



**The Fullerton Arboretum**  
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## **News Release**

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### **Orange County Agricultural & Nikkei Heritage Museum To Open New Exhibit-April 18, 2009**

(Fullerton, CA) – The Orange County Agricultural & Nikkei Heritage Museum at the Fullerton Arboretum will be unveiling a new exhibit on April 18, 2009 titled “Farmers to Flyers: MCAS El Toro and Mid-Century Orange County.” This is the third major exhibit at the museum and it will interpret the impact of the El Toro Marine Air Station on the development of Orange County. The time period this exhibit covers is 1930-1955. This includes the agricultural history of the land before the establishment of the Marine Air Station, including the crops that were grown on the land and the farmers that tended the land. The exhibit will also include the story of Japanese Americans who worked at or near the land that would become the base.

The base was established in 1942 on the land purchased from the Irvine Company and beginning in 1943, the air station was used during World War II for combat pilot training. The exhibit will tell the story of how and why the air station was opened as well as those of the service men and women who served during and after World War II and their memories of the base and the local community.

The exhibit will be comprised of four sections and will explore how Orange County changed over the course of 25 years and the role that the El Toro Marine Air Station played in that change. The first section will cover the agriculture history of the land, including the crops that were grown and the workers that farmed the land. The second section will examine the acquisition of the land as well as the construction of the base. It will also examine life on the base and how the base fit in with the surrounding communities.

In the third section, the exhibit will examine the end of the war and the beginning of the Cold War population boom in Orange County and its transition away from an agriculture based economy, as well as the development of freeways. The last section of the exhibit will briefly explore the recent controversy over the plans for the land after the closing of the base and the recent development of the Great Park. The goal of the exhibit is to examine the Marine Air Station's role in a changing sense of place in Orange County.

The exhibit will also interpret the end of the war and the beginning of the Cold War population boom in Orange County and its transition away from an agriculture based economy. The year 1955 is pivotal in the history of Orange County, as the population grew by 200,000 people and Disneyland opened. This exhibit will be open to the public beginning April 18, 2009 and the normal visiting hours are 11:00 am to 3:00 pm weekends (Saturday and Sunday). Admission to the exhibit is free, however donations are graciously accepted.

Established in 1979, the Fullerton Arboretum has served the community as a premier resource for ecological, horticultural and historical education. The Fullerton Arboretum is the largest botanical garden in Orange County. Encompassing 26 lush acres, The Fullerton Arboretum has assembled a permanent collection of over 4,000 unique and unusual plant species from around the world. With its ponds, streams and wildlife, the Fullerton Arboretum offers a tranquil retreat from a fast-paced urban life.

The Fullerton Arboretum is located on the CSUF campus one block west of the 57 freeway at Yorba Linda Blvd. and Associated Road. For further information, contact the Fullerton Arboretum at (714) 278-3407 or visit our website at [www.fullertonarboretum.org](http://www.fullertonarboretum.org).

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