____

Permit: _____

Total: _____

Please fill out this form and mail with your check or money order to:

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

Friends of Shore Acres Inc. is a 501 (c) (3) tax-exempt organization.
Tax I.D. #93-0941893

Shore Acres History

At its zenith, L.J. Simpson's Shoreacres Estate stretched from Sunset Bay to Cape Arago.

1905 - Louis bought the property from Jake Evans for \$4,000.

1907 - Louis began building his first mansion on the bluff (site of the present Observation Building) as a Christmas present for his wife Cassie. He began landscaping and formal gardens that would include exotic plants from all over the world and planted Monterey Cypress at the entrance to the gardens. He built a carriage house/barn complex at the north end of the property and a gardener's cottage (the only structure still standing) near the formal gardens. At the south end, L. J. built a dairy farm complex where he raised prize Holsteins.

1914 - Enlarged the mansion to include a Roman Bath Room with 26x52' swimming pool that used both fresh and salt water. Built rose pergolas and greenhouse. Reconstruction of the south end of the formal gardens included a Japanese garden and 100' pond. Also built Sunset Bay Inn which was destroyed by a fierce storm in 1939.

1921, April - Cassie Simpson died after a long illness.

1921- July - The mansion burned to the ground.

1927 - Louis and his second wife Lela moved into a second mansion that stretched 224' along the bluff.

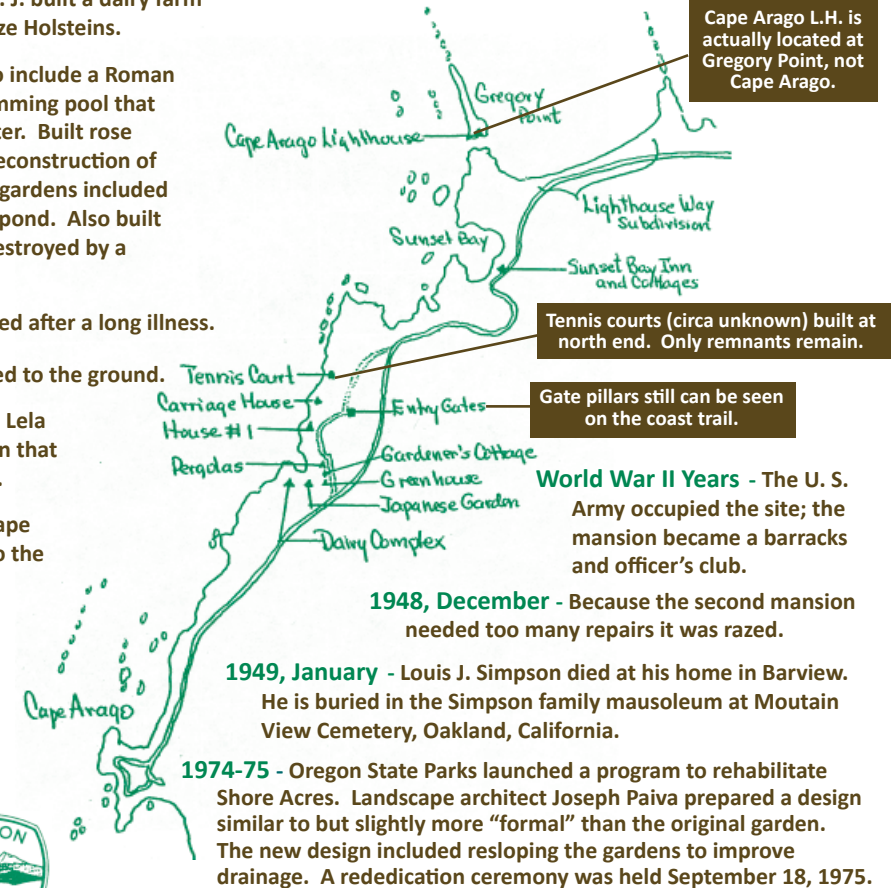
1932 - Louis and Lela gave the Cape Arago portion of the estate to the state of Oregon.

1942 - The U.S. Army closed the road at Sunset Bay and the Simpsons moved to a home in nearby Barview.

1942, December - The Simpsons sold the remainder of the estate for \$29,000 to Oregon for the development of a public park.



Garden House (former *Gardener's Cottage*) - early 1900s - Note the half-moon shape of the "first" pond which Simpson would modify to present shape, circa 1914



Cape Arago L.H. is actually located at Gregory Point, not Cape Arago.

Tennis courts (circa unknown) built at north end. Only remnants remain.

Gate pillars still can be seen on the coast trail.

World War II Years - The U. S. Army occupied the site; the mansion became a barracks and officer's club.

1948, December - Because the second mansion needed too many repairs it was razed.

1949, January - Louis J. Simpson died at his home in Barview. He is buried in the Simpson family mausoleum at Mountain View Cemetery, Oakland, California.

1974-75 - Oregon State Parks launched a program to rehabilitate Shore Acres. Landscape architect Joseph Paiva prepared a design similar to but slightly more "formal" than the original garden. The new design included resloping the gardens to improve drainage. A rededication ceremony was held September 18, 1975.

1977 - All America Rose Selections Display Garden established.



Map from "The First Simpson House, 1907-1921: Shore Acres State Park," report by Stephen Dow Beckham for Friends of Shore Acres, Inc.-1997



Friends'/ Parks' Cooperative Milestones

1986, December - Creation of Friends of Shore Acres, Inc.

1987, December - First Holiday Lights by the Friends and Shore Acres State Park.

Since then, the Friends in partnership with the Oregon Parks & Recreation Department and various financial supporters have accomplished many projects for Shore Acres.



- 1988 - Garden cart and garden "sitters" for sales
- 1988 - Underground wiring in formal garden
- 1988 - First parking lot lights
- 1989 - Information & Gift Center (8'x8')
- 1990 - Plant I.D. signs
- 1991 - Underground wiring in pond area
- 1992 - Information & Gift Center (24'x24')
- 1993 - Friends' storage building (24'x24')
- 1993 - Shore Acres Viewbook
- 1993 - Garden House - new wiring, lights, paint
- 1995 - "Gardens Above the Waves" video
- 1995 - Doubled existing parking
- 1995 - More parking lot lights
- 1996 - Memorial Fountain built
- 1996 - Landscape Lighting project started
- 1998 - Garden House - new carpet
- 1999 - New rose pergola
- 1999 - Garden House - kitchen remodel
- 2000 - 50 space overflow parking lot
- 2000 - Garden House - new foundation & ceilings
- 2001 - Performance Pavilion
- 2001 - Friends' web site created
- 2002 - Storage building doubled in size
- 2003 - Simpson Reef Overlook - new parking lot, viewing platform and interpretive displays
- 2003 - New entrance and Information & Gift Center (32'x48') reminiscent of L.J. Simpson's first mansion and gardens.
- 2004 - Memorial Resource Library established
- 2005 - Memorial Fountain Display redesigned & built
- 2005 - Pond - resurfaced base
- 2005 - Observation Building wiring and path lights
- 2005 - Landscape Lighting added on west side of garden
- 2005 - "Gardens Above the Waves" video updated on DVD
- 2006 - "The Shore Acres Story" video available on DVD
- 2006 - Garden House - new interior doors
- 2006 - New brochure rack at entrance
- 2006 - Second Gifts & Memorials Display created
- 2006 - New brick path near Observation Building
- 2007 - Water system booster pump
- 2008 - New gate on the northwest side of the garden
- 2008 - Garden House - restoration of front windows
- 2009 - A second storage building for Friends & Park
- 2009 - Garden House - installed original style small windows
- 2009 - Garden House - painted inside and out
- 2009 - Web camera, west side - installation
- 2010 - Web camera, west side - pictures on web site
- 2010 - Paver paths near Garden House and Pavilion
- 2010 - Memorial Fountain renovated
- 2010 - New garden gate southwest of garden
- 2010 - New fencing around garden
- 2011 - Garden House - restored dining room windows
- 2011 - New garden benches
- 2011- New Interpretive Panels in Observation Building and Garden Entrance

Ongoing interpretive projects include brochures, newsletter, new plants, and signs.



Garden Entrance and Information & Gift Center

- Many interesting items available for your shopping pleasure.
- Annual OPRD park passes available for purchase at the Information & Gift Center (IGC).
- Net proceeds from the IGC, the Holiday Lights, and other Friends' activities go toward projects that benefit the park.

MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS:

10% Discount in the IGC

Member Discount on OPRD Permits

Annual Summer Journal

Volunteer Opportunities

- Application Form - Back Panel -

Friends' Mission

"The purpose of Friends of Shore Acres, Inc. is to participate in interpretive, educational, and physical development programs with Sunset Bay Management Unit."

FoSA Bylaws

- One park manager, one park ranger, and about five seasonal full time ranger aides work as "gardeners" (and everything else) at Shore Acres.
- Possible "original" plants surviving from Simpson's time are the palm trees near the pond and the Monterey cypress, pine and spruce trees in the windbreaks.
- Shore Acres State Park is home to the national co-champion Monterey Pine tree which is located between the Pavilion and the Greenhouse.
- While Shore Acres is "all-abilities" accessible, some wheelchairs are available in the IGC.
- Weddings Information: 541-888-3778 or www.shoreacres.net home page
- Gardening Questions: 541-888-3732 or www.shoreacres.net "Ask the Gardener"

Holiday Lights

Thanksgiving thru New Year's Eve



A community tradition was born in 1987 when the Friends of Shore Acres decided to "string a few lights" to help celebrate the holidays. That first season, 6,000 miniature lights, one large Christmas tree, and the decorated and open Garden House drew 9,000 visitors.

Now, *300,000 lights* - both holiday and landscape - many large holiday trees, lighted sculptures, performance pavilion, and the festive open house attract 40,000 to 50,000 visitors each season.

In the Garden House, long scrolls of names are a tribute to business supporters and the more than 1,500 volunteers who make it happen for all to enjoy.

Also contributing to the success of the Friends and the Holiday Lights are our 250 members, our Information and Gift Center, and *visitors like you.*

"Fantastic, worth the trip" - *Alberta, Canada*

"Always good, loved the ship!" - *Coos Bay, OR*

"Upstairs, out of a storybook!" - *Medford, OR*

"Part of our Thanksgiving tradition!" - *Tulelake, CA*

Other Annual Friends Events at Shore Acres

Rhododendron Sunday/

Mother's Day - May

Rose Sunday-Father's Day - June

OCMF Garden Concert - July

Bonsai Day - August

Dahlia Day - September

This and That

Questions asked about the Holiday Lights

How many lights?

300,000 lights (all L.E.D. except for landscape lights and some sculptures)

What's new?

Each season brings new sculptures and changes to the lighting design as well as landscape lights on the tall trees that frame the garden.

What is the theme?

"Home for the Holidays"

Who pays for the lights and decorations?

Friends of Shore Acres, Inc. with support of local businesses and individuals.

Who pays the light bill?

Shore Acres State Park and Friends of Shore Acres, Inc. Cost has been as high as \$3500 a season. L.E.D. lights use up to 90% less energy, which will reduce the electric bill for years to come.

How many volunteers string the lights?

70-80 people working 6 weekends and several weekdays in October and November.

How many total volunteers?

More than 1500.

How many cookies?

36,000 to 48,000 or more.

How do you make the cider?

A special spice mix and frozen apple juice

How many visitors attend each night?

Depends on the weather, as few as several hundred to more than 3,000.

How many visitors per season?

Depends on the weather, 40,000 to 50,000. Visitors come from nearly every state and many different countries.

When do you prepare for next season?

Planning starts in January. Sculptures are created during the summer. Actual setup and decorating starts in October.

Volunteers Welcome

Holiday Lights at Shore Acres State Park is sponsored by Friends of Shore Acres, Inc. in partnership with Shore Acres State Park. Co-Chair - Shirley & David Bridgham
541-756-5401 or bridgham@epuerto.com