

Earl's Diary, Wednesday, July 16, 2014

Hello to all you Loyal Readers,

Today I'm off for Coos Bay/Charleston. Once again the sky is overcast and as I approached Charleston (which is right on the coast) the fog was rolling back and forth. Not another good day for taking pictures. However, I thought to myself, it might make for some good mood shots.

Shore Acres Park is located on the Cape Arago Highway, 13 miles southwest of Coos Bay and U.S. Highway 101.

Perched on rugged sandstone cliffs high above the ocean, Shore Acres State Park is an unexpected combination of beautiful natural and constructed features. The garden features plants and flowers from all over the world. Something is in bloom almost every day of the year.



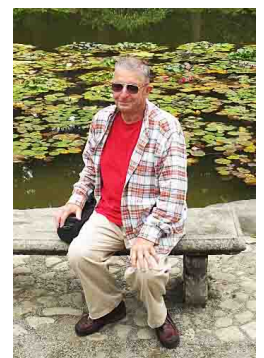
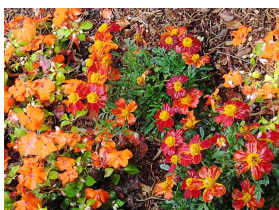
The entry way looks out over the 5 acres of formal gardens



Shore Acres was originally an estate of the same name owned by Louis Simpson, a Coos County timber baron.



Simpson developed the summer home into a showplace three-story mansion complete with a heated, indoor swimming pool and a large ballroom. The grounds contained five acres of formal gardens, including a Japanese-style garden built around a 100-foot lily pond.



Just to prove I was there



When fire destroyed the mansion in 1921, Simpson began to build an even larger replacement – two stories high and 224 feet long. However, financial losses in the 1930s caused both house and grounds to fall into disrepair. In 1942, Simpson's beloved Shore Acres was purchased by the state of Oregon for use as a public park.

Structural deterioration eventually forced the mansion to be razed, however, the restored formal gardens continue to attract thousands of visitors each year.



The gardens Simpson developed, as well as one building, the gardener's cottage, remain as important features in the park.

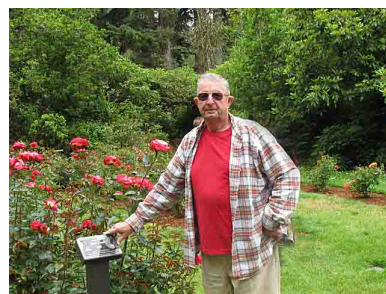


There were lots of rhododendrons, however their blooms were long past. The vestiges left were the seed pods.





Ever since its beginnings as Louis Simpson's private estate, the plantings at Shore Acres have been designed to take advantage of the area's mild climate. They have created a "garden for all seasons" – with showy "peaks" of different kinds of flowers every time of the year.



Is this the thorn among the roses?



I asked how could these roses flourish in this cool foggy weather. One of the Oregon residents said that they do have sun. Last week it was sunny all week and the roses were in full bloom. Wouldn't you know it, it was foggy when I got here!



Fuchsias and begonias in the greenhouse.





Unusual looking *berberis* leaf



A walk to the cliff edges produced interesting rock patterns.



A fully enclosed observation building now occupies the site of Simpson's mansions, offering spectacular view of rugged seascapes.







## The Boat Harbor at Charleston



Unloading the day's catch

On my way back to Coos Bay I had to pass right through the Charleston harbor area. Although it was foggy, I decided to get some foggy boat shots. I think the presence of fog gives a surreal appearance to the scene.



It was lunch time. Guess what I found at Pigeon Point (not too far from Charleston)? Nary another chain outfit in the whole area. The \$5 lunch even came with a blizzard (for \$1 extra). Oh boy! Lunch AND blizzard!

Well dear readers, it's been fun traveling to areas I haven't been before. Tomorrow the Oregon Gathering starts. I have responsibilities to run the Golf Ball Horseshoe Tournament. That will be the first official event of the gathering. Anyway, thanks for coming along with me today. Until next time, bye for now - - Earl