



Capitola

THE tremendous growth of interest in what is becoming nationally recognized as a "Flower Festival"—is the National Begonia Festival of Capitola, California—sponsored by the Capitola Chamber of Commerce. It's growth over the last 8 years has grown to such proportions that Capitola by the Sea has become during the first part of Sept. a Mecca and a must for lovers of flowers.

The year 1954 developed the original idea of publicizing this little seaside resort emphasizing the marvelous "all year" uniformity of weather conditions and the climates ability to develop and produce the "Begonia" in all it's glory. 1954 had as its sponsors the Capitola Businessmen's Association. A Queen was chosen for the event, Miss Jeanette Hayford. The success of this initial event encouraged further effort so that, —

In 1955 the Capitola Chamber of Commerce took on the task of further elaborating and expanding the event. The Veterans of Foreign Wars played a large part in this year's operation. From this date to the present the Chamber's members and it's affiliated organizations and friends have volunteered their time and often their money for it's success.

For Queen of 1955, Miss Marty Hurst was chosen.

By 1956 the National Begonia Festival's growth had been so great that it became necessary to organize the operation on a more systematic basis. The need was placed before the Ladies Auxiliary of the Capitola Chamber of Commerce and they consented to take this responsibility and supervise the extensive operation.

A central committee was formed and with the aid of many civic minded citizens the festival was put on a paying basis. Prospective "Queens" sold "popularity" tickets for the first time. The "Queen" won according to her ability to "outsell" her associates. This method has been re-used each year to date. Marion Bradbury assumed the leadership for 1956 and this leadership developed the Coronation Dinner which was held at Shadowbrook Restaurant. At this time Installation Ceremonies was instituted for the first time, — an innovation up to that time and used each year since.

Preceding these events the Queen and attendants to the accompaniment of music were ferried up the River to Shadowbrook. This also was the year when Peggy Hoyt was named "Queen Mother" and her home beautifully decorated, was designated "Queen's Headquarters". There, the Queen and her attendants prepared themselves in beautiful gowns for the festival. Another "first" this year was that the Queen and her attendants were interviewed on television. Fourteen floats were paraded up and down the river propelled by motor boats and Miss Clara Gomes was proclaimed Queen of festivities. 1956 was a big year in putting the festival on the map.

1957 was the year that Principal John Bell, was prevailed upon to assume the leadership of the Begonia Festival. Miss Rosemary Walpole was proclaimed Queen this year and the size of the Festival became of age when 20 floats beautifully decorated were in the parade. Decorating of floats became a real contest emphasizing the growing interest in the event. The