

Los Angeles Flower Market History Project

American Florists' Exchange / Los Angeles Flower Market
www.FlowerMarketHistory.com

For Those Who Love History or Have an Interest in the Area's Flower Industry

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Sending Flowers to America

Scheduled for Tues., July 14, 2009 – 7:00 p.m. at Redondo Beach Public Library

The “lost era” of flower farming in Redondo Beach and nearby communities featured in slides and narration

(Redondo Beach, CA): Peggi Ridgway, principal author of the book *Sending Flowers to America*, will present a slide show based on the historic photos of the book and share the stories behind the photos. Ridgway and her associate editor spent a year researching and interviewing the families of early flower farmers for this major book commissioned by the Los Angeles Flower Market.

The presentation begins with the area's earliest commercial flower growers (housewives) and includes photos and stories of the European immigrants of the early 1900s who settled in the South Bay and quickly learned to grow, ship and sell their flowers, trucking them daily to the Los Angeles Flower Market. E.J. Vawter, the “carnation king” from Redondo Beach, as well as the Stamis and Karavas families and others, are featured, along with the Civil War captain from Alhambra, the housewife who started the seed industry, and other highlights from the book's dozens of stories and hundreds of photos.

The “lost era” of commercial flower farming in Southern California, from about 1880 to 1960, is so called because it has been largely overlooked by historians of the area. Southern Californians supplied the entire nation with its off-season flowers for many decades, until advances in transportation brought imported flowers. Flower production continues to be a major contributor to our state's agricultural industry. This picture show honors the early growers and sellers.

