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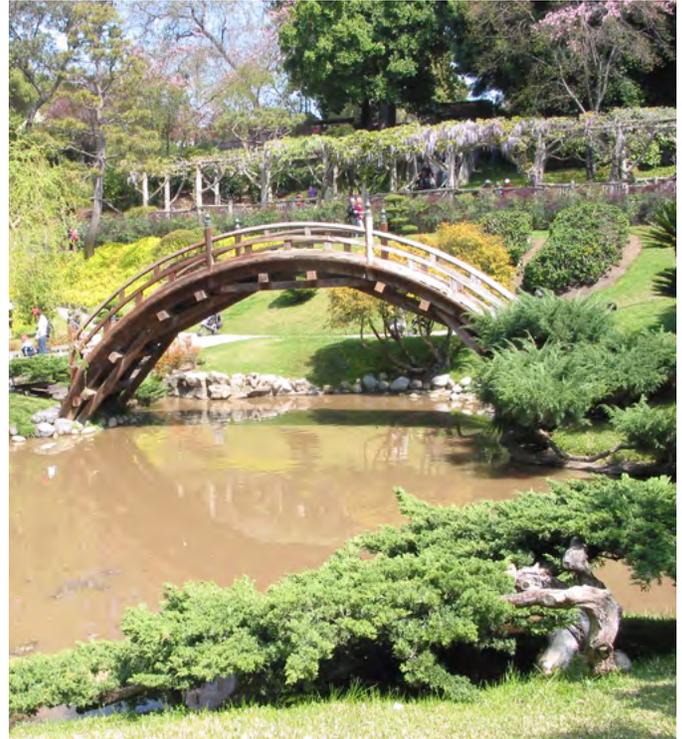
The California Garden & Landscape History Society (CGLHS) is a private nonprofit 501(c)(3) membership organization devoted to celebrating the beauty and diversity of California's historic gardens and landscapes; promoting wider knowledge, preservation, and restoration of California's historic gardens and landscapes; organizing study visits to historic gardens and landscapes as well as to relevant archives and libraries; and offering opportunities for a lively interchange among members at meetings, garden visits, and other events. *Eden: Journal of the California Garden & Landscape History Society* (ISBN 1524-8062) is published quarterly. Subscription is a benefit of CGLHS membership.

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Front Cover: *Waterfall in the San Diego Japanese Friendship Garden in Balboa Park. This garden is an expression of the friendship between San Diego and its sister city, Yokohama. While the garden first opened in 1991, the second phase opened in 1999 and was designed by renowned landscape architect Takeo Uesugi. Photo by Koichi Kobayashi.*

Above: *The moon bridge built by Japanese craftsman Toichiro Kawai in the Japanese Garden at The Huntington in 1912; restoration by Takeo Uesugi. Photo by Phoebe Cutler.*

Right top: *Dr. Takeo Uesugi, Professor Emeritus of Landscape Architecture, Cal Poly Pomona (unknown photographer).*

Right bottom: *James Irvine Garden, Japanese American Cultural and Community Center, Los Angeles, designed by Takeo Uesugi. Photo by Kelly Comras, February 2017.*

Remembering Takeo Uesugi

Koichi Kobayashi

I first met Takeo Uesugi (1940-2016) in 1968. Newly married, Takeo had just returned from graduate work at the University of California, Berkeley, and a series of internships in the U.S. I had not yet graduated from Kyoto University. Takeo joined the university in 1969 and we worked together as research assistants for half a year. I then left for Canada before attending graduate school at UC Berkeley. Right after graduation in 1972, I joined the landscape architectural department at Ohio State University as an assistant professor and embarked on my career.

Both Takeo and I had studied at Osaka Prefecture University. We also both studied American landscape architecture at UC Berkeley under Garrett Eckbo, but we were five years apart. Of Eckbo's view of the Japanese garden, Takeo wrote in 2001, "He never neglected the concept of the Japanese garden, but challenged the imitation of Japanese gardens in America." I was more influenced by Garrett's classmate from Harvard, James Rose, whose book *Creative American Gardens* inspired me more when I was trying to figure out whether my future was to be in Japan or abroad. I was overwhelmed by the ancient tradition of Japanese gardens and daunted by knowing that there were far more experienced gardeners within that tradition than I.

But not Takeo. After receiving his MLA from UC Berkeley in 1967, he went on to become a professor at Cal Poly, Pomona, establish a landscape architecture practice in Pomona that specialized in Japanese-style gardens, and, in 1981, receive a PhD from Kyoto University. Takeo attributed all that he knew to his mentors: Dr. Tadashi Kubo of Osaka Prefecture University and Dr. Akira Okasaki and Dr. Makoto Nakamura of Kyoto University. Born in Osaka, Japan, in 1940, he was the fourteenth generation of *uekiya* (Japanese garden craftsmen) in his family. According to his youngest son, Keiji Uesugi, Takeo was not only well versed in Japanese garden design principles but also in the tenets of Western landscape architecture. Intrigued by Modernist sensibilities, he was inspired by Isamu Noguchi but it was his internship in 1967 with M. Paul Friedberg and Associates in New York City that most shaped his design philosophy.





In designing the landscape for the Japan Pavilion at the 1970 Japan World Exposition in Osaka, Takeo began synthesizing Modernist ideas with the aesthetics of Japanese gardens. In his biography of his father, Keiji wrote that with the establishment of Takeo Uesugi & Associates (TUA) in California in 1971, his father aimed to create landscapes that “sensitively addressed environmental factors and that were visually striking and spatially balanced.” He also wrote of his father that:

At the core of his design philosophy

Above: The George and Sakaye Aratani Japanese Garden is on the Cal Poly Pomona campus. Designed by Takeo Uesugi, the garden was completed in 2003. The 1.3-acre stroll-style garden features a pond, bridges, walkways and a small amphitheater. As Dr. Uesugi said and as this photo reveals, the garden displays “the unique plants of East Asia and traditional details of the Japanese garden in ... a tranquil and serene atmosphere.”

All photos are by the author unless otherwise indicated.

was the idea that principles of Japanese garden design could promote sustainable practices and could be applied in any region around the world... he believed that the inspiration for a design should be drawn from the site itself, through the study of its natural and cultural history.

Takeo and I visited each other from time to time in Seattle and Pomona after he became a professor at Cal Poly, Pomona, where he taught for more than 30 years. In 2001 I organized the Fourth International Symposium on Japanese Gardens in Seattle and invited Takeo to be the keynote speaker. To welcome visitors to the symposium a rock garden was constructed at the Kubota Garden by Shojiro Yamada of Hanatoyo Landscape Company of Kyoto, which installation Takeo took great delight in interpreting for the symposium’s participants.

At the symposium Takeo spoke about the future of the Japanese garden:

With its strong aesthetic appeal and timely themes of spirituality and nature, the Japanese Garden has established itself as a respected force in modern landscape architecture in Japan and overseas. As we continue into the new Millennium, we usher in an exciting new era of evolutionary change in the appreciation, understanding, design and functionality of Japanese gardens. We now come to understand that while the Japanese Garden has been shaped by a rich history grounded in Japanese culture, it is, at the same time, not bound by these time-honored traditions. The future of the Japanese Garden must transcend our current understanding of this traditional art form as we seek to expand our views of what a Japanese Garden is, and can be.

The last time I saw Takeo was at the San Diego Japanese Friendship Garden. He was supervising construction of this his last garden, assisted by Professor Makoto Nakamura, our teacher at Kyoto University.



Above, clockwise from top left: Dr. Uesugi with owners Jim and Connie Haddad in the Storrier Stearns Japanese Garden, Pasadena, which was designed by Kinzuchi Fujii in the late 1930s but restored by Dr. Uesugi in 2005. Courtesy Keiji Uesugi; San Diego Japanese Friendship Garden, photo by the author; concrete arbor in the Japanese Garden restored by Dr. Uesugi at The Huntington in San Marino, photo by Phoebe Cutler; stream in the Aratani Japanese Garden at Cal Poly Pomona—landscape design by Takeo Uesugi.



When Takeo died after a long battle with cancer, Keiji Uesugi wrote, “His accomplishments as a college professor, designer of some of the most beautiful gardens in the country, compassionate missionary, and devoted husband/father forever solidify his legacy and epitomize the positive impact one person can have on society. Otsukaresama.”

Sources/Acknowledgments:

Biography of Takeo Uesugi by Keiji Uesugi and Noel Dorsey Vernon, February 3, 2016.

Urban Designer and Landscape Architect Koichi Kobayashi is currently a Visiting Research Fellow at the University of Hyogo in Japan. His consultancy, Kobayashi Global, is based in both Seattle and Shanghai. Koichi spent 5 years working for EDAW and AOYA in China and has lectured at universities in China and Japan. He received his B.S. in Landscape Architecture from Kyoto University and his MLA from UC Berkeley.

Top, from left: The stone lantern in the San Diego Japanese Friendship Garden is inscribed with the names of the donors: Dr. Takeo Uesugi, Dr. Makoto Nakamura (professor emeritus of Kyoto University), and Tokushiro Tamane, the Chief Gardener at Kinkaku-ji, in Kyoto; from left, Dr. Uesugi, Prof. Nakamura, and the author in the San Diego Japanese Friendship Garden.

Bottom: Bridge over the stream in the Aratani Japanese Friendship Garden at Cal Poly Pomona.

Photos courtesy of the author.

2016 ANNUAL REPORT

PRESIDENT'S LETTER



Though I've only been with CGLHS for the last several years, in that short amount of time I've seen the organization grow. Under the dynamic leadership of past presidents Judy Horton and Kelly Comras, all of the processes, databases and behind-the-scenes mechanisms that keep the organization working have been incrementally updated. It has been a tremendous amount of work, made even more astonishing when you consider that under their leadership, CGLHS still provided our membership with a host of well-planned tours and conferences, as well as our beautifully produced journal, *Eden*.

We started 2017 with several new Board members, all of whom bring new talent and energy to the organization. In the coming year, the work that Judy and Kelly began will continue, with several Board members working to implement a new, robust and integrated system, keeping us up-to-date.

Meanwhile, we are planning what I think will be another wonderful conference, this time in Palm Springs. A comparatively new city, in a setting of breathtaking natural beauty, landscape design in the Coachella Valley has had a varied and fascinating history. Despite the extreme weather, some of the most beautiful gardens have been created here. I hope to see you here in October!

Steven Keylon
President, CGLHS

WE ARE GRATEFUL TO ALL OUR MEMBERS, DONORS, EDEN CONTRIBUTORS, AND VOLUNTEERS WHO HAVE HELPED ENSURE THAT CGLHS WILL CONTINUE TO CELEBRATE THE BEAUTY AND DIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA'S HISTORIC GARDENS AND LANDSCAPES FOR MANY MORE YEARS.

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Fern Dell

Phoebe Cutler and Vonn Marie May



If a homebody in 1941 received a postcard from a relative visiting Los Angeles, there was a good chance that the black-and-white photo on the front would have shown a creek beside a packed-earth path, a gnarled sycamore, and a profusion of ferns. At the bottom of the image, a caption would have read, in block letters, “Fern Dell, Hollywood, Cal.” If the curious recipient wanted to know more, she could have gone to the recently published Works

Project Administration (WPA) guide to the area and on page 184, read the following:

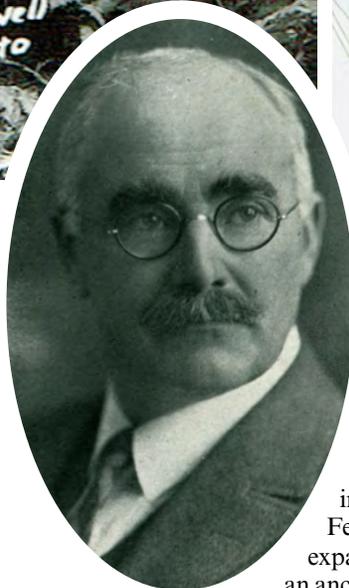
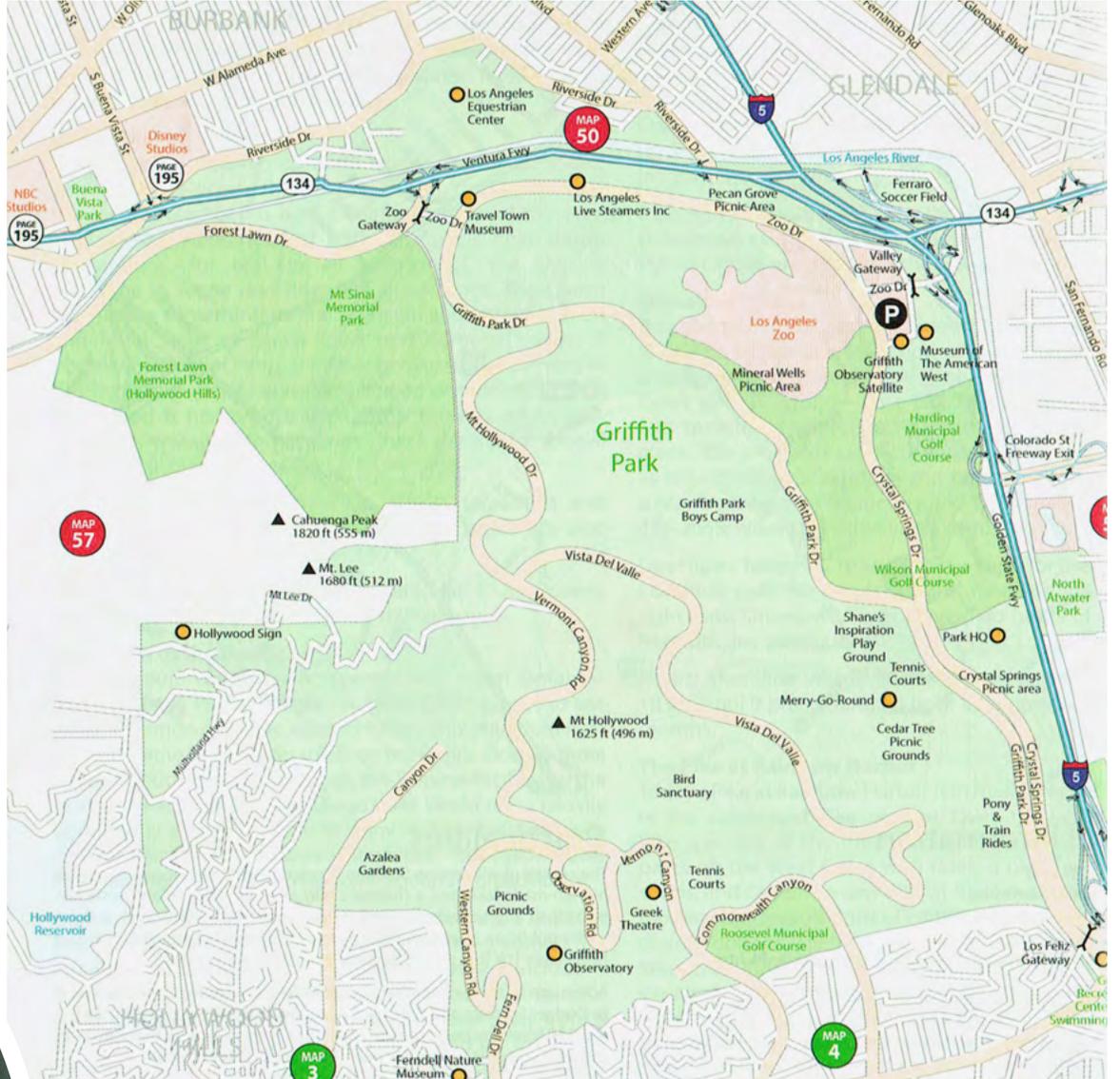
Fern Dell (open 6 a.m.—11 p.m., picnicking facilities; free), in the southwestern end of the park is a heavily wooded ravine with a tumbling brook, rock pools, and bowers of ferns ranging in variety from large tree-ferns to tiny moss-like specimens. They have been growing there from the time when, according to legend, the ravine was used by the Cahuenga Indians for tribal council meetings, and called Mococahuenga (council grounds of the Cahuenga).¹

Above: *This spot with its multi-trunked sycamore leaning over clusters of Tasmanian tree and Western sword ferns was Fern Dell's most photographed location (Bob Plunkett, L.A. Postcard Co., c. 1937).*

Inset: *Frank Shearer, the second head of the Los Angeles' parks, applied his extensive training and experience to a big expansion of the system. The American Institute of Park Executives recognized his abilities by electing him to its one-year presidency position in 1932 (Park and Recreation, October 1932).*

Right top: *Map of Griffith Park. Not for Tourists, NFT: Not For Tourists Guide to Los Angeles 2017 (New York: Not For Tourists, 2016).*

This paragraph, not atypical of the output of the Federal Writers Program guides, combines myth and fact; but, more importantly, in this instance Fern Dell stands on its own as a destination. Like many famous locales, the ravine's renown has, in the intervening 70-plus years, faded. A review of four contemporary guides to the capital of the Southland indicates that only one, the “Rough Guide,” allots any text to this singular preserve. Moreover, it



characterizes Fern Dell as a “a bucolic glade of ferns,” but then dispenses with it by describing it as “the border” between the park to the east and “an exclusive neighborhood to the west.”²

One representative from the sample, the “NFT Guide to Los Angeles,” does display a map of Griffith Park and that includes, without identifying it as such, Fern Dell’s 200-foot-wide-and-mile long expanse.³ With no reference to its origins as an ancient drainage channel that coursed down

Mt. Hollywood, the plan labels Western Canyon, the parent formation that contains the dell. The eponymous Fern Dell Drive which bisects the dell is also indicated, but none of the adjoining city grid. Yet it is this grid and the ravine’s relationship to it that was the original *raison d’être* for Fern Dell’s existence.

In 1910, when planning for the area began, the city’s primary concern was access to mountainous Griffith Park. At that time the only formal entry to the 3015-acre expanse was on the north, or San Fernando, side. No road penetrated the Hollywood edge of Griffith Jenkins Griffith’s munificent gift to the populace.⁴ A pre-existing grassy picnic ground—in 1912 the site of a speech by politico and forest conservationist Gifford Pinchot—was assembled with other parcels to create the park’s formal entry.⁵ The new, interior entry road continued, slightly off center, the north-south trajectory of Western Avenue, above Franklin Avenue and contiguous to Los Feliz Boulevard. The subject area was called Western, and, alternately, Mocoahuenga Canyon. In addition to the road, the plan for the entry envisioned a waterway, playgrounds, and a stone viewing tower. With the exception of the tower, by the early 1920s, these goals were largely achieved. In the interim, however, a more challenging ambition had taken hold. The idea of a stream-side fernery was introduced. At this very early period, with the focus still on the lower section, the intention was for the



well-watered ravine to become a natural garden showcasing a wide representation of the division Pteridophyta.

The ravine's new orientation can be attributed in no small part to the appearance in 1908 of a talented and highly trained Scot, Frank Shearer (1876–1971). Shearer began his 25-year employment with the Los Angeles Park Department just two years after arriving in the Southland. The 34-year-old engineer was initially engaged to build five miles of a 14-mile park road. Before several

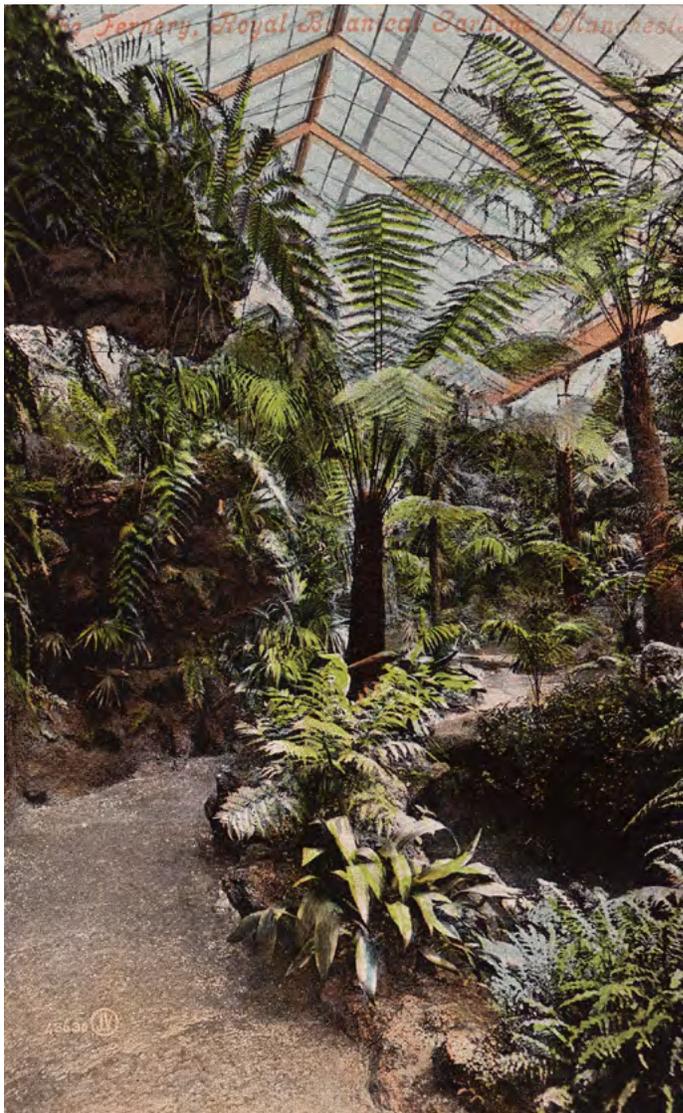
months had passed, the new employee had performed so capably that he was promoted to the position of acting director—soon to be director—for all of the city's parks. Los Angeles was blessed. From the whole length and breadth of the West Coast only a handful of people at that time would have been as well qualified as Shearer to fill this important position.

Born in Aberdeenshire in the rural north of Scotland, the new park director's working life began at the age of 16 with employment as a farm hand. Five years service as a gardener followed that early period of manual labor. The "thoroughly honest and sober" Highlander then relocated to Edinburgh to take courses in business.⁶ For his next pursuit Shearer enrolled in a three-year program run jointly by the Royal Botanic Garden (RBGE) and the University of Edinburgh. With this arrangement a student would pursue courses in horticulture, forestry, surveying, and landscape gardening, while simultaneously working at the botanical garden. By the time of his completion of the program, our Scot had charge of the herbaceous department and all RBGE's exterior work.⁷ Lured by the much-touted opportunities across the Atlantic, Shearer moved again, finding ready employment with prominent East Coast estates.⁸ Heading further west, the restless Scot built, according to a self-authored biographical entry,

Above left: By 1928 Fern Dell was ready for showcasing in the Park Department's second annual report. Tree ferns, sword ferns, and chain ferns thronged the path and Fern Dell Creek (Board of Park Commissioners, City of Los Angeles, Annual Report 1928).

Center: Multiple rows of dry-stacked, recycled concrete walls, legacies from the 1932-'33, city employment initiative, bound the slopes behind and in front of the upper picnic area restroom (1926), mark the walking path, and outline the edge of the east tributary. Also in abundance are the 1985 faux wood concrete railings.

*Far right: Fernery, Royal Botanical Gardens. British ferneries were to be found in both residential and botanic gardens, such as the Royal Botanical Gardens in Manchester, but less expectedly they also appeared at seaside resorts, restaurants, theaters, and lunatic asylums (Sarah Whittingham, *The Victorian Fern Craze* (Oxford: Shire Publications, 2011).*



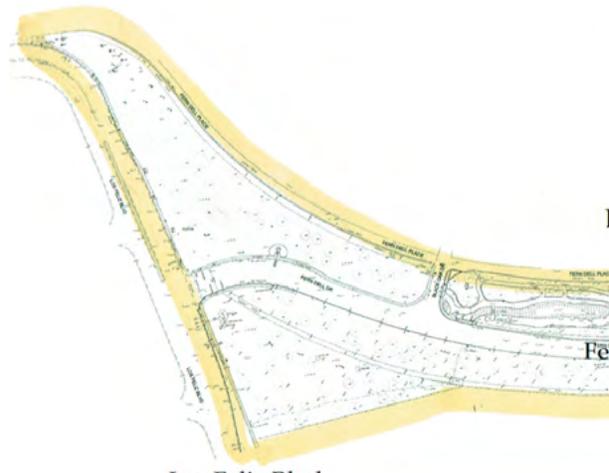
Denver's first boulevard and, in addition, supervised the parks in one of its early neighborhoods—both work experiences that would serve him well in his next advancement.⁹

In 1910, the year Frank Shearer was appointed permanent director of the Park Department, East Hollywood was still a rural, unincorporated enclave that only that year joined the small but dynamic city to its south. Part of a larger farming community Los Feliz Avenue was noted for its nurseries, one of which belonged to Edward Sturtevant, a transplant from New Jersey and a specialist in aquatic plants. Sturtevant had been active in promoting the Western Avenue park entry and for a couple of years (until his untimely death in 1922) would continue to have influence on the vale's development.

In a more official capacity, leading lawyer Henry O'Melveny, was, according to Shearer, "the authority on the Board on all matters pertaining to plants."¹⁰ As committed as these two supporters were, it is unlikely that either of them would have come up with the idea of recasting the ravine as a fernery. However, the fact of their support would have given the up-and-coming newcomer the courage to advocate for such a transformation.

Shearer was raised, schooled, and toiled in the gardens and greenhouses of a country that, for over 70 years—from 1840 to 1914—hunted, imported, sold, and generally apotheosized any and all species of the division Pteridophyta. Botanic gardens, nurseries, wealthy landowners, and amateur naturalists amassed multiple specimens in myriad greenhouses and conservatories. Shearer could hardly have avoided the plant group during his gardening years: in Gordon Castle's (Morayshire) two conservatories, in the Coltness Estate's "extensive gardens and large ranges of glasshouses," or in the mixed planting of RBGE's rock garden.¹¹ In addition, while employed at the Coltness Estate in Lanarkshire, the young horticulturist would have been close by Glasgow's Kibble Palace, a massive greenhouse with an elaborate fern display.

The U.S. horticultural community was not immune to the pteridomania that possessed the United Kingdom. The year 1892 saw the founding of the American Fern Society. Frances Theodora Parsons' *How to Know the Ferns* appeared six years later. Even before these landmark dates, the fashion for *Asplenium*, *Dryopteris*, and *Woodwardia* had reached the Pacific Coast. One major conduit was, significantly, a Scot, an earlier one. Upon becoming director of San Francisco's parks in 1887, John McLaren inherited a Conservatory showcasing ferns. Deeming that insufficient, he initiated



Los Feliz Blvd.

plans for an “Australian Tree Fern Dell.”¹² Surviving documents indicate a distant and formal relationship at this time between the two California Scot superintendents. Even without that bond, Los Angeles tended to take inspiration from the park activities of the larger city to the north.

Even as the vogue was declining in Britain, ferns were holding their value in the Southland. As Shearer explained to Sturtevant in the spring of 1916, he had to prioritize shaping the existing stream over planting it, because the department lacked the finances to hire a watchman to guard the vegetation.¹³ In reality, for at least the preceding two years, the Montgomery Brothers, a New Zealand operation (of which almost nothing is known), had been building weirs and pools in the lower stream, while at the same time reinforcing the banks with rocks and tree stumps. According to Mike Eberts’ *Griffith Park, A Centennial History*, the Park Commissioners first began serious consideration of planting ferns along the stream the winter of 1916, one result being the transplanting of 400 feathery Woodwardia natives from the eastern side of the park.¹⁴ Perhaps because they were indigenous, fear of their theft would appear not to have been an issue, because the “Watchman’s Cottage” was not completed until the following year.

For the first few years of the 1920s, we have mainly anecdotal information on the progress of the ravine. From one letter of the three that have survived his tenure as park superintendent, we can see that Shearer is determinedly pursuing the fernery concept. Nor

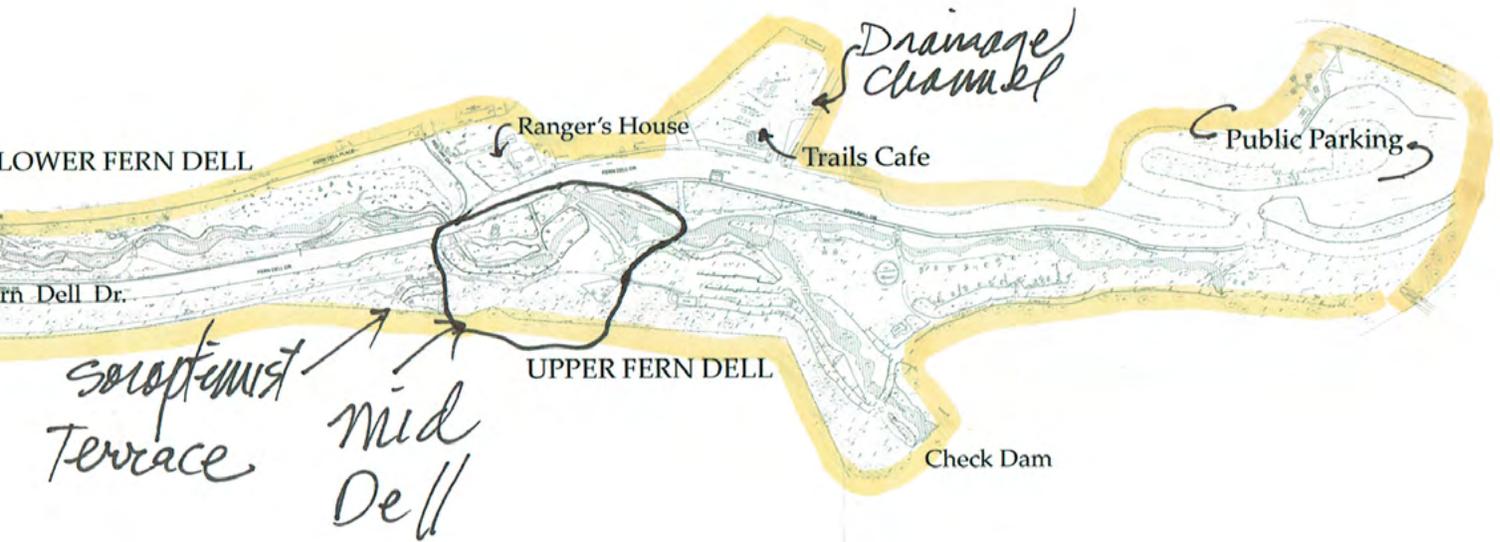
does the determined director suffer any interference with his goal, even if the culprit, in this instance, happens to be the powerful water czar William Mulholland. Listing the ravished vegetation—“9 tree ferns, 6 woodwardias (sic), and 17 hedge plants”—the vigilant Scot holds his fellow civil servant responsible for the destruction wrought by his party of water surveyors.¹⁵ Almost at the same time, the dell suffers the greater loss of Edward Sturtevant, but in his place gains Harry Johnson, an eminent botanist and former employee of Sturtevant’s Cahuenga (the early name for East Hollywood) Water Gardens.¹⁶

With Johnson lending his expertise and Mulholland cowed into making good on replacements, the dell by the end of the decade revealed the beginnings of a lush, semi-tropical world of enthralling plants and rustic appurtenances. Water bubbled over stony weirs. The earliest known photo of Fern Dell (shown on page 10), extracted from the 1928 Park Commissioners’ second annual report, shows the site’s exotic allure. Under a canopy of sycamores and alders, Tasmanian tree ferns (*Dicksonia antarctica*) jostle with the brighter green Australian tree fern (*Alsophila australis*). A throng of sword ferns (*Polystichum munitum*), maidenhair ferns (*Adiantum pedatum*), and Pacific chain ferns (*Woodwardia fimbriata*) share the edge of the decomposed granite walks with iris species, baby tears (*Soleirolia soleirolii*), and other introduced plantings. Enhancing the exotic effect is the bucolic atmosphere conveyed by the use of rough-cut rock walls with log copings, stumps for seats and edging, and peeled wood bridge railings. By the late 1920s Fern Dell was a small treasure, a star in a firmament focused on beautification.¹⁷

For ease of discussion, the ravine can be divided into two contrasting parts: a lower and an upper dell. While the lower, or southern, segment features a single winding stream and is narrow, moist, and heavily shaded; the upper, or northern, half is dry, open and spreading with two diverging tributaries. The two creeks embrace a spacious picnic ground with a packed-earth surface and scattered trees. Towards the eastern end of the glade the views open

Above left: *Between the end of 1938 and 1941 three rotating groups of Civilian Conservation Corps workers implemented the Park Department’s plans for upgrading the two tributaries that run through the upper picnic area. The imitative stonework, as this view of picnicking along the west tributary shows, is remarkable for both its naturalism and its good-to-excellent state of preservation.*

Above right: *The map shows the entrance; the two divisions, upper and lower; Fern Dell Drive; the north parking lot, and such prominent features as the Watchman’s Cottage and the lazy picnicker’s choice, the Trails Café. Courtesy Vonn Marie May | Friends of Griffith Park.*



up to include the high ridges to the northeast (and, from 1935, Griffith Observatory). As early as 1926, according to an article in the *Los Angeles Times*, the original formulation of this upper area was attracting as many if not more people than the shady, thickly planted lower paths and pools. In fact, so much auto traffic was headed to the picnic ground in the upper glade that the Park Department, the piece announced, was installing a parking lot. Moreover, in order to allay the dust stirred up by the hordes of grove-bound picnickers, it was also paving the first quarter mile of the entry road. Van M. Griffith, son of the park's benefactor and head of the Park Commission, assured the citizenry that the city was also enlarging the picnic area and adding new accommodations.¹⁸ A couple of years later the Park Board in its *Annual Report 1928* celebrates the ravine with the verdant view described above, but nothing of the upper picnic grove, despite the popular appeal of the seating under the sycamores.

Three plans have survived from that early expansion in 1926.¹⁹ Four other, extant blueprints identify the two additional campaigns of the first half of the last century: one between 1931 and 1932 and a second, from 1937 to 1941. A construction drawing for a picnic shelter honors the million-dollar "Unemployment Relief Bond," which spurred the first of these two drives. After a hiatus, two plans—an addition to the "Foreman's Cottage," (formerly the "Watchman's Cottage" and now the Nature Museum) and a reconfiguration of the upper two streams—are legacies from the next employment effort, i.e., the federal work program heralded by Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal.

The existence of these paltry few plans raises two questions: Why aren't there more drawings and why is there a five-year hiatus between the Depression-era sets? After all, the '30s was awash in federal spending. One answer is climate. In this decade, to an extreme degree, flooding followed drought. Much of the work in Griffith Park and elsewhere was an ad hoc response to the presence of either too little water or too much. Flooding hit the city and its slopes in 1934 and again, even more severely, in 1938. The

annual reports, the Park Board's minutes, Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) and WPA documents from 1935 until the end of the federal work program make constant reference to the elements of water control: waste ways, spillways, flumes, check dams, and sanitary sewers. Exacerbating the risk of floods was the scourge of fire. A disastrous brush fire in 1933 killed 42 relief workers and denuded the upper slopes of Western and Vermont Canyons. When an unseasonal downpour two years later hit these canyons, men rushed to build 50 to 60 check dams to prevent widespread landslides. Besides being frequently dramatic, this flood-control work was essential to Fern Dell's long-term existence.

Climatic events were disruptive, but so also were politics, both within and without the Park Department. Externally, the mid-1930s was a period of considerable turmoil in Los Angeles. A recall movement, complete with bombings, was successful in toppling Mayor Frank Shaw.²⁰ The election of a new mayor in the fall of 1938 caused a complete turnover of the Park Board. Not long before that upheaval, the deposed Board had removed Shearer as superintendent, one year after honoring him for a quarter-century of dedicated service. WPA and CCC files contain some hints that the charges of unresponsiveness and lack of cooperation may have had some basis in reality. At the outset of the WPA program the Los Angeles Park Department struggled to produce acceptable projects. A series of poorly prepared applications were turned down or rescinded. When finally the department requested \$600,000 for systemwide improvements, President Roosevelt, impatient with small plans, approved a sum of \$3.5 million.²¹ Another clue suggests that, remiss as the park department leadership may have been, it was not the only party at fault. One CCC official, unable to get an archery range built in a timely manner, accused the old Board of incompetence and looked for relief from its replacement, which included the return of the past president, Van Griffiths.²² (The same upheaval included the return of Frank Shearer, not as park director, but as vice-president of the Park Commission.)

In defense of the Shaw-appointed board, it was quick to act when

the subject at hand was not bows and arrows but ferns and weirs. In the winter of 1938 the Park Commission convened a special meeting to review in-house landscape architect S. E. Sanders' plan for revamping the two north-south tributaries. Sanders proposed to refine and to augment the hasty, semi-skilled work of the '32-'33 massing by a city-run work relief program of day laborers in the Western Canyon. From that relief cycle came concrete slab-and-stone retaining walls.²³ Reconnaissance photos taken a few years later in anticipation of the arrival of a CCC camp depict long strings of concrete slab-and-stone walls, found in several parks of this period, and laid, in this case, to help shape and contain the course of the two rivulets. While retaining these outer rock borders, Sanders' plan proposed a more naturalistic treatment to replace the stones of the streams' immediate banks and those laid across the beds themselves. Faux-concrete rock weirs and edging would mimic the wearing effect of repeated bouts of flash flooding. At the same time, and with the severe storm of 1934 in mind, the worn-appearing boulders, shown in details on the drawing, would be larger and more effective flood deterrents. Another three years would pass before a CCC company, the fourth and last to labor in Western Canyon, would realize Sanders' plan.

This final work crew came from Florida and worked from February of 1941 to the spring of the following year, virtually the final days of the CCC. According to CCC Special Investigator M. J. Bowen, the Floridians were "splendid," a marked improvement over their North Carolina predecessors.²⁴ Their supervisors, two "senior landscape architects and engineers," must also have been capable, because the company did a remarkable job of transforming concrete into warped, dented, and worn boulders. So impressive were the results, a "LEM," or "local experienced man"—the Southland at this time possessed more than one artisan with this skill—might have assisted them.

By the end of the Depression the dell was in peak condition. The combination of its popularity, well-funded work programs, and a series of damaging storms had inspired intensive episodes of expansion and remodeling. Recently, after a long phase of decline, pressure has once again mounted, this time for restoration of the ravine's once-celebrated lush and rustic atmosphere. Thus it has become essential to understand the appearance of the dell at its apex.

Friends of Griffith Park, a non-profit, was founded in 2010 to advocate for and support the park's natural resources and history. One of the first needs identified was the revitalization of Fern Dell, one of the most important and historic features of the park. In 2011 the Friends commissioned PGAdesign to prepare a cultural landscape report. The resulting report focused on Fern Dell's current condition and urged a more in-depth history. The concerned organization followed up with a request that the authors of this piece extensively research the history of Fern Dell.

One of at least two questions that linger from that study, which perforce covered the decade of 1931 to 1941, is how far up the canyon did the planting go? Another is did the east and west branches of Fern Dell Creek run only seasonally? To answer either it is necessary to understand the development of Griffith Park's water supply system. Reports from 1928 on indicate that for a period of 10 years Los Angeles invested heavily in an irrigation system for its largest park. As early as 1931, a 1,683-foot pipeline was laid in the dell to supply circulating water to an unspecified upper section from the lower pools.²⁵ Eight years later the ravine was hooked up to the mountainous preserve's wider system. A 1941 water plan illustrates that sprawling network. Two supply lines run through the ravine, one as far as the recently added,

northern parking lot. In addition, another two lines run down to the upper picnic area from the nearly 1,000-foot-high ridge topped by Griffith Observatory.²⁶

Without considering that irrigation map, the very design of the dell's upper reaches suggests that an uninterrupted supply of water was intended to course through the carefully crafted streams. Presently, the two tributaries are empty most of the year. At their base a ragged islet juts illogically out of an empty and weedy depression meant as a pond. A July 1938 field report supports the case for the historical purpose of four seasons of water. In his correspondence from the field, Max E. Walliser, landscape architect out of the National Parks headquarters in San Francisco, reviews two plans prepared by Sanders for the picnic area. One is the aforementioned construction plan; the other is a lost "water and planting plan."²⁷ Earlier, at the end of the first development campaign, Helen King gives further weight to more irrigation and more planting. In her column, the garden editor summarizes the progress in the building and planting of the "lower end" of the upper part. She reassures her readers that the planting will continue further up. Yet more support for the idea that vegetation might have been part of the last development campaign is contained in a paragraph in a long article describing a 1940 overall park master plan; but that mention assumes that native plants would be part of an enlargement of Fern Dell.²⁸

Maybe some of this vaunted planting did exist at one point. On one hand, we have the testimony of a spokesman from the era. From 1936 Donald Clinton lived at Western Avenue and Los Feliz Boulevard, passing much of his boyhood in the canyon. Although his strongest memory is of the upper picnic area's spreading trees, he recalls, in the section "north of the botanical areas" long rows of fixed benches set on decomposed granite. Clinton's distinction between a botanical part and a contrasting section beyond it speaks to the historic divide. Moreover, although this son of storied Los Angeles restaurateur Clifford Clinton, remembers lawns and a turfed area for baseball in the northern half—landscaping that would not have existed without the recent installation of irrigation, he maintains that, in regard to the two streams, "water ran through Fern Dell" but "not up in the picnic area."²⁹

Somewhat contradicting Clinton's recall (and we have to concede that ten-year-olds are not generally interested in Pteridophyta) is an extract from the 1950s memoir of a park maintenance supervisor. Richard Bullard remembers "adding an acre of ferns" along with the construction of new concrete basins.³⁰ It is possible then that for a time the fernery broached into the upper dell. However, by the '60s, when the decline of Fern Dell most likely began in earnest, that extension of the original botanic character was undoubtedly already lost.

In contrast, the war years of the 1940s were good ones for Western Canyon. Although expansion of Fern Dell ended with the disbandment of the New Deal work agencies in '42, gas rationing assured Fern Dell's continued popularity. Gradually, however, the site lost its prominence as a recreation destination. The transplants from Iowa and Illinois no longer gathered, if they gathered at all, for massive state picnics. By the mid-1940s Donald Clinton and his brother were no longer trolling for crawfish at the foot of Fern Dell Creek. Nor did the "immaculate" maintenance that Clinton remembers survive much past the '50s. Although the rotting peeled log bridges were replaced, their replacements were metal versions from a catalogue. Simulated concrete faux-bois railings replaced the original log ones. Gaps in the stone walls and weirs were patched with unsightly daubs of cement. The horticultural

situation was even worse. Invasive plants and over-active pteridophytes squeezed out desirable specimens. By the beginning of this century, only 15 of a one-time array of 42 different fern species were still extant.

The wolf is not yet at the door. In a greenhouse at Long Beach City Community College, instructor Jorge Ochoa propagates rows and rows of fern specimens taken from the private garden of fern expert and author, the late Barbara Hoshizaki. She was a long time Fern Dell caretaker as well as president of the Los Angeles International Fern Society. Hoshizaki's intention was that these plants would eventually be placed in a revived Fern Dell. Friends of Griffith Park wants to honor that intention. When they do, Los Angeles will be able to boast once more of possessing one of this country's most prominent, maybe even the most prominent, survivor from the Victorian fern craze.

Endnotes

1. Los Angeles; a guide to the city and its environs, compiled by workers of the Writers' Program of the Work Projects Administration in Southern California ... Sponsored by the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors (New York: Hastings House, 1941)
2. Jeff Dickey, *The Rough Guide to Los Angeles & Southern California* (New York: Penguin, 2011).
3. NFT not for Tourists Guide to Los Angeles (New York: Not For Tourists, Inc., Skyhorse Publishing, 2016).
4. "Plan Boulevards for Griffith Park Entrances." *Los Angeles Herald*, 13 December 1910. It took five years before the city managed to finalize purchase of the land.
5. "Pinchot Talks to City Club Guests at Griffith Park." *Los Angeles Herald*, 11 May 1912. The talk took place in the Mococahuenga picnic grounds; Mike Eberts, *Griffith Park, A Centennial History* (Los Angeles: The Historical Society of Southern California, 1996), photo p. 128.
6. The characterization is in Shearer's reference from the Coltness estate. (Probationer's Records, Archives of the RBGE).
7. Probationer Gardener records, Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh, courtesy of Leonie Patterson, Archivist.
8. Shearer initially worked on the Samuel Tilden estate in Yonkers, N.Y. (Later to be developed into a famous garden under the ownership of Samuel Untermyer.) He was also employed by Jay Gould's son Howard on Long Island's North Shore. That job was followed by a stint on Cumberland Island off Georgia in the employ of the Carnegies.
9. "Frank Shearer, Los Angeles County Biographies," from John Steven McGroarty, *California of the South*, vol. 4 (Chicago: Clarke Publishing, 1933): 511-12. (Accessed from <http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~nmpelton/lashe.htm>, 2012).
10. Shearer to E. D. Sturtevant, 7 February 1916 to E. D. Sturtevant (Park Miscellaneous Facilities File, Los Angeles Municipal Archives).
11. Information regarding Gordon Castle and the no longer extant Coltness Estate was provided by Christopher Dingwall in an e-mail to Leonie Patterson, RBGE, 22 May 2014.
12. *Pacific Bank Book of California* (San Francisco, 1888): 87. Raymond H. Clary, *The Making of Golden Gate Park: The Early Years: 1865-1906* (San Francisco: California Living Books, 1980): 67; Christopher Pollock, *San Francisco's Golden Gate Park: A Thousand and Seventeen Acres of Stories* (Portland, Oregon: West Winds Press, 2001): 46.
13. Shearer to E. D. Sturtevant, 5 April 1916 ("Park Miscellaneous Facilities" file, Los Angeles Municipal Archives).
14. Eberts, "Griffith Park," 128, 129.
15. F. Shearer to William Mulholland, 9 April 1923 ("Park Facilities" file, 1923, Los Angeles City Archives). In this letter the superintendent refers to the canyon as "Fern Dale." In his 1917 "Griffith Park Improvement Association" report, Van M. Griffiths cites the approval of a "Fern Canyon" (Van M. Griffiths Papers, UCLA). In 1923, in its first annual report, the Park Department finalizes the name, choosing "Fern Dell." (The modern usage has changed again with the frequent contraction of the two words to "Ferndell.")
16. W. C. Drummond, "The Fern Dell, Los Angeles," *American Fern Journal*, 48 (January-March 1959): 3. Victoria Padilla in her 1962 survey also mentions Johnson. Harry Johnson bought Sturtevant's business, relocated it and renamed it Johnson's Water Gardens. Chuck Staples, "Harry Johnson, Sr. Biography." Drummond also gives credit to Walt Lambert, Assistant Superintendent of Parks, who was in charge of the municipal nursery. <http://cssaarchives.com/HARRY%20JOHNSON,%20SR,%20BIOGRAPHY.pdf>. Accessed 29 August 2016.
17. This campaign included the establishment of the Municipal Nursery (1927), the hiring of the Olmsted Brothers and Harland Bartholomew & Assoc. (1927), and the launching of a street tree program (1930). October 1931; Eberts, 82.
18. "Park Road Rebuilding Job Begun: Western Avenue Entrance to Griffith to be Ready in 30 Days," *Los Angeles Times* (henceforth LAT), 15 March 26. The lower dell also received attention. Grassy plots were added to the sides of the stream and walks.
19. The plans detail a revised entrance, an entrance toilet, and fencing for the Foreman's Cottage, Los Angeles City Archives.
20. The most convincing retell of the political turmoil is by Fred W. Viehe in "The Recall of Mayor Frank L. Shaw: A Revision," *California History* (Winter, 1980/1981). In this version Shaw is a hero and Clifford Clinton, owner of the famed Clifton's Cafeteria, planted the bomb at his own home.



21. T935, Roll 4, Index to Reference Cards for Work Projects, Administrative Project Files, 1935-1937, California (National Archives and Records Administration, San Francisco [henceforth NARA, SF]). (The archive is in nearby San Bruno.) One possible, contributing factor was Shearer's marriage in March 1935 to Marviane Harvey, age 24. Pursuant to this marriage, Shearer, age 60, was busy building a house for his bride in the San Fernando Valley.
22. "Supplementary Report, Camp SP-40 California, n.d., probably June 1939 (NARA, Washington, DC).
23. 15 February 1938, *Park Board Minutes*, July 8, 1937-July 7, 1938. The LAT's garden editor announces in her column the completion of stone work for "more terraces and water pools, extending much further up the canyon." Helen W. King, "A Princely Gift: Nature's Liberal, too, in Griffith Park," LAT, 4 December 1932.
24. M. J. Bowen, Glendale, CA, to the Director of the CCC, Washington, DC, 28 February 1941 (National Archives, Washington, DC).
25. Park Board, *Annual Report*, '30, '31: 36. Also cited were new walks, three rock terraces, a grotto, and "quantity of plants and new ferns."
26. George W. Borden, "Memorandum for the Regional Director," National Park Service, Branch of Engineering, Region IV, San Francisco, 30 January 1941. Irrigation plan for Western Canyon, *Park Board Minutes*, n.d.
27. Max E. Walliser, "Monthly Narrative Report to Chief Architect," U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Region IV, 26 June to 25 July 1938: n.p., RG 79, Box 18 (NARA, SF).
28. Helen W. King, "A Princely Gift: Nature's Liberal, too, in Griffith Park," LAT, 4 December 1932. Larry Black, "It'll Make Central Park Look Like a Back Yard," LAT, 7 January 1940. Black is reporting on the completion of Ralph Cornell's master plan for the park.
29. Telephone interview with Donald Clinton, 24 April 2014. Donald Clinton's father, Clifford, was a controversial figure in the citizen reform movement that sought to recall Mayor Shaw. Friends of Griffith Park questions the existence of baseball in the canyon.
30. Richard E. Bullard, "Fern Dell." 28 March 1956 (unpublished manuscript formerly in Van M. Griffith Papers, UCLA Special Collections but as of 10 June 2016, reported lost) from Eberts: 163.

Phoebe Cutler is a frequent contributor to Eden from San Francisco and a member of the journal's editorial board. Vonn Marie May heads a cultural land planning business in San Diego.

Above: 1937 postcards, from the Collection of Friends of Griffith Park.

The Bartlett Book of Garden Elements

A Practical Compendium of Inspired Designs for the Working Gardener

Book Review by Libby Motika

When authors Michael and Rose Bartlett contemplated a garden book, they were certain of one thing: They did not want a coffee table book. They wanted a useful compendium of ideas that would offer multiple possibilities for garden design—a practical encyclopedia of garden elements.

Their book, *The Bartlett Book of Garden Elements* (David R. Godine), is structured as an alphabet of some two dozen man-made objects such as arbors, fences, paving, sculpture, decks, and walls that add structure, direction, focus, privacy, and inspiration to a garden.

After more than 30 years visiting and photographing gardens all over the world, the couple conceived the idea of a book with a particular focus on garden details. Michael, a landscape architect, believed that photographs and drawings provided a spectrum of ideas for his own designs and would help clients envision the plan he developed.

“Michael had gardening flowing through his body,” says Rose. “His grandfather, Leonard J. Buck, and great-grandfather, Charles Austin Buck, were both amateur horticulturalists who each developed gardens that are now open to the public.” Michael began his practice in Washington, D.C., laying out gardens for embassies, commercial projects and private homes.

In settling on a format for the book, Michael’s scrupulous categorizing of photos according to topic formed a useful blueprint. In addition, the Bartletts’ illustrated lectures on various topics, such as the history, design and function of the elements, helped structure the book.

Michael started an outline for the book imagining a certain amount of text but relying on photos to convey ideas.

When faced with the uncertainty of surviving a cancer diagnosis, Michael devoted all his time to the book, even working on his laptop in the Intensive Care Unit, sketching out the chapters and selecting the appropriate photos.

After his death in 2008, Rose followed his outline and working with Godine editors fleshed out the chapters. Each topic follows



a similar pattern. The chapters begin with the history of the element.

Boot Scrapers, that humble, utilitarian item, have their own chapter and have a fascinating practical and decorative history not only in Western countries but also in India and other parts of Asia. Although it is a common practice to leave one’s shoes outside the house or temple, guests who crossed the thresholds shod were expected to use boot scrapers.

In the Drains chapter, one learns fascinating tidbits about a seemingly mundane subject. The earliest record of pipes being used to direct drainage dates back to 3100 BC, in the Indus Valley of present-day Pakistan and northern India. The ancient Persians considered stormwater runoff sacred and the pollution of it a sin. They collected this valuable natural resource in underground cisterns.

Bringing the reader up to today, the book offers a number of methods to harness water especially in the parched West, including drainage swales, rain barrels, and green roofs.

The history subtitle is followed by design. In the chapter on Porches, Decks and Terraces, the first consideration is the local

climate—sun, wind, and temperature. Personal taste, existing architecture, available space, views, function, and budget should factor into the design. These “outdoor rooms” have foundations, roofs, and supporting elements that should relate to the existing house in design, architectural style, material, and color.

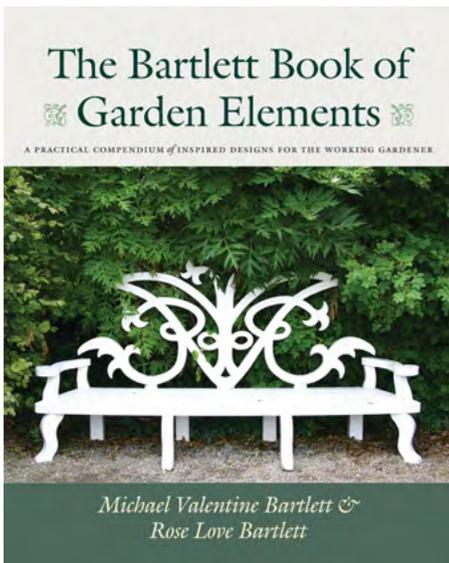
Each chapter then takes up climate and weathering, and finally installation and maintenance. The reader is not overburdened with step-by-step technical instructions, rather made aware of the extensive number of possibilities in design, material, and uses. By focusing solely on garden elements, the authors can offer ideas and practical considerations no matter the region or climate.

In the Allée chapter, the authors choose a lush and inviting walkway along the terrace at Greystone Park in Los Angeles. Designed by Paul Thiene in 1927, the walkway consists of upright cypresses spaced to allow views while defining the path through the garden.

In the Furniture section, a Beatrix Farrand bench at Dumbarton Oaks in the early 1930s is made of teak and iron wire. In the Stairs section, photos illustrate the baroque stairway at the seventeenth-century Troja

Judy Horton's Favorite Books on Garden Ornament

All of these books were part of my early education/training. I've marked the ones I still find very useful with an asterisk. When I am looking for images for a project I most often use architecture and garden "coffee table" books plus images I have torn out of magazines. Over and over I consult books on modernist architecture, Mediterranean-climate gardens, Moorish/Islamic architecture and gardens, and Japanese gardens. I use Dobyns' book, *California Gardens*, and I love David Hicks, *My Kind of Garden*, for more traditional (English/East Coast) garden design. Also, there was a great series of little books first published in Great Britain in 1991 and then in New York by Simon and Schuster. Called *The Library of Garden Detail*, the titles included *The Garden Gate*, *The Garden Trellis*, *The Garden Wall*, *The Garden Bench*, *The Garden Path*, and *Water*.



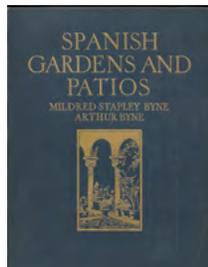
The Bartlett Book of Garden Elements
Michael Valentine Bartlett and
Rose Love Bartlett
David R. Godine Publisher, 270 pages

Palace in Prague, which incorporates sculpture depicting a battle between Olympic gods and Titans. A staircase in New Zealand features mosaics of cobalt blue tiles, pottery shards, and pebbles resting on weathered timber risers.

With more than 1,200 color photos, beautifully reproduced on high-quality paper, the book's axiom is really "Show not Tell." The authors intentionally decided on a high-quality paperback to make the book conveniently transportable.

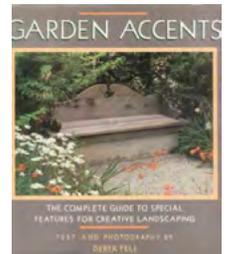
Los Angeles native Libby Motika is a journalist with more than 25 years experience in community newspapers, with a focus on architecture and gardens. She is a board member of the Santa Monica Conservancy and a docent with the Los Angeles Conservancy.

Above: A bronze Diana, as sculpted by Gleb Derujinsky in 1925 and placed in Brookgreen Gardens in 1935. Photo courtesy The Bartlett Book of Garden Elements.



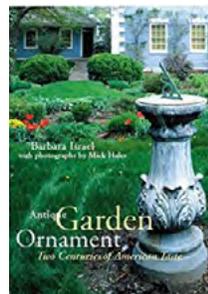
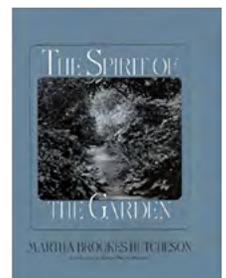
« *Spanish Gardens and Patios*, Mildred S. Byne and Arthur Byne. Philadelphia and London: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1924.

Garden Accents, the Complete Guide to Special Features for Creative Landscaping, Derek Fell. New York: Henry Holt and Company, c. 1987.



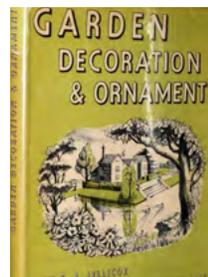
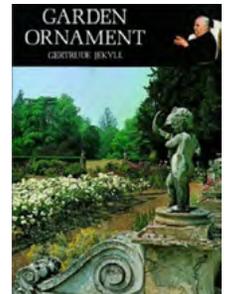
« *Furnishing the Old-Fashioned Garden, Three Centuries of American Summerhouses, Dovecotes, Pergolas, Privies, Fences and Birdhouses*, May Brawley Hill. New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., c. 1998.

Spirit of the Garden, Martha Brookes Hutcheson. Boston: Little Brown and Company, c. 1923.



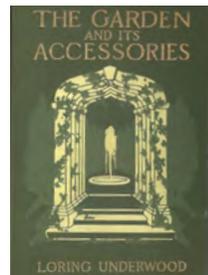
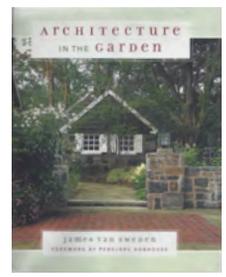
« **Antique Garden Ornament, Two Centuries of American Taste*, Barbara Israel. With a preface by Mark Hampton. Photographs by Mick Hales. Harry N. Abrams, Inc., c.1999. This is a great reference book.

Garden Ornament, Gertrude Jekyll. »
Antique Collectors' Club, c.1982 (originally published 1918).



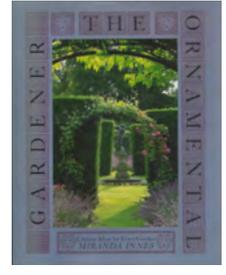
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* *Architecture in the Garden*, James »
van Sweden with Thomas Christopher. Forward by Penelope Hobhouse. New York: Random House, c. 2002.



« *The Garden and Its Accessories*, Loring Underwood. Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1907.

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Judy Horton, a Los Angeles-based garden designer, was a CGLHS Board member from 2005 to 2016, serving as president from 2009 to 2014.

MEMBERS NEWS

FILOLI'S CENTENNIAL

Members living in or planning to visit the Bay Area may wish to know that Filoli, the 654-acre National Trust for Historic Preservation site in Woodside, is continuing to celebrate its centennial. A California State Historic Landmark, the estate is also listed on the National Registry of Historic Places. Each year of its three-year centennial, Filoli has featured an aspect of the property: 2015 was the year of the Land; 2016 was the year of the House and Collections. In 2017, the centennial celebration culminates with the year of the garden. In addition to lectures and exhibitions on the estate's history, Filoli will be presenting new events and programs, including a grand gala.

Right: Magnolias and daffodils at Filoli this spring; fountain in the Wedding Place. Photos by Virginia Kean



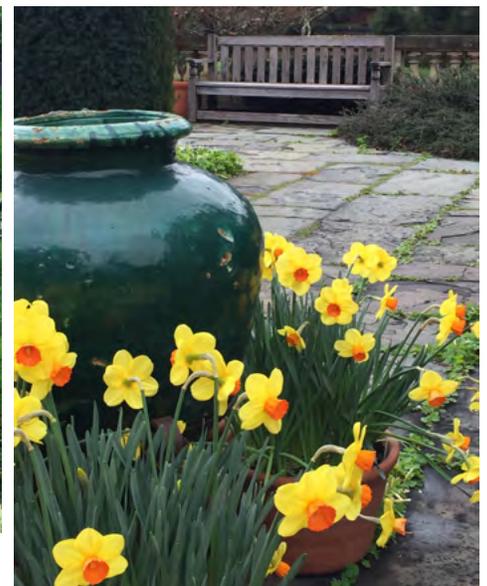
Hannah Carter Japanese Garden | Judy Horton

HANNAH CARTER JAPANESE GARDEN UPDATE

In February The Los Angeles Cultural Heritage Commission unanimously supported the nomination of the Hannah Carter Japanese Garden, now named the Ethel Guiberson Hannah Carter Japanese Garden to recognize Ethel Guiberson, mother of the owner who built the garden in 1959, as well as Hannah Carter wife of Edward Carter who deeded the property to UCLA in 1964, to be designated a Historic-Cultural Monument. The nomination now goes to the LA City Council for final approval. The nomination was submitted by the Los Angeles Conservancy. CGLHS, along with the Garden Conservancy, the Cultural Landscape Foundation, and the Los Angeles Conservancy, was part of a coalition formed in 2012 to save the garden. In 2015 the Hannah Carter family's lawsuit against UCLA was settled, allowing the garden to be sold along with the adjacent house and ensuring that the gardens would be preserved for the next 30 years. Developer Mark Gabay purchased the house and garden in 2016.

Big thanks to Antonia Adezio who called this to my attention when she was president of the Garden Conservancy and I was CGLHS president. Without her guidance and many hours of work, the garden would most likely be gone.

Judy Horton, Past President, CGLHS





BATCHELDER TOUR AND TALK

CGLHS sponsored a Tour and Talk on January 29 in Pasadena in collaboration with the Pasadena Museum of History to view an outstanding exhibition of ceramic and tile work by Ernest Batchelder. An accompanying exhibition highlighted some of the more than 30 ceramics factories operating in Pasadena at mid-century that turned out tableware, souvenirs and art pieces. Exhibition curator Laura Verlaque spoke to a group of about 40 members and visitors on Batchelder and Pasadena's ceramics industry. Following the talk, the group visited Batchelder's house as guests of the current owner, Dr. Robert Winter, who opened both house and garden for a tour. After enjoying a box lunch in the Batchelder garden, ornamented by Batchelder fountains and walls of Batchelder tile, the group visited the Pasadena Playhouse where the Library with its Batchelder fireplace was opened especially for CGLHS. By then it was after 2:30 pm, and many had to leave for home. A few members stayed on to tour other Batchelder sites in the Pasadena Civic Center with tour leader Ann Scheid, using a map of public installations of Batchelder tile in downtown Pasadena created by Sheryl Scott, our talented graphic designer, with the help of Judy Horton and Libby Simon.



From top left: *Tile fountain in the front garden of the Batchelder house in Pasadena; current owner of the Batchelder house, Dr. Robert Winter opened the house and garden to CGLHS members. Photos by Virginia Kean.*

Left: *Ann Scheid and the Batchelder fireplace in the Library of the Pasadena Playhouse. Photo by Pamela Meyer.*

Below: *Tiles on the front of Batchelder's studio; photo by Virginia Kean*





California Garden & Landscape History Society

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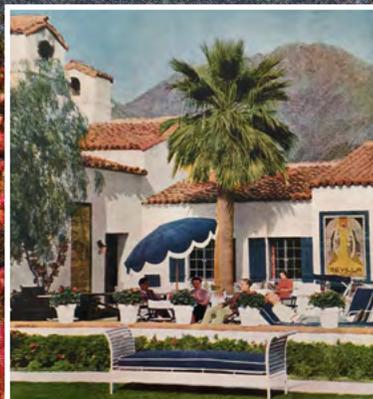
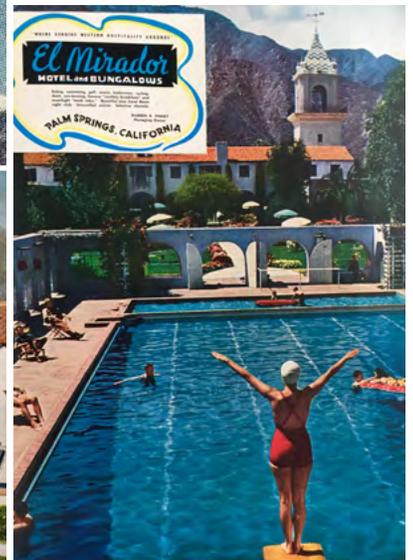
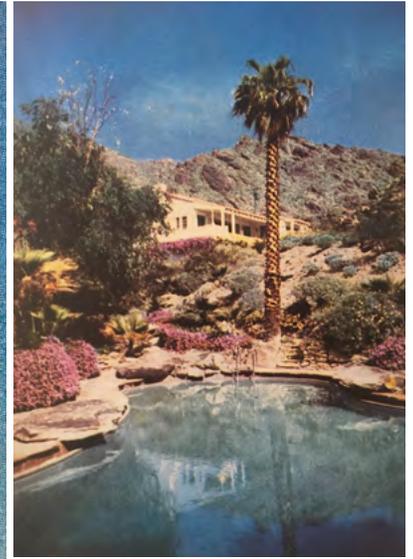
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SAVE THE DATE ANNUAL CGLHS CONFERENCE IN PALM SPRINGS

Friday, October 27 - Sunday, October 29

At this CGLHS conference, the spotlight is on Palm Springs. Through talks and garden tours, we will get a better understanding of, and appreciation for, the natural and designed landscapes of the Coachella Valley. Though a comparatively new city, life in Palm Springs is lived primarily outdoors, making the landscape especially important.

Reservation, fee, and hotel information will be coming in a future issue.



1930s Kodachrome photos of Palm Springs, courtesy of Steven Keylon