



THE BROMELIAD BLADE

Newsletter of the San Diego Bromeliad Society

Volume L, Number 6

June 2015

Editor's Notes

As if you couldn't tell by all the information in the newsletter, our annual show and sale will be in June. Of course, there will be no meeting. Meetings will resume in July.

Let's not forget that the show will not be a SHOW without your entries. There are forms and the schedule available on the SDBS web page. Please have your entry forms filled out before arriving to help avoid the congestion that always forms at the door when exhibitors wait until they arrive to begin the paperwork.

While you are helping with the show and sale or just are admiring all the wonderful plants that will be displayed, take a moment to snap a photo of your favorites. Send them to the newsletter editor (dankinnard@mac.com) with a comment or two for the July newsletter. I'll use as many as will fit in the newsletter.

The President's Corner

by Robert Kopfstein

And what is so rare as a day in June?

Then, if ever, come perfect days;

Then Heaven tries the earth if it be in tune,

And over it softly her warm ear lays.

James Russell Lowell

This June the SDBS has much going on:

We will be installing our exhibit at the San Diego County Fair on Saturday May 30. The theme (which ties in to the overall theme of the fair) is Remembrance of Things Past. The fair is commemorating the 100th anniversary of the 1915 Pan American Exhibition in Balboa Park.

Our exhibit will feature antiques used as props to highlight a variety of bromeliads.

Participating in the county fair gives us the opportunity to make the public aware of the bromeliad society. To this end, we also will be giving three short talks on "bromeliad day" at the fair (special thanks to Pam Koide-Hyatt and Nancy Groves for agreeing to be presenters).

And of course June is also the month of our annual standard BSI show and sale on the 13th and 14th. You can enter plants on June 12 from 11:00 am to 5:30 pm, and if you wish to sell plants, remember to double tag them, one with the plant ID and one with your member number and the price. The split is the usual 80% (to you) and 20% (to the club).

Every year the show requires much energy, labor, and commitment, but the payoff is worth it. The show/sale gives us the chance to get the public involved in knowing more about the plants we love so much. It also helps in recruitment of new members, a must if we are going to survive as an organization. It

Editor's Notes (cont.)

Please send your contributions for the newsletter to the [editor](#). All contributions are welcome – photos, articles, observations, growing hints, and just about anything else that can be shared with our readers. The newsletter is a group effort.

We have an article about the history of the Kent Bromeliad Garden at the San Diego Zoo. It gives a bit about the beginnings of the garden that we now maintain. □

July Meeting

The July meeting will feature Aaron Sedivy, Conservatory Horticulturist at the Denver Botanic Garden. The presentation will focus on growing bromeliads in three significantly different environments at the Denver Botanic Gardens. Additionally, there will be a quick demonstration on how to build an epiphyte limb made of PVC pipes and cork bark which will be auctioned off. This should be an interesting and different program. There will also be news from the June Show such as the big winners and announcement of the Visitors' Choice Award (good for bragging rights). Details about the August picnic will also be available. □

also allows us to get together and socialize.

If you have never entered a plant, there is a category in the schedule for novices. For those who are "old hands" at entering there are some few changes in the schedule that may please you — check them out.

Entering plants and participating in our annual show/sale is something that you can do personally to make your membership in the SDBS more rewarding and worthwhile. □

June Show and Sale

by Nancy Groves, Show Chair

SHOW TIME! Let's all participate; everyone can and should participate. Show and Sale is June 13-14, Sat-Sun 10-4:00.

Everyone should be able to enter at least one or two plants and as an incentive, we are offering a discount on your sale purchase of 5% if you enter at least 2-5 plants and a 10% discount if you enter 6 or more plants! (This will be a one use coupon to be used by the entrant only.) Such a deal, you can't pass it up, so get busy and clean up some plants.

Don't worry if you have never entered before you can enter in the "novice" class and learn. If you have looked at the web site bsi.org/webpages/san_diego and don't know how to fill out the form here are some tips: (use pencil)

Genus - Tillandsia or Aechmea or ...

Species/cultivar/hybrid - name on plant,

Show Schedule

Category I - Horticulture (one species/hybrid/cultivar)

Category II - Display, (2 or more species/hybrid/cultivar)

Category III - Artistic:

DC - decorative container

AA - artistic arrangement,

Category IV - novice.

Now go to Show Class List: (S for single, M for multiple, B for blooming, F for foliage, P for patio) 1100-1814 Horticulture I, 2315- 2520

Display II, 3321- 3327 Artistic Decorative Container III, 3528-3532 Artistic Arrangement III, 4500

Novice IV.

Now with these tips go back and write the Show Class number from the Show Class List that matches your Category I,II,III, or IV with the genus and the S,M,B,F,P. Example: An *Aechmea fasciata* would be Genus=*Aechmea*, Species= *fasciata*, show class

Companion Plants

In times of drought the sound of falling water can be refreshing on a hot afternoon. Can we find experience that sensation in our gardens? We have all seen talks on bromeliads in the Andes where cataracts abound and rapidly flowing streams are overhung by pitcairnia. Such impressive displays would certainly be discouraged by our water authorities but more modest ones might not.

Pitcairnia are thirstier than many bromeliads we commonly grow, but some of the aechmeas from the Atlantic rainforest and coastal regions of Brazil are better adapted to sunnier and drier conditions. One of these, *Ae. nudicaulis*, has shown itself a willing companion of water spray. Here it is, mounted above loose stones over which water passes and flows into a pond. Humidity from the mini-fall benefits the plant as well as Spanish moss and, almost hidden to the left, a tillandsia. The flow is enough to draw attention

Water in the pond is pumped back to the top of the fall and the only loss is due to evaporation. The bromeliads do not make direct contact with the water. The amount used in this way is very small. In hot areas a mini-mister mounted above ▽

number= 1203 if it is a single blooming aechmea or a 1303 if it is a multiple foliage aechmea.

See, that wasn't too hard. If you still have questions, just bring in the plants and we will help with the forms.

Only show rules you really have to remember are that you must have grown the plant yourself for at least 6 months (with the exception of Artistic Arrangements) and have been a member of SDBS for at least 90 days, and of course, your plants and pots should be clean (no leaf shine and free of insects). Plants for the show must be brought in on Friday, June 12th from 11AM to 7PM; all will be judged by Friday night. You must pick up your plants Sunday from 4PM to 5PM; all plants not picked up become the property of SDBS. If you plan to enter an exhibit or commercial entry you must contact Nancy Groves at nancygroves@me.com before the 11th; entries will have a space reserved specifically for them and can be set up after 11:00 AM on Friday.

The judging is non-competitive in that each plant is judged on its own merits by points with Award of Merit purple 95-100, Blue 90-100, Red 85-89, yellow 80 and below with notes written on back of red and yellow to suggest improvements, and judged means no score given. So lots of good entries mean many awards in each category. The Mulford F. Foster award is for best Horticulture entry in show and the Morris Henry Hobbs award is for best Artistic entry; these two awards are given by the Bromeliad Society International in accordance with the BSI rules for judging. Think about joining BSI which provides members with a quarterly journal with lots of pictures, access to back issues on line, info on world conferences, a great picture gallery of bromeliads, etc.

If you have been an SDBS member for at least 90 days, you can also sell on Sat. and Sun. with 80% of sale price going to you, the seller and 20% going to SDBS. Sales plants can be brought into the plant sales area after 11 AM on Friday the 12th but if you want to bring them in before 11AM you may store them temporarily in room 104 until all tables for show and sale have been set up. If you are selling, you should feel obligated to come and help with set up and covering of tables on Friday morning if you have a job that can't spare you please provide and alternate to help.

This is the entire society's show and everyone should participate as you can. Please e-mail nancygroves@me.com or call 858-453-6486 and volunteer to help with set up of tables, putting on tablecloths, make coffee, bring in breakfast eats on Friday morning; or help on Sat or Sun by bringing in food, work in sales pulling tags or packing up purchases, sit at the entry to the show area to see that no sales plants enter the area and no show

Companion Plants (cont.)

the falls can be turned on with a timer for a minute once or twice a day. In areas closer to the coast, where my garden is located, this is not necessary except under hot, low humidity conditions. There are many ways to implement a low-flow waterfall and it's not expensive to do so.

Leathery leaved neoregelias and aechmeas and are better adapted to these conditions than other bromeliads. Perhaps that's not surprising because some of them are found in full sun on the seashores of Brazil along with surfers and bikini-clad babes, all exposed to strong winds and spray. Once the job is done you'll find a plant such as *Ae. nudicaulis* a suntanned but uncomplaining companion on summer days and, for years like this, on other days as well. ☐



plants exit, walk around the show area talking to guests and answering questions and encouraging them to vote for their favorite plant, volunteer to take photos or help clean up from 4:00 to 5:30 on Sun. Please, please volunteer for at least a 2hr period; everyone can help make this a great show and sale! ☐

May Show and Tell

PlantBrought by

Aechmea blumenvavii.....Bob Wright

Billbergia alfonsi-joannis.....Bob Wright

Billbergia 'Fireworks'Andy Siekkinen

Billbergia viridifloraAndy Siekkinen

Hechtia isthmusianaAndy Siekkinen

Hechtia laxissimaAndy Siekkinen

Hechtia sp.Bob Wright

Neoregelia bahianaAndy Siekkinen

Orthophytum horridum.....Bob Wright

Tillandsia ionanthaJim Wright

Tillandsia schiedanaNancy Groves

Tillandsia stramineaAndy Siekkinen

Tillandsia tectorumNancy Groves

Ursulaea tuitensis.....Andy Siekkinen

Vriesea 'Velma Wurthmann'Ed Doherty

☐

A link from Lisa Rini who thought others might find interesting: <http://thehorticult.com/bromeliads-bronx-visit-new-york-botanical-garden/>

SDBS 2015

Meetings

Meetings are held at 10 AM on the second Saturday of each month at Balboa Park, Casa Del Prado, Room 104.

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Couldn't Show and Tell

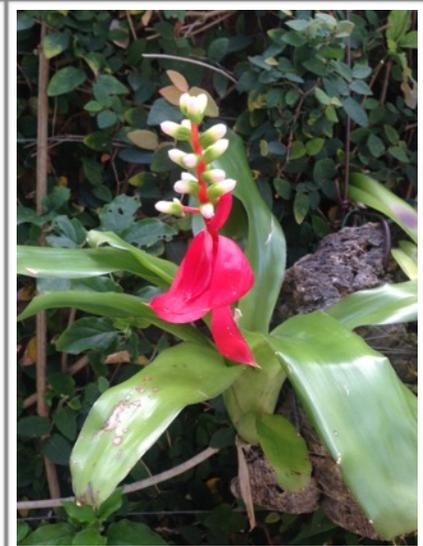
This is a place we can showcase photos of plants that are permanently planted or attached in a garden. Please send your photos to the newsletter editor to share with everyone.

From Julian Raposo

Here's what's blooming in our garden now:

▽ *Aechmea nudicaulis* and a neoregelia

Vriesea pardalina ▽



△ *Vriesea simplex* and the *Aechmea carvalhoi* △ that I got from the opportunity table last meeting. The bloom turned out to be beautiful.

(continued on p. 7)

SDBS 2015

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Web Page

www.bsi.org/webpages/san_diego.html

The Bromeliad Blade

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Items for publication are welcomed and should be received by the editor by the 25th of the preceding month.

UPCOMING EVENTS

WHEN	WHAT, WHERE
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HIGHLIGHTED MEETINGS

June 12-14, 2015	SDBS at 50: Our Golden Anniversary SDBS SHOW AND SALE Balboa Park, Casa del Prado, Room 101 www.bsi.org/webpages/san_diego.html
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July 11, 2015 at 10:00 AM	San Diego Bromeliad Society Balboa Park, Casa del Prado, Room 104 Program: Aaron Sidvey, Denver Botanic Gardens www.bsi.org/webpages/san_diego.html
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August 8, 2015 at 11:30 AM	San Diego Bromeliad Society Annual Picnic at the gardens of Robert and Karen Kopfstein and Eloise Lau and Dan Kinnard www.bsi.org/webpages/san_diego.html
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June 13-19, 2016	Bromeliad Society International World Conference Houston, Texas
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MONTHLY MEETINGS

1 st Tuesday, 6:30 PM	San Diego Orchid Society Balboa Park, Casa del Prado, Room 101 www.sdorchids.com
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2 nd Saturday, 10 AM	San Diego Bromeliad Society Balboa Park, Casa del Prado, Room 104 www.bsi.org/webpages/san_diego.html
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2 nd Saturday, 1 PM	San Diego Cactus and Succulent Society Balboa Park, Casa del Prado, Room 101 www.sdcss.net
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2 nd Monday, 5 PM	San Diego Horticultural Society Surfside Race Place at the Del Mar Fairgrounds www.sandiegohorticulturalsociety.org
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May Meeting

Our annual anniversary celebration (our 50th) was enjoyed by all. In addition to the great presentation on the Canary Islands by Nels Christenson, there were lots of snacks (most containing pineapple), a well decorated and tasty anniversary cake made by Karen Kopfstein, a varied group of Show and Tell plants, an auction of a few plants, and a very large opportunity table. Long-time members Nona Church and Thelma O'Reilly were present and added some interesting items about "how things used to be". Maybe the celebration next year will be even bigger ☐

Photos From the Meeting

Pamela Hyatt and Thelma O'Reilly



Nona Church



Couldn't Show and Tell (continued)

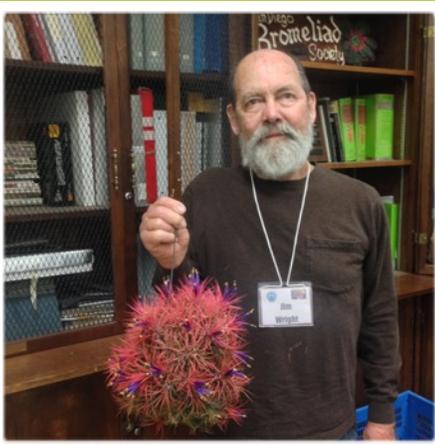
From Pam Peters



△ *Tillandsia latifolia*



△ *Tillandsia ehlersiana* x *T. streptophylla*, primary hybrid



From Eloise Lau and Dan Kinnard:

These couldn't wait to bloom until the show. Sometimes the timing of the blooms is just not as we would like. ☐

Billbergia alfonsi-joannis ▽

Billbergia zebrina ▽



Meet our Members

Wanda Mallen

by Wanda Mallen

The year was 1989. I had already become enamored of succulents and was busy filling my small condo patio and front entrance with pots of plants and was experimenting with propagation from leaves and stems. There was an item in the paper about a show and sale by the local bromeliad society (Saddleback) in a nearby hotel and it sounded interesting. I knew nothing about these plants at the time but a nice lady (Sherry Galceran) spent time telling me about how some of the pups for sale would grow into nice plants and invited me to a meeting of this friendly and welcoming group. I joined and thus began my love of these beautiful and easy-to-grow plants. I also met wonderful people that I am still friends with. Of course, I





Robert Kopfstein with an auction plant



soon ran out of room at my condo in Dana Point so I bought a house with a quarter-acre lot in San Juan Capistrano that I thought would be plenty of room, and I did stay there for about eight years. Then I got restless again and tired of Orange County traffic so an ad in the paper for a new tract in Fallbrook with large lots intrigued me and my husband (Gary Vincent) and I went down and took a look. The rest is history as we now have two acres, which I am quite confident will keep me busy for the duration.

I have been in the court reporting industry most of my life, and still continue to do proofreading for court reporters, but my passion is of course plants. Since those early days of learning about the wonderful world of succulents and bromeliads, I have expanded my interests to conifers, Australian natives, woodland plants, tropicals, and anything else that I just have to have. Variegated and weeping plants are particular favorites. In bromeliads, I particularly like Dyckias and Hechtias, and of course colorful Neos and Aechmeas.

Dave Kennedy

SDBS: Where do you live?

DK: Clairemont

SDBS: When and how did you get started growing bromeliads? DK: In 2010 I lost my best friend to cancer. While grieving, I noticed several clumps of bromeliads in my back yard that had survived with little care for 10 years. Something clicked and I became hooked.

SDBS: If you could be a bromeliad which one would you be? Why?

DK: *Tillandsia grandis*. Oversized, a tad fussy, requiring constant hydration, seemingly disinterested in producing offspring.

SDBS: Tell us a little about yourself:

DK: I am a wannabe novelist. Previously, I wrote and published two guidebooks to rock climbing in San Diego. I have hiked, climbed and backpacked all over California and other states. □



Mary Whittemore working for a higher auction bid.



A History of the Kent Bromeliad Garden

by Mary Siemers with forward by Al Evans

Volunteering at the Kent Bromeliad Garden at the zoo is one of the opportunities afforded members in The San Diego Bromeliad Society. It is a great way to spend a few hours a month learning about gardening with bromeliads from members who have been involved with bromeliads for many years. When you become a volunteer, along with the responsibility of helping to care for the Garden, you receive a volunteer ID card which allows you access to the Zoo. This is important because we often work before the zoo opens (usually 8AM until 10AM on alternate Saturdays) and it allows us to volunteer our time without having to pay an entrance fee for the privilege. We are administered by a Volunteer Office that also has other volunteer opportunities at the zoo sometimes available.

The garden is dedicated to Dr. Leonard Kent, who started growing bromeliads many years ago and turned his interest into one of the largest bromeliad nurseries in the world. The Kent Bromeliad Nursery still donates their plants to not only show off the many varieties of bromeliads available, but to keep the zoo garden interesting and colorful all year long. It's always a good volunteer day when new bromeliads arrive from the Kent Nursery for placement in the garden. Many thanks to Mick Uphoff, who retired in December after over 25 years as Zoo Garden Administrator. Taking his place is Dave Kennedy who is highly enthusiastic about new possibilities for the garden. Also important in this endeavor is member Judy Bell, who has taken an interest in our project and is acting as our liaison to the zoo administrators.

When I was asked a number of years ago to do an article on the Kent Bromeliad Garden, it occurred to me that the history of how the garden came into being might be very interesting. I contacted Mary Siemers, who was involved from its beginning, to provide a history of the garden. The following is an article by Wayne and Mary Siemers as they recalled the events that took place, beginning in November, 1983. Thanks Wayne and Mary!!

[The Bromeliad Study Group was disbanded in 2012. The Kent Bromeliad Garden maintenance has been taken over by the San Diego Bromeliad Society. Ed.]

BROMELIAD STUDY GROUP ZOO GARDEN HISTORY

At the Bromeliad Study Group meeting of November, 1983, we talked about making plans for the upcoming year and came up with the idea of planting and maintaining a bromeliad garden at the San Diego Zoo. At that time, there were only a few of us at

the meeting and we sat around one table, not knowing Jeff Kent had donated a bromeliad garden to the zoo in 1982 in honor of his father, Dr. Leonard Kent.

At the January 1984 meeting, we talked again about the possibility of a zoo bromeliad garden and assigned one of our members to contact the San Diego Zoo Horticulture Department to pursue the matter. We also mailed them a copy of our February newsletter to give them an idea as to who we were, what the Bromeliad Study Group goals were, and also welcome them to our February meeting. The newsletter was addressed to: San Diego Zoological Society/Horticulture Department...to whom it may concern. We included the time and location of our February meeting. Bob Ward, the San Diego Zoo botanist, attended our meeting. We talked extensively about our plans for a zoo bromeliad garden.

Several days later, Bob called me (I was the newsletter chairwoman and my husband, Wayne, was the secretary) and said he had arranged for the Study Group to meet with officers of three departments from the zoo. Four of our members attended that meeting. After the meeting, Bob took us to see the Dr. Kent Bromeliad Garden. The garden, as it was, obviously needed to be re-landscaped as the zoo did not have the personnel to take care of it. While there, I saw an empty display case in the middle of the garden. I asked our members if they would offer to place some of their plants in the display case. The response was "yes". I then asked Bob if we could use the bromeliad garden display case to show bromeliads from the Study Group. He was very pleased with the idea and gave his permission. I immediately started bringing my plants and displaying them as an educational display. Each plant was identified on a rather large label so the public could read it. (I believe the display case was well received. Staff from several offices would come by to see it. The plants and the display case itself, were always fresh and clean. It not only represented the Study Group but I had much enjoyment doing it for 10 plus years and very pleased that I had the opportunity.) While all of this was in the negotiation stage, Jeff Kent called Bob to let him know his father had retired from his medical profession, had moved to Vista, and wanted to come to the zoo to work on the garden.

Bob knew I was working on the display case and called me to ask if I could come to the garden on Monday morning at 8:00 AM. I did, and what a surprise! There was Dr. Kent, Chuck Coburn (zoo horticulturist) Mike Boswick (gardener supervisor) and Bob Ward. We had a short meeting and I was asked if I would work with Dr. Kent to start re-landscaping the garden. Of course I accepted and started that same morning. Dr. Kent had brought with him a van full of beautiful plants in bloom and a shovel. We started work that day and continued for several weeks. Unfortunately, a few days later, Dr. Kent and I both received a call from the zoo horticulture office telling us not to come in anymore because the Gardener's Union had filed a grievance against us. Things became quite sensitive! One of the senior gardeners in that area had counted 92 hours that Dr. Kent and I had worked there. About 3 weeks later we were again allowed, by the horticulture dept., to continue working until the grievance was settled. We continued working for several months which didn't go over well with the Gardner's Union.

In the meantime, Bob worked hard proving that we were not interested in taking jobs away from the union workers. The grievance lasted for one year. Then, Bob called for the Study Group to come for an evening meeting at the horticulture office. He wanted our president, Gary Noel, to attend. At this point our proposition was formalizing. Bob needed to know more about our capacity and in general how this project would be managed, and who was going to do what. For the first order of business at the meeting, Gary Noel asked Morlene O'Donnell to be the chairwoman of zoo bromeliad care. Dr. Kent had donated some bromeliads for a plant sale to help us get started financially, and they needed to be cared for. At that time, the plants were under some large trees far away from the garden. As the next order of business, I was asked to be chairwoman of the Zoo Garden. Next at the meeting, Bob let us know we could start coming as a group to begin working in the garden. The arrangement was that he would meet us at the back gate and he would escort us to the garden. We decided to come as a group twice a month on a Saturday from 9:00 to 12 noon. This plan worked well and went on for the next 3 or 4 months. By then we had

gained a few more members that were coming to help. Bob arranged for us to come in by the front entrance. Later, I began receiving annual zoo passes for the volunteer members.

Morlene and some of our other members began cleaning and grooming the plants Dr. Kent had donated.. Wayne arranged for a weekend sale Saturday and Sunday in the Casa Del Prado courtyard. Bob transported the plants from the zoo to the courtyard for us and Wayne, Morlene and I held the sale which netted \$500.00.

On Sunday at 4:00 PM, when Bob came to pick up the remaining plants, he was amazed to see only a few unsold plants for him to take back to the zoo! As soon as Bob could arrange a location for us to put in a tool shed, the Study Group purchased a metal shed plus some tools for cleaning the garden. Wayne and another member installed the shed. On September 9, 1984 we celebrated the re-landscaping of the garden. Dr. Kent and his wife, Irene, attended along with most of our members and Bob Ward. It turned out to be a very fun day and everything went well. Our next project for the Zoo Garden was to provide \$1000.00 for the Zoo Craft Dept. to make a nice sign to be placed at the garden, near the Dr. Kent plaque.

Towards the later part of 1986, Bob came to our house to let us know he was moving to San Francisco, where his new job was at the Golden Gate Arboretum. He felt he was letting the Study Group down. We had a long visit talking about our project and he made some very helpful suggestions. When Bob left, we then came under Chuck Coburn's supervision.

Because the plants we had under the trees had to be moved from place to place, we finally asked Chuck to allow us to build a shade cloth enclosure. After his approval of a location, the Study Group provided the cost of the material, and 5 of our members built it on one Sunday. Again we were in trouble with the Union! This time was worse. It also lasted for one year, and the Zoo finally hired an Arbitrator. The Arbitrator's decision was in our favor. (After the Union problem, we made sure not to do anything that was not pertinent to the garden.) Finally, we purchased tables for the shade cloth enclosure. These tables were quite expensive as well as being shipped from back east.

In 1988, we had a terrible storm that did considerable damage to the Zoo and completely destroyed the garden. We rebuilt it with some improvements. A number of man-made rocks were purchased to help simulate a bromeliad native habitat. We also purchased a large tree limb to attach plants. Best of all, we built a nice display case designed by our President at that time (Paul Plylor of Oceanside). He did the main part and carved a nice large stone for the waterfall. Wayne and one of the members finished it as Paul was quite busy at the time. A watering system was installed by Zoo personnel and the Study Group reimbursed the cost of \$500 to the Horticulture Department. Later we had to build a wrought iron enclosure around it and it all came out very nice.

Very nice indeed! Drop by to see the garden sometime if you happen to be visiting the zoo. Its current location (it moved a number of years ago) is near the reptile house between the komodo dragon viewing area and the humming bird enclosure.

Some photos of the Kent Bromeliad Garden circa 1984:

