

Press Release

Fullerton Arboretum's

Orange County Agricultural and Nikkei Heritage Museum presents:

A Determined Lot: Resilient Pioneers Forge a New County's Future

Exhibition Dates:

February 16 to December 7, 2008

Open: Open Saturdays and Sundays, 12:00 pm to 4:00 pm
Or by appointment

Located at: Fullerton Arboretum, California State University, Fullerton
1900 Associated Road
Fullerton, California 92831

Admission: Free

Internet Site: www.arboretum.fullerton.edu

Additional information:

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Orange County Agricultural and Nikkei Heritage Museum, at the Fullerton Arboretum at California State University, Fullerton, highlights Orange County's agrarian roots and the contributions made by pioneering farmers.

A Determined Lot: Resilient Pioneers Forge a New County's Future explores the development of agriculture in the Santa Ana River valley and other areas of Orange County. It recognizes the challenges faced by pioneer families: water supplies, natural predators, and harvest costs. Familiar names on today's landscape come from this hardy group of early settlers.

This exhibit, like its predecessor, is based on the collection of oral histories and photographs held at CSUF's Center for Oral and Public History, and it primarily uses those interviews collected by the Orange County Pioneer Council as well as early oral history classes.

Initially, ranchers grew barley and other grains to sustain cattle, and grapes were planted by the earliest Orange County settlement in Anaheim with irrigation from the Santa Ana River. Deciduous fruit trees like apples and apricots were also tried, but a variety of factors led to changes in the cultivation of these first crops. The development of Valencia and navel oranges marked a change in the area's agricultural economy. Railroad companies played an important role both in enticing farmers to the area and in expanding their markets across the nation.

When the population growth and rising production costs for farmers collided in the early 1950s, much farmland gave way to housing and other development. Orange State College was sited on 236 acres of Valencia citrus groves and is now known as California State University, Fullerton. The exhibit also celebrates the 50th anniversary of the school's inception.

This exhibit owes much to the cooperation of several departments working with the Arboretum from across the California State University, Fullerton campus. From Visual Arts to Anthropology, from History to Engineering, professors, staff, and students have taken part in the staging of this exhibit. Moreover, the volunteers who devoted countless hours building creative displays, and the generosity of people in the community who provided advice, artifacts, and personal items, all contributed to the realization of this project.

Curator
Kathleen Frazee

Designer
Christina Hasenberg

Director
Gregory Dymant