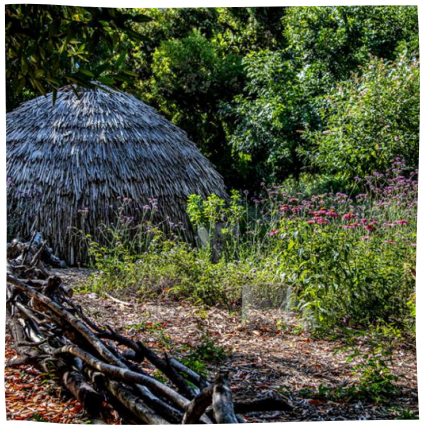
The Arboretum
LOS ANGELES COUNTY ARBORETUM & BOTANIC GARDEN

HISTORY

SCAVENGER HUNT

Use this scavenger hunt to explore the historical sites and plants at the Arboretum.

TONGVA HOUSE



The Tongva people entered these homes by walking back-first through the door. Can you do it?

The Tongva people who lived on the land that is now the Arboretum lived in dome shaped homes that were built from tule reeds that grew in the area. Today, you can explore the replica home at the Arboretum. These homes were called kiis, pronounced *keys*. Animal pelts were placed on the roof to add warmth and bay leaves were woven into the reeds to help repel insects. There would have been a fireplace in the center of the structure with a hole in the roof above it to let the smoke out.

OAK TREE/ACORN

Do acorns remind you of anything you eat?

Oak trees were one of the most important food plants to the indigenous people of this area and were also considered sacred. The acorns were a staple food crop. Acorns were gathered in large baskets that were carried on the back with a strap around the forehead. Acorns were stored in a granary, which was a large basket made from young willow branches and lined with bay leaves. The bay leaves helped keep the acorns dry and acted as a natural insect repellent.

REID-BALDWIN ADOBE

There is no kitchen in the Adobe. Where do you think they cooked?

The Adobe was constructed in 1840 by Hugo Reid, one of the owners of the Arboretum land. It was built with adobe bricks, a tar covered roof, and white-washed walls. White-wash was a coating made of salt, water, and a mineral called lime and was used to prevent mildew and to reduce insect damage. Lucky Baldwin moved into the Adobe in 1875. The Adobe has been renovated to reflect its appearance during Baldwin's ownership.

THE DEPOT

Can you spy the golden railroad spike?

The Santa Anita Depot was completed in 1890, helping to bring the LA and San Gabriel Valley Railroad Company through Lucky Baldwins ranch and land. Originally, the Santa Anita Depot was located about a quarter of a mile north of where the Arboretum currently is. The Depot also housed the Santa Anita Post Office. The Depot closed in 1940. The Arcadia Historical Society fought for its restoration and the Depot was moved and rebuilt brick by brick at the Arboretum in 1970.

QUEEN ANNE COTTAGE

Can you spy where the bell lives on the cottage?

The Queen Anne Cottage was built in 1885-86 as a honeymoon gift for Lucky Baldwin's fourth wife. Lucky Baldwin was one of the owners of the Arboretum land. The architect was Albert Bennett, who was also Lucky Baldwin's father-in-law. This ornate cottage acted as a guest and entertainment house. It is named the Queen Anne Cottage because of the "Queen Anne" architectural style, which features intricate details, steep roofs, and towers. These houses are usually asymmetrical.

COACH BARN

Can you find where the horses ate?

Designed by the same architect as the Queen Anne Cottage, Albert Bennett, the coach barn was built in 1879 and housed Lucky Baldwin's private carriages and horses. The walls inside feature alternating slats of cedar and redwood planks. Redwood is naturally fire resistant, which makes it good for building. The hay and horse feed were kept in the upstairs loft. Can you find the fire truck? Does it look different from the fire trucks we have today?

TOYON

What would you use the red liquid from this berry for?

Toyon berries served many purposes for the early inhabitants of this land. The berries from the toyon or California Holly were cooked to remove the bitter taste. They were also dried and ground up for later use. The bark and leaves were used in a tea to help with stomach aches. Indigenous people in this area also used the red pigment from the berries as a paint to color clothing, animal hides, pottery, and even their bodies to tell stories. Look for this plant near the Tongva house and in Crescent Farm. It is not always fruiting.

GRINDING STONE

How many acorns do you think you would have to grind to make a bowl of mush?

Acorns need to be shelled and ground before they can be eaten. The indigenous people of this area used large stones to grind the acorns into flour. To remove the bitter taste of the acorns, the flour was then rinsed several times. The flour was then boiled in tightly woven watertight baskets by dropping super-heated stones in the water to create a mush, which was eaten cold and called wéwish. The acorn flour was also made into a bread.

COCHINEAL

What does this insect remind you of?

Cochineal is a small insect that lives and feeds on prickly pear cactus. They secrete a waxy white substance to retain water and protect themselves from the sun. When crushed, these insects produce a vibrant red liquid that has been used for centuries as clothing dye and as ink for writing. When the Spanish arrived in the Americas, cultivating and exporting cochineal quickly became one of their most lucrative businesses. At the peak of the dye trade, they were exporting 300,000 pounds of cochineal dye per year. It takes 75,000 live insects to make one pound of dye. That's a lot of bugs!

CACTUS SPINE

What would you use a cactus spine for?

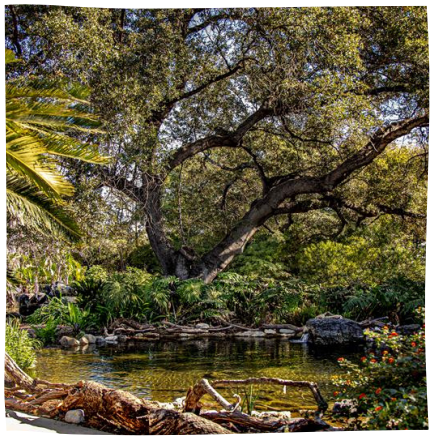
Indigenous people have used cactus spines for a variety of things throughout history including sewing needles, fish-hooks, tattoo needles, toothpicks, jewelry, and combs. The spines could be heated and bent into different shapes. There are many species of cacti native to this area, but a notable variety is the prickly pear cactus that was used as a food source, and also to create fences and boundaries.

ADOBE OVEN

How many bricks to you think were used to build the oven?

The adobe oven is made from traditional sun-dried mud bricks. Adobe bricks need soil that is a combination of sand and clay. Straw was often added in but is not necessary. These ovens use wood and coals as their heat source and can maintain a useable temperature for several hours. Typically used for baking bread or roasting meat, the ovens could also steam corn by pouring water over the coals.

TALLAC KNOLL



Look out at the amazing view of the valley from the top!

The homesite of the earliest inhabitants of the land that is now the Arboretum was known as Aleupkigna, "the place of many waters." It is believed their settlement was on Tallac Knoll. Currently on Tallac Knoll there is a large grove of Englemann Oaks, which were a major acorn food source for the indigenous people in this area. Tallac Knoll is a geologic remnant of the Raymond Hill Fault. Artesian springs from the Raymond Hill Fault helped feed Baldwin Lake.