

TELETYPE

L58-RPS

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

1401033 0140 (141.4)

Gadsby

REGIONAL DIRECTOR, REGION FOUR, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE,
180 NEW MONTGOMERY STREET, SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA.

ON ADVICE FROM CONGRESSMAN CLEM MILLER'S OFFICE
WE EXPECT A VISIT FROM ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER BATHURST OF
SANTA ROSA NEXT TUESDAY MORNING REGARDING POSSIBLE NPS
ASSUMPTION OF ADMINISTRATION RECONSTRUCTED LUTHER BURBANK
EXPERIMENTAL GARDEN. CAN YOU FURNISH ANY BACKGROUND
INFORMATION? THOMPSON, RECREATION RESOURCE PLANNING

Copy to: Claims-Payroll
NPS Planning

JHGadsby:ts

Ext. 5039

12/9/59 3 P.M.

RECEIVED
DEC 10 1959

California

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State Chamber of Commerce
National Park Service

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GENERAL SERVICES ADMIN
PUBLIC BLDGS. SERVICE
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NPS INTERIOR BLDG WA

CONCERNING GADSBY INQUIRY ON LUTHER BURBANK EXPERIMENTAL GARDENS AT

SANTA ROSA, THEY ARE LOCATED IN AND OPERATED BY THE CITY AS A PARK.

LUTHER BURBANK IS BURIED THERE. SITE OF ABOUT 2 ACRES INCLUDES THE BURBANK HOME OCCUPIED AT LEAST UNTIL RECENTLY BY THE WIDOW. AREA IS OPEN TO THE PUBLIC AND IS IDENTIFIED BY A STATE HISTORICAL MARKER. THE CITY AND THE LOCAL JUNIOR COLLEGE COOPERATE IN BOTANICAL WORK CARRYING FORWARD BURBANK'S EXPERIMENTS IN HYBRIDIZATION. ADJOINING ACROSS STREET IS JULLIARD CITY PARK ABOUT ONE BLOCK IN EXTENT WHICH ENHANCES THE BURBANK GARDENS. OUR INFORMANT MR BOB MOIR OF STATE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE OFFICE IN SANTA ROSA IS NOT AWARE OF ANY ORGANIZED EFFORT TOWARD NATIONAL MONUMENT STATUS

MAIER ACTING REGION DIR

2

AC 1425U

45-2011
J. Gadsby
R. W. [unclear]
→ per file

general files
~~Mr. Kahler~~
~~Mr. Littleton~~
very good report
J.H.
L 58

Luther Burbank - Home and Gardens, Santa Rosa, California

This is to record a conversation of this date among Mr. Bathurst, Assistant City Manager, Santa Rosa, California, and Herbert E. Kahler, J. Gadsby, and Roy E. Appleman of the National Park Service concerning recognition of the Burbank Home and Gardens. This conversation took place in Mr. Kahler's office.

Mr. Bathurst outlined the present status of the Burbank project as follows: The city of Santa Rosa has expended about \$150,000 in developing a memorial type area at the Burbank Gardens. There are approximately three acres in this tract of land. Immediately adjoining it is another tract of something less than two acres on which the old Burbank Home stands. Mrs. Burbank still lives there, although she is now a very old lady. The city has title to the first tract and will receive title to the second tract including the Home on Mrs. Burbank's death. At that time the two areas will be joined and administered as one. The city pays the taxes, through Mrs. Burbank, on this second tract.

The city has been making efforts for some time, by working through Mrs. Burbank, to obtain an inventory and identification of the pieces of furniture, bric-a-brac, and other items in the Burbank Home. Most of this apparently dates from the period of Mr. Burbank's lifetime. Progress with an inventory has not been spectacular because Mrs. Burbank is rather difficult to work with and she cannot be pressed on the matter. The city also is attempting to obtain from Mrs. Burbank as much information as possible concerning Luther Burbank, as she remembers him. The city realizes that this is an important and pressing problem because of Mrs. Burbank's advanced age and frailty and the fact that she may pass away at any time.

Mr. Burbank, himself, is buried under a cedar of Lebanon tree which is located in the memorial area.

According to Mr. Bathurst about 150,000 people visit the place annually. There is no fee. Across the street from the Burbank Home and Gardens is the Julliard Park, about one block in extent. This enhances the environment of the Burbank Gardens. A local Junior College has been attempting to carry on botanical work along the lines of Burbank's experiments in plant hybridization.

Mr. Bathurst in his conversation clearly demonstrated that the city of Santa Rosa is very proud of what it has done in developing and promoting a Luther Burbank Memorial. The Luther

Burbank memorial will be dedicated in March 1960, according to present plans. Mr. Bathhurst indicated an effort is being made to secure the United Nations and Department of Agriculture participation in, and support for, the dedication. His interest in speaking to representatives of the National Park Service was to enlist support for Federal recognition of the memorial; this does not mean status as a national historic site nor Federal financial assistance and maintenance and administration. He simply is seeking to have the proper Federal agency give suitable recognition to the Burbank Home and Gardens as a place of national significance.

Mr. Kahler outlined the work of the National Survey of Historic Sites and Buildings. He indicated the study of the Burbank Home and Gardens would be included in the theme study on the Arts and Sciences which is scheduled for the 1962 fiscal year. He indicated that in that study an effort would be made to evaluate the importance of the Burbank Home and Gardens. In this manner the site would receive Federal evaluation and recognition and if it fell within the group meriting National Landmark status it might receive a Federal marker of some kind. Mr. Kahler indicated that decisions concerning National Landmark status are still pending, and that such a category has not yet been officially approved.

Mr. Bathhurst was entirely satisfied with the prospects that the Burbank Home and Garden might receive some recognition in the course of the National Survey of Historic Sites and Buildings.

Mr. Bathhurst mentioned enthusiastically a Mr. Peron who is the gardener employed by the city to take care of the Burbank Garden. Mr. Peron speaks four or five different languages and has taken a great interest in the life and work of Mr. Burbank. He is on good terms with Mrs. Burbank, and it appears that he knows more about Burbank's work than anyone else in Santa Rosa. This, apparently, is due primarily to his close relationship with Mrs. Burbank and his own interest in botany and gardening.


Staff Historian



UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

L58

March 2, 1960

MAR 7 1960
Appleman
P. G.
Cullinane
file

Memorandum (AIR MAIL)

To: Director

From: Assistant Regional Director, Region Four

Subject: Proposed Presidential Message Regarding Luther Burbank Memorial Gardens

Upon receiving Mr. Cullinane's teletype (L58-IBI) of March 1, on subject message, we telephoned Mr. Kent Bathurst, Assistant City Manager, Santa Rosa. Mr. Bathurst conferred in Washington with Messrs. Kahler and Appleman regarding the possibility of the National Park Service designating the Luther Burbank Gardens as an historic site, or in some way conferring national status upon it.

Mr. Bathurst told us that the dedication--originally set for some time in March--has been postponed on account of weather and for other reasons. It is now set definitely for May 13, in the middle of a whole week of celebrations May 9 to 15 in the town of Santa Rosa, honoring Luther Burbank.

We will be happy to work up a draft of a Presidential message in a few days; we gather that, with the dedication date postponed until May 13, there is no immediate rush.

Assistant Regional Director

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MAR 10 1960
BRANCH OF INFORMATION

L 58

March 25, 1960

MAR 30 1960

Queller
K. H. Rice
Blair

APR 6 1960

Files

MEMORANDUM TO

Mr. Frederic Fox
 Special Assistant
 in the White House

In response to your request of February 23, a suggested Presidential message for the dedication of the Luther Burbank home and gardens on May 13 is attached. We regret the delay in forwarding the draft, but the National Park Service--which handled the assignment--found it necessary to obtain information from their regional office in California.

The National Park Service has noted that the Luther Burbank Home and Gardens is not now and probably never will be a "National Monument" in terms of formal recognition by the Service. The City of Santa Rosa has been given (by the Burbanks) the three-acre tract called the Burbank Gardens and the city has invested \$150,000 in its rehabilitation. Upon the death of Mrs. Burbank the home also goes to the city for the completion of a community-owned Burbank memorial. Mr. Burbank is buried under a Cedar of Lebanon tree on the grounds.

As part of the National Survey of Historic Sites and Buildings, the National Park Service anticipates that a study of the Luther Burbank home and gardens will be made in 1962 as part of a theme on the Arts and Sciences. In this manner the site would receive Federal evaluation and recognition, and, if it fell within the group meriting National Landmark status, it might receive a Federal marker of some kind.

The Park Service believes a Presidential Message to Mayor Jack Ryersen and the City of Santa Rosa is advisable, inasmuch as Burbank was such a prominent citizen of California and the

Call

MR. WHITING, ROOM 3310 ✓

city plans a full week of celebration from May 9 to 15--with the dedication of the gardens on May 13.

The incoming correspondence is enclosed.

C. Herschel Schooley

C. Herschel Schooley
Assistant to the Secretary
and Director of Information

Enclosures

By Messenger