

Eden

THE DEFENSE LANGUAGE INSTITUTE
presents



Cultural



Gardens



at the
PRESIDIO OF MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA

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& Landscape
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A path at the LA River's Sepulveda Basin, one of the Annual Conference tour sites. Photograph courtesy Leslie Comras.

Eden

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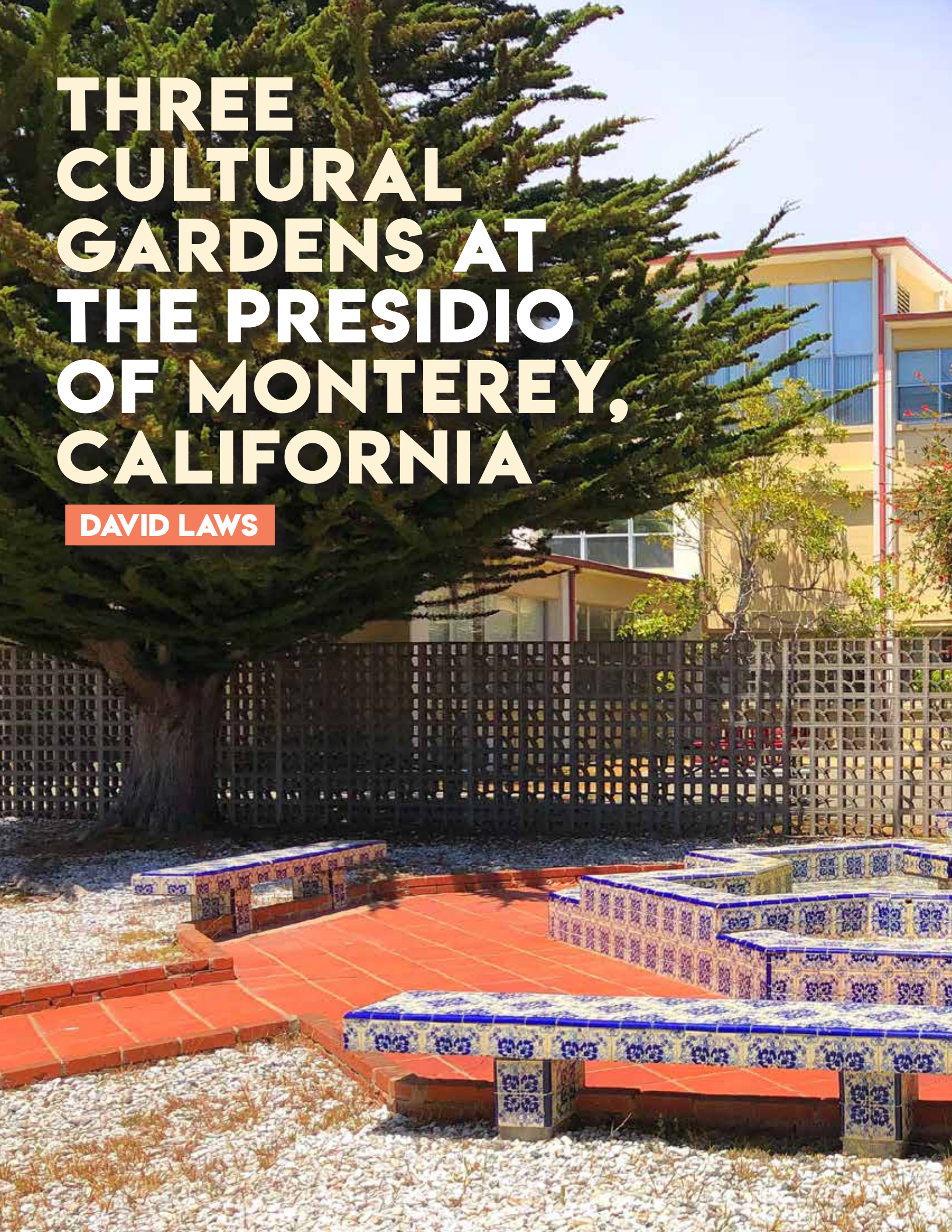
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Above: At the LA River conference, one stop was at the recently opened Taylor Yard Bikeway/Pedestrian Bridge, which was designed by SPF:architects. Photograph courtesy Steven Keylon.

THREE CULTURAL GARDENS AT THE PRESIDIO OF MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA

DAVID LAWS





Fountain on Patio Ibero Americano, DLIFLC,
Presidio of Monterey in June 2022.
Photo: David A. Laws.



"This garden allows me to stay
connected to a part of my past
and to so much of what made me
who I am."

- Gwyn De Amaral



Gwyn De Amaral's father, Major Charles F. De Amaral Jr., served as a helicopter pilot and died in Vietnam in 1965. The Patio Ibero Americano, one of three cultural garden landscapes created on the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center (DLIFLC) campus on the US Army's Presidio of Monterey in California in the 1960s, is dedicated to Maj. De Amaral. Although a civilian, through a Gold Star Survivor Access Badge program, his son visits this spot overlooking Monterey Bay frequently to pay his respects near a plaque honoring his father's service.¹

I visited the garden in June 2022 with Mimi Sheridan of the Alliance of Monterey Area Preservationists (AMAP). Our guides were Laura Prishmont Quimby, Cultural Resources Program Manager, US Army Garrison, Presidio of Monterey, and Cameron Binkley, Command Historian, Defense Language Institute. Ms. Sheridan received a *Recordation and Evaluation Report* of proposed modifications to Buildings 620 and 624 on the Presidio under the National Historic Preservation Act Section 106 prepared by the US Army Corps of Engineers in 2020.

Created as outdoor classrooms where students could experience other aspects of the culture behind the language that they were learning, the gardens were included but not as the primary subject of the report. As a California Garden and Landscape History Society member, Ms. Sheridan requested an opportunity to view the gardens.

HISTORY OF THE DEFENSE LANGUAGE INSTITUTE (DLI)

In 1941 the US Army established a secret Japanese language program on Crissy Field at the Presidio of San Francisco. The Military Intelligence Service Language School (MISLS) moved to Minnesota for the duration of the war. Graduates were credited for contributions that shortened the war by up to two years. In 1946, MISLS relocated to Monterey, where the commandant laid the foundation for a school to teach language proficiency and cultural understanding that could also serve diplomatic and intelligence-gathering demands. Now called the Army Language School, classes in Russian were followed by Arabic, French, Greek, Korean,

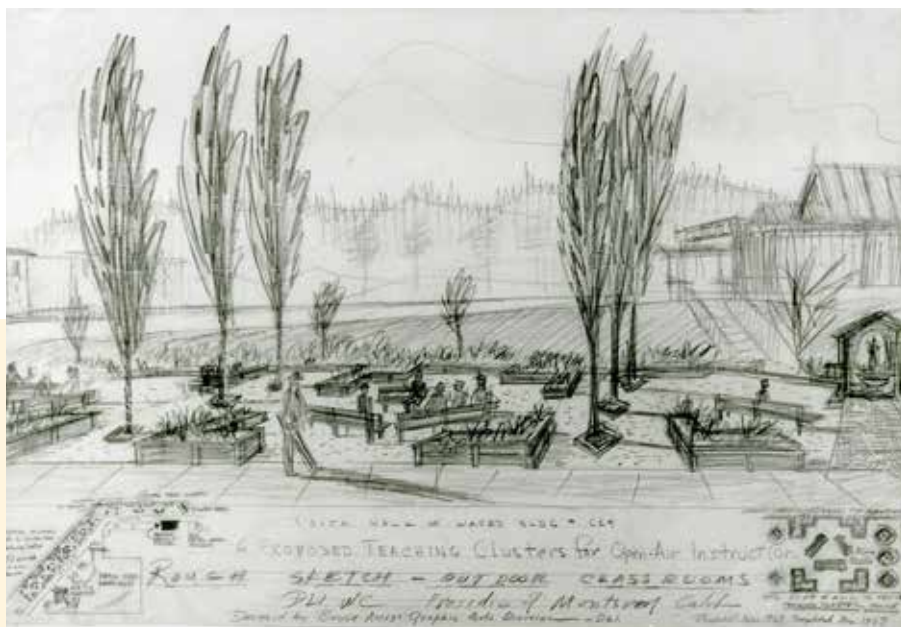
Above: The 11th Cavalry on Soldier Field, Presidio of Monterey, April 29, 1932. Cavalry-era barracks served as the school's first classrooms. Photo: Courtesy of the DLIFLC Command History Office.



Above: DLIFLC logo.

Right: Proposed teaching clusters for outdoor instruction. Photo: Courtesy of the DLIFLC Command History Office.

Bottom: Sketch of planned Asian Garden. Photo: Courtesy of the DLIFLC Command History Office.



Persian, and Turkish in 1947.²

In 1963, to promote efficiency and economy, several programs were consolidated into the Defense Language Institute (DLI) headquartered in Washington, DC. The Army Language School was known as DLI West Coast Branch (DLIWCB) and became the main site for training enlisted linguists. Army planners and architects began to reshape the Presidio of Monterey, where classes were held in cavalry-era barracks. Their design envisioned an academic-style campus with modern instructional facilities

and dormitories in a park-like setting built on the slope above the historic Presidio. A relaxed, non-traditional military atmosphere was intended to facilitate learning by students undergoing intense language instruction.

According to Vincent Zinck, who studied Chinese at DLI in 1969, "We did not wear camos or fatigues, we didn't march to class. It was very loosey-goosey. It was much more like a school than a military base."³

In 1976, the DLIWCB became the Defense Language Institute Foreign



Left: Students view the pond feature with their instructor. Photo: Courtesy of the DLIFLC Command History Office.

Bottom: An instructor helps a student with Japanese pronunciation. Photo: Courtesy of the DLIFLC Command History Office.

Mr. Yamamoto of the Japanese Dept. helps PFC Kalgren with Japanese pronunciation in the Oriental Garden of DLIWC. 1968



Language Center (DLIFLC) and today is the Defense Department's premier school for culturally based foreign language education and training. It is widely regarded as one of the world's finest schools for foreign language instruction.

THE CULTURAL GARDEN IDEA

Due to the myriad distractions of everyday life, language teacher Eric Hawkins considered the typical style of language teaching in schools like "gardening in a gale." The immersive experience at DLI

eliminated many of those issues. Aware that a garden setting facilitates learning has long been acknowledged by educators, teachers at DLI extended the gardening metaphor by creating spaces outside the classroom as an opportunity to better understand cultures associated with the language being studied.

Colonel Richard J. Long, DLI Commandant who approved the gardens' creation, wrote, "I was a strong opponent of teaching languages in a vacuum and advocated coverage of the entire ecology that had nurtured each tongue. ... it was the idea of the



faculty to create gardens in furtherance of this theme.”⁴

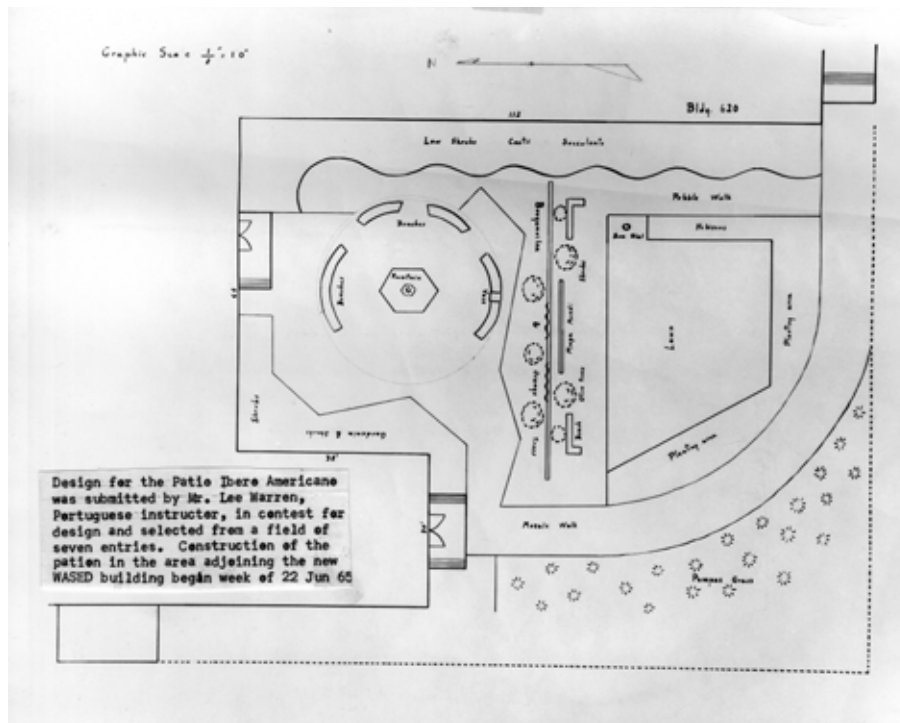
The Institute’s plan to incorporate gardens into the learning environment attracted wide attention in the local press in 1965. A *Monterey Peninsula Herald* headline dated April 28 read, “Army praised for landscape plan at Monterey Presidio.” The *Salinas Californian* wrote: “DLI establishing a Latin garden” (June 25), and a story titled “New gardens started at Presidio” appeared in the *Seaside News Sentinel* on June 30.

Building 624 (Pomerene Hall) was DLI’s first purpose-built classroom facility and

initially housed the Far Eastern Division of the school. The first of the three cultural gardens to be completed, the Asian Garden (originally called the Oriental Garden) is located between two wings of this three-story, mid-century-modern style structure. The other two gardens, the Mediterranean and Ibero Americano, stand on opposite sides of a wing of Building 620 (Nisei Hall) that opened in August 1966.

THE ASIAN GARDEN

Students and faculty constructed the Asian Garden between December 1964 and



Bottom: Winning entry for Patio Ibero Americano design. Photo: Courtesy of the DLIFLC Command History Office.

“As you visit our garden, you will see a tall, narrow stone standing upright: in front and somewhat to one side of it is a flat and broad stone; at the other side is one of middle height. Together they illustrate perfectly that

Here you actually see several basic types of Oriental gardens. The hill garden features a hill which is usually combined with a pond and a stream. A woodland spring arrangement is typical. Flat gardens are those laid out on a flat area without hills or ponds, and the level area is supposed to be the surface of water. Stones, trees, stone lanterns, and water basins form the decorative elements. It

Certain other features of our garden represent different other aspects of Oriental culture. The Ginkgo tree (silver apricot), found in many Chinese gardens, bears a nut considered a delicacy in Chinese cookery and a basic herb in Chinese medicine. There are also a Tatgata buddha near the pond, and a Kwanyin, Goddess of Mercy who hears the prayers of the world—deities in the Buddhist religion.”



Top: Dr. Luis Vargas works on the fountain plumbing in April 1966. Photo: Courtesy of the DLIFLC Command History Office.

Bottom: The De Amaral family at the fountain dedication in 1966. Photo Credit: Courtesy Gwyn De Amaral.

In October 1972, the Monterey Bonsai Club dedicated a memorial in the garden to the more than 3,000 Japanese Americans killed during World War II, the Korean Conflict, and the Vietnam War.⁶

Due to the lack of appropriate horticultural and structural maintenance over the years, little of the grace and elegance conjured by the designers' words and nothing of the bonsai memorial remain today. The following notes regarding the status are abstracted from the *Recordation and Evaluation* report of 2020.

The Asian Garden is not maintained and appears to be little used. The formerly

manicured landscape has become overgrown as ornamental trees and plants have matured. Much of the gravel surfacing once used as a decorative element of the flat garden area is obscured by soil and pine duff and has been sheet washed from drainage runoff. The wooden benches along the base of the slope are no longer present. The original seating has been replaced by a picnic table in the middle of the flat garden area. The fountain feature is not functional and the stream and pond are dry. The decorative ground cover and split bamboo edging around the fountain area have been removed and the area is overgrown. The extant bridge is not original. A replacement bridge remains but is faded, and the wood is decaying. Both of the Asian-influenced stairways have been replaced with concrete steps with aluminum pipe railings.

THE PATIO IBERO AMERICANO

Lee Warren, an instructor of Portuguese, submitted the winning entry out of seven received for the design of the Patio Ibero Americano. Between June 1965 and May 1966, students and faculty of the Spanish and Portuguese Departments helped Iberian department chairman Dr. Luis Vargas with construction. Dr. Vargas volunteered so extensively on the patio that it was known as the "Vargas Patio" for some years after he passed. It comprised two learning spaces, a courtyard, and a patio divided by a decorative cement block wall. Both landscapes incorporated traditions of the Iberian Peninsula, where gardens were linked to the home and functioned as areas for cooling and relaxing.

According to the 3 *Cultural Gardens* booklet, "You enter the first garden through an arch made of wood that was designed specifically to simulate adobe-type brick, a material generally used for arch construction in native locales. There is a large patio with benches. The trellises are covered with bougainvillea, jasmine, honeysuckle and bigonia [trumpet flower]. There are hanging flower pots and flowers in cultivated areas. These plants, although obtained locally, are typical of the flora of the Iberian Peninsula and Latin America. Here and there you will find camellias, poinsettia, lemon and olive trees, some palms, papaya and banana trees, and other species. The Moorish-influenced fountain is the center of the second garden, which includes tiled benches for use by students and instructors. The design of this fountain was copied from one erected in Cadiz, Spain, in honor of America. The 'azulejos' or tiles, although of Moorish pattern, were made in Guadalajara [Mexico]."

The memorial plaque to Major Frank



De Amaral Jr. is mounted on the pierced cement block wall behind the fountain. Maj. De Amaral's father worked as a contractor for Genevieve Bates, owner of Big Sur's Glen Deven Ranch. On learning of his son's death, Mrs. Bates, who was donating the funds for the fountain, suggested the plaque's addition to the wall.

For administrative reasons related to a lack of formal documentation compliant with garrison regulations, the only regular maintenance service for any of the gardens was the suppression of weeds for fire safety precautions. In 2012, Gwyn De Amaral worked with the Family Affairs director to organize students and other volunteers to restore the fountain and trim overgrown plants.

Although these issues are now largely

resolved, neglect over the years has significantly impacted the original concept of the patio landscape as, according to the *Recordation and Evaluation* report of 2020, several historical elements of the inner courtyard are gone. These include the entry arch, benches, a semicircular concrete block wall, a wood-framed trellised walkway, and planters. Grass has replaced the majority of vegetation in the garden plots. Seating now consists of metal picnic tables.

Historic photographs depict an exterior graveled conversation seating area beyond the archway entrance and fountain patio. Twelve wooden benches in the conversation area were separated by diamond-shaped planter boxes that held trees. The seating area has been removed, and only vestiges of gravel remain.

Above: A Women's Army Corps soldier at the archway entrance to the Patio Ibero Americano. Photo: Courtesy of the DLIFLC Command History Office.

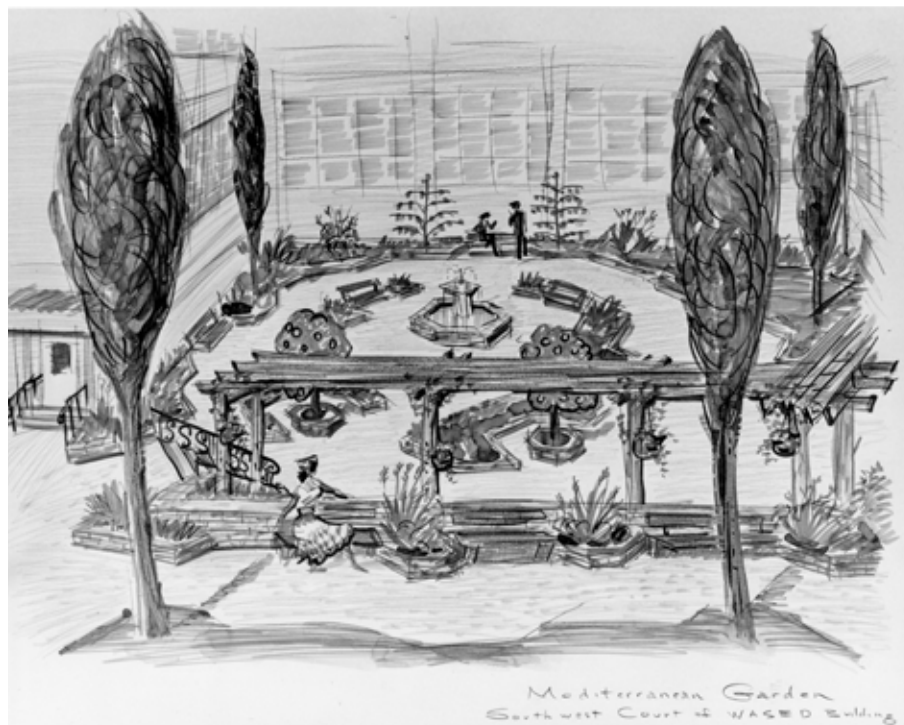


THE MEDITERRANEAN GARDEN

The Mediterranean Garden entry in the *3 Cultural Gardens* booklet notes that “our architect Mr. Sebastian Bordonaro, AIA, and our landscape consultant, Mr. Richard Murray, have tried to capture some of the elements that are part of the history of European gardens. Therefore, we have walkways that follow graceful curves. We have a pool in the center, happily bubbling away. We have some of the

plants used in Roman gardens, such as olive trees, and some of the ones used in formal gardens of the French type, such as boxwood bushes. We have also some aspects of the romantic English garden in the lawn areas. The garden is not quite complete. Benches will be placed in selected spots and a marble slab will be placed across the center of the pool. This slab will have a water jet coming through it.”

Completing the garden’s prominent centerpiece, the raised, blue and white-tiled,



oval pool awaited the delivery of a massive, 6,200-pound black marble slab from a quarry in Carrara, Italy. After visiting Monterey, General Remo Fraton, who established the Italian language school, Scuola Lingue Estere Esercito, arranged for the gift of the marble by the Italian Ministry of Defense “as a testament to our friendship and common ideals”⁷ and in appreciation for the technical advice offered by DLI in helping the Italians create their own school. General Fraton participated in the

Opposite: Wooden benches in groups of three were arranged in triangular conversation areas. Photo: Courtesy of the DLIFLC Command History Office.

Top: Sketch of projected Mediterranean Garden with a fountain. Photo: Courtesy of the DLIFLC Command History Office.

Bottom: The Mediterranean Garden in September 1967 complete except for the marble slab. Photo: Courtesy of the DLIFLC Command History Office.



garden's dedication in October 1970.

Placed as a traverse across the pool, the marble slab carries an inscription "Gift from the Italian Armed Forces." A lily-shaped copper fountainhead crafted by Seaman Charles Craig that once cascaded water onto the monolith and down into the pool has been replaced by a light blue painted aluminum flower.

Early photographs indicate that bushes were planted in the areas between the patio and brick pathways. These areas are now covered with grass. Boxwood bushes described in early documentation were likely located along Building 620 and on the eastern side of the pathway. Red flowering torch aloe (*Aloe arborescens*) now grows in this location. Olives planted as part of the original garden remain, but other exotic trees have also become established.

THE FUTURE OF THE GARDENS?

Unlike a building, as plants grow and age, the look of a garden changes rapidly. No garden can be left alone and survive as it was created. After a few years of neglect, only a skeleton remains—a few scattered rocks and stones: unpruned trees towering over faint traces of floral beds.

What does the current state of benign neglect of DLI's three cultural gardens tell us about their original premise? Did the gardens actually help improve the proficiency of students by linking the culture of the places to the languages being taught? There is no documented evidence, but the effort exerted by the faculty in creating them is a testament to the vibrancy of the notion at that time. With modern language teaching methods and the ease of sending students abroad to study other cultures directly, it is unlikely that they would be replicated today.

Whether the gardens are restored, maintained in their present state, or continue to decline will depend on decisions by future administrations. Because of their now historic status, it's possible that they could be accorded the same institutional pride as the infantry buildings and monuments of the Presidio's designated Historic District on the lower slopes.

Whatever the decision, it is important to understand that all three have assumed roles beyond their original purpose. The Italian gift symbolizes the Mediterranean garden as a beacon of international friendship and cooperation. The Asian and Iberian gardens memorialize personnel who died in the service of their country. Gwyn De Amaral hopes that his commitment to restoring his father's memorial will inspire others to ensure that all these spaces are treated with appropriate dignity and reverence in the future.



Endnotes

¹ Winifred Brown, "Presidio of Monterey issues first new, improved Survivor Access Badge," July 9, 2021. Retrieved on 11.8.22 from: <https://www.army.mil/article/248281?fbclid=IwAR3CRTZ2lHqqqj-EiXudO02fZVhMoNP0Za-ypokdtr4hYevRy3OBcpM0PajA>.

² Cameron Binkley, "From World War to Cold War: Creating the Army's 'Multilanguage School at Monterey,'" Deputy Command Historian DLIFLC. Retrieved on 11.8.22 from: https://history.army.mil/events/ahts2015/presentations/seminar4/sem4_CameronBinkley_MultilanguageSchool_text.pdf.

³ Tammy Cario "A friendship reconnected at DLIFLC," Jan 23, 2019. Retrieved on 11.7.22 from: <https://www.dliflc.edu/a-friendship-reconnected-at-dliflc/>.

⁴ Letter to Col. Kibbey M. Horne, Commandant DLIFLC, October 7, 1970.

⁵ *Cultural Gardens at the Presidio of Monterey, California*, published by the DLI West Coast Branch (DLIFLCB), 1966.

⁶ "Japanese American garden memorial dedicated at DLI," *Monterey Peninsula Herald*, October 16, 1972.

⁷ DLIFLC Press Release #110, October 10, 1970.

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Opposite, top: Placing the marble slab across the pool. Photo: Courtesy of the DLIFLC Command History Office.

Opposite, bottom: Mediterranean Garden dedication October 1970. Photo: Courtesy of the DLIFLC Command History Office.

Top: The Mediterranean Garden in June 2022. Photo: David A. Laws.

Bottom: The De Amaral memorial plaque is set in a border of Moorish-style 'azulejo' tiles. Photo: David A. Laws.



PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE OF THE LOS ANGELES RIVER

A Review of the 2022 CGLHS Annual Conference.

Thea Gurns





Held the weekend of October 14-16, 2022, the CGLHS Annual Conference was titled, "The Los Angeles River: Past, Present and Future. This photograph shows the group touring the Sepulveda Basin. Photograph courtesy Leslie Comras.

“CGLHS and The LA River conference attendees were fortunate to have as our speakers and tour guides those who are ‘on the ground’ with great passion striving to restore the river and restore communities.”

Libby Simon, Convenor



FRIDAY, OCTOBER 14, 2022

California Garden and Landscape History Society this year landed in a region connecting and echoing CGLHS stopovers past.

Our traveling trio from San Diego arrived early, resolved to take in the Norton Simon Museum. Art is great, but the lure for me is the garden designed and installed by Nancy Goslee Power. My initial visit happened soon after the garden was first in place in October 1999. This latest sighting revealed mature grace and beauty in a landscape faceted by a looping stream, rounding pathways, and dominated by trees and sculpture; in all, a lovely spot to relax on a



bench and contemplate a small-leaved ficus labeled *Ficus macrophylla*. Hmm. I learned from one of our trio that a previous board meeting lagniappe was a tour through these gardens led by Power herself. Thus spurred, I remembered the designer once opened her studio yard to us as the opener to a previous LA conference. Wherever CGLHS goes, we trail our history.

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For our kick-off reception, CGLHS assembled at La Casita del Arroyo. We walked through an intelligently planted dry landscape into a pastel room of pleasing domestic proportions just right for our number, a collection of donated twentieth-century art displayed on its walls. The

back-deck sight of the Arroyo Seco's deep gulch and elegant spanning bridge was arresting in late daylight. Inside, we enjoyed substantial nibbles and a right-for-the-season apple rum punch.

President Keith Park and Convenor Libby Simon greeted us, establishing the acronym "LAR" to designate Los Angeles's river.

Presenters were introduced who would become familiar over the weekend. Dr. Tilly Hinton, founder/curator of Project X, is a public historian and environmental storyteller. Melanie Winter is aligned with the River Project. Each spoke about the river's significance and value, previewing what we would later hear from them at greater length.

**Left:** At Friday night's opening reception, artist John Kosta gave an illuminating lecture on the history of the LA River. Photograph courtesy Steven Keylon.

**Middle:** The Friday night reception was held at La Casita del Arroyo located above the Arroyo in Pasadena. Photograph courtesy Steven Keylon.

**Right:** The Colorado Street Bridge in Pasadena as seen from La Casita del Arroyo. Photograph courtesy Steven Keylon.





Artist John Kosta took time to describe why his art is inspired by and focuses on the waterway, reflecting impressions and character coming from varied settings along LAR's fifty-one-mile course.

We gathered back on the deck for a night view of Arroyo Seco, its bridge now dominating in a show of brilliant lights. Myron Hunt, we learned, had designed both the bridge and the casita.

#### **SATURDAY, OCTOBER 14, 2022**

While we munched goodies from the breakfast buffet, our president and convenor again welcomed us and promptly introduced our first speaker. Dr. Tilly Hinton came from Australia to study and stayed on as scholar, storyteller, and cultural producer who launched the LA River X archive and the Good is Better website. Next, power, both personal and political, entered the room in the person of Joe Edmiston, former Executive Director of the Santa Monica Mountain Conservancy. He

told of struggle and triumph in creating Congressman Augustus Hawkins Park in a park-poor neighborhood. His advice: "Be bold early on." Melanie Winter delivered a diagrammed, detailed account of the challenges of watershed management and basin restoration of the ecosystem.

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We masked up, boarded our bus, and drove off to face the river. Along the way, we heard from a trio of presenters who valiantly stood on the moving vehicle to prepare us for what we would encounter. Glen Creason, former Los Angeles Central Library map librarian and historian, came equipped with maps; Debra Scacco gave us the perception of an artist and historian; and Kari Fowler, a historic preservation planner, added her evaluation.

Arriving at the park named for the late Lewis MacAdams, river activist supreme, we assembled at a small amphitheater for orientation and the background story of our surroundings. Standing in light rain, we heard how early farmers, both indigenous



and incomers, cultivated the rich alluvial soil left by flooding. On the bank opposite us, railroads established extensive trainyards. At times fierce river torrents turned destructive in an expanding city. After a 1938 deluge, the Army Corps of Engineers came in and channeled the waterway between towering cement walls. With the river tamed, railyard workers took over from farmers and built houses on the bank on which we stood. In the area known as Elysian Valley, tiny toads mistaken for frogs gave the area its nickname, “Frogtown.” Later, true bullfrogs moved in, finding the toads tasty tidbits.

Guides from Friends of the Los Angeles River (FoLAR) and the Los Angeles Conservancy, walked us through streets of vintage houses, 1930s through 1950s. A number of wooden residences had been plastered over in a bid to maintain and preserve their structures. The commercial section supporting the neighborhood thrives in flourishing times, all but shutting down in bad economic years such as dire 2008. On this Saturday afternoon, a prop shop catering to

Left: At Saturday morning’s breakfast reception at the Garland Hotel, Dr. Tilly Hinton, of LA River X spoke. Photograph courtesy Steven Keylon.

Middle, left: Saturday morning breakfast at the Garland Hotel. Photograph courtesy Steven Keylon.

Middle, right: Joe Edmiston, the Executive Director of the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy. Photograph courtesy Steven Keylon.

Right: Melanie Winter, director of The River Project. Photograph by Steven Keylon.



Left and middle: At Lewis MacAdams Riverfront Park, tour guides from the Los Angeles Conservancy and Friends of the Los Angeles River (FoLAR) discussed the history of Frogtown and the LA River. Photographs courtesy Steven Keylon.

Right: Box lunches were accompanied by a fascinating talk by Kari Fowler about the bridges that span the LA River. Photograph by Steven Keylon.



LA's film and television studios bustled. Five single stores from different eras had been cobbled together to accommodate a motley mix of sofas, lighting fixtures, and geegaws. Look up, and disparate ceilings identified the room's construction material and building code era. Outside, walking back to the river, our guides pointed out district history in buildings—a defunct Hostess cupcake bakery; a functioning pickle factory under the ownership of former East Berlin refugees; down the road, a prospering brewery/eatery.

Through an open gate at the end of the block lay the river. Look upstream, and it ran walled by tall slanting cement slabs. Then over a series of steps, water tumbled to unleash into its natural course. Small earthen islands had emerged, and plants had found space to establish an ecosystem. From their perch on tall shrub and tree branches, birds flapped into flight. Fenced from the water, our group ambled along a paralleling



bikeway, warned to give way for hellster bike racers intent on speed. Chatting as we strolled, stopping to call out plants, birds, butterflies, or floating debris, we arrived at our park starting point.

From stacks in a courtyard, we claimed boxes and lunched while listening to speakers from FoLAR give context to the river's environs. Dr. Tilly Hinton explained a project to reclaim into parkland the train yard we would soon see. Toxins in the soil would be identified, and an eradication plan devised, perhaps by seeding restorative plants and tracking their cleansing effect through leaf studies. Within a timeline of five years, project workers hope to see the land salvaged as playing fields.

We received a photo packet of celebrated Los Angeles bridges, a number now vanished, and others on our afternoon sight-seeing route.

Reboarding the bus, we drove to fabled—books, films—Taylor Yard, now converted

from trainyard to Metro center. Bike path and walkway are accessed by a shiny bright orange bridge. Lookouts bulged on each side, offering a closer view of water moving steadily along the plant-edged riverbed or pooling amid algal bloom. We heard how new bridge financing materialized when a bureaucrat ensconced deep within City Hall emerged from his office with twenty years of boxed-and-filed promises to build such a bridge.

As our bus drove away, those looking through the window for a last glimpse of the river could survey an enterprising begloved young woman collecting and bagging accumulated trash, guarded by a handsome, obedient Ridgeback dog.

Now came our encounter with the bridges and viaducts of Los Angeles—so many bridges, of so many eras, of so many design styles. Our bus paused at each so we could hear their story and appreciate the sight. One of Gothic Revival remains a



personal favorite.

Los Angeles's latest contribution to bridge design, the New Sixth Street viaduct, was a highlight, a contemporary work of wonder with tilted upper arches and canted holding cables. After its opening ceremony, the new bridge played host to anarchy, we learned, as the neighborhood claimed it for recreation. Daredevils climbed its arches; paint wielders sprayed graffiti; bikers and

car drivers executed wheelies. A barber set up in the median to serve customers, and vendors did good business. On our afternoon visit, all remained sedate.

Driving back to our Garland Hotel homebase—shout out to Beverly—we could sightsee what's known these days as DTLA. Downtown buildings' history was spontaneously recounted. A glimpse of the shuttered ruins of the former jail, the



Left: The attendees pose for a group shot at the Taylor Yard Bridge, October 15, 2022. Photograph courtesy Steven Keylon.

Right: Attendees spent time at the Taylor Yard Bikeway/Pedestrian Bridge, which offered views of the LA River, with the Hollywood sign in the distance. Photograph by Steven Keylon.

notorious Gray Lady, brought me chills.

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Ca' del Sole restaurant's back courtyard provided round-tabled cozy seating for our gala night. Tree lights strung on lower branches provided a festive atmosphere for an Italian meal served family style. Wine carafes were passed, and one diner's anecdote provoked a following story from a listener, which triggered reminiscence from a third.





After a brief update of CGLHS affairs, glasses were raised in toast to founder Bill Grant.

### **SUNDAY, OCTOBER 16, 2022**

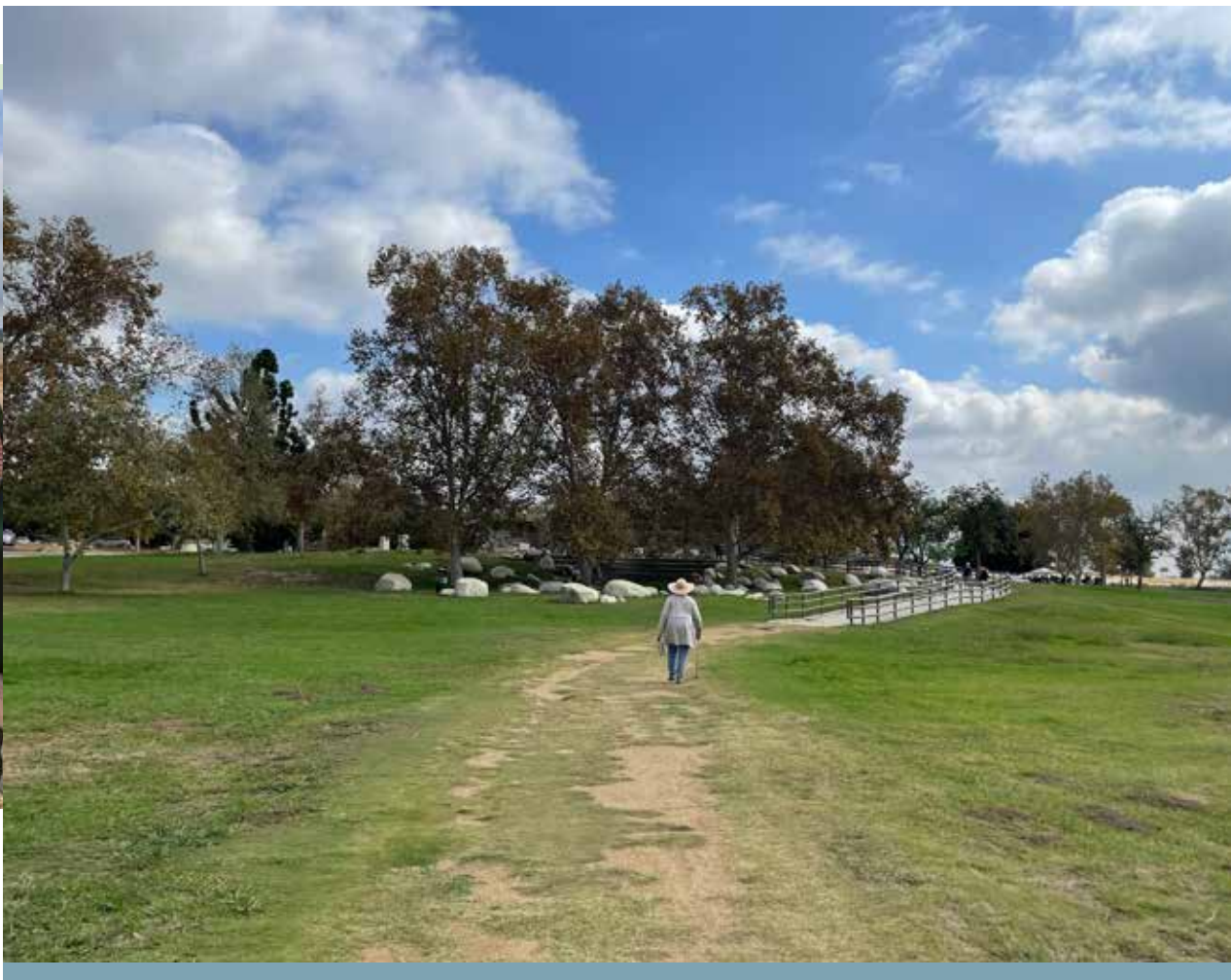
Our caravan started early on the ten-mile trip to Van Nuys' Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve. Directed to a plaza, we navigated Nancy-Drew-style—after the cricket greens, follow the road past the oak in the middle of the road and along the faux bois fence—to convene at a shallow amphitheater. We listened to a brief orientation by Dr. Tilly Hinton, and guest hosts John Kosta, Peter Bennett, and Fred Kaplan. Muriel Kotin from the San Fernando Valley Audubon Society described bird species temporarily or permanently using area resources, among them egret, osprey, and red-tailed hawk. We learned of the LA River X and the El Rio de Los Angeles Audubon sightings and vernacular histories preserved in the Western Water Archive.

Dividing into two groups—one ushered by Muriel Kotin, the other led by The River Project's Melanie Winter—we hiked alternate routes through the landscape, reuniting at the confluence of Haskell Creek and the Los Angeles River. Charred trees and bushes in stark silhouette heightened the look of autumn chaparral. Sepulveda Dam's steep cement slabs stood in sunlit Brutalist splendor.

Our storyteller crew recounted past flood disasters, the dam's origins, and eventual triumph through guerrilla action to allow the river to run free. Our speakers rotated in, each telling their version of how a kayak floated down the water, carefully documented to prove the water pilotable, led to the river being declared a navigable waterway and thus under Clean Water Act jurisdiction.

Back at the plaza, more than a few of us lingered, comparing our weekend and past experiences, reluctant to break up





camaraderie. From Arroyo Seco's overlook, through Frogtown, over the LA bridges, and at the end of our tramp in the wildlife reserve, we found our LAR landscape.

In 2018, for *California Garden* magazine, I wrote about FSDRIP (First San Diego River Improvement Project), San Diego's effort to tame the course of its river through Mission Valley. Small in midcentury, the commercial and housing district since has grown huge. FSDRIP gleaned lessons from what the Army Corps of Engineers did to Los Angeles's river. A confluence of citizens, San Diego State professors, and civic leaders convinced the corps that widening of the river's course, deep-bottom dredging, placement of weirs and landscape planting would combine to tame the river—for the most part. So it came to pass, although the mouth of the river where it pours into the ocean is as intensely concreted as anything LA offers.

FSDRIP was never meant to end flooding, instead aiming to mitigate damage

from all but the worst of raging waters. Its construction has been so successful that an evolved version is planned for the river's upper thirty miles.

Standing on riverbanks in Frogtown, City Yards, and Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve, hearing about past floods, I wondered why coming floods escaped mention. Perhaps the fight to reclaim nature from concrete was so fiercely fought as to overwhelm thought of what might arrive with the future.

And indeed, a week after the conference, an *LA Times* headline, Local section, read, "One dead, four missing after storm, five others rescued after Ontario flood control channel was swept by runoff." An accompanying photo showed the Washington Boulevard Bridge and rushing water beneath.

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Next year...where? Each conference seems hard to better, but CGLHS manages, and sets echoing conferences past.

Left: Dinner was held at Ca' del Sole, in Toluca Lake. Photograph by Steven Keylon.

Middle: On Sunday, attendees gathered at the Sepulveda Basin. Peter Bennett, a photographer who documents the LA River, spoke. Other speakers on this tour included Dr. Tilly Hinton of LA River X, Melanie Winter of The River Project, and Patty Lombard of the Larchmont Buzz are pictured. Photograph courtesy Leslie Comras.

Right: The Sepulveda Basin. Photograph courtesy Leslie Comras.

BOOK REVIEW



A Californian's Guide to the Trees Among Us
(Second Edition Expanded and Updated)
Matt Ritter
Heyday Books, Berkeley, California | 2022 | 196 pp

Book Review by **Kelly Comras, FASLA**

Full disclosure: I am a big fan of Matt Ritter, author of the newly expanded and updated, *A Californian's Guide to the Trees Among Us*. Ritter is a professor of botany at Cal Poly San Luis Obispo. Engaged in cutting-edge botanical research, he is a hero among those who study trees that will thrive in California as climate change occurs.

Ritter is also a gifted and enthusiastic teacher. He has written a book that explains not only how to identify 150 of California's most familiar landscape trees, but offers multiple windows into understanding and appreciating these trees and their cultural requirements through stories, historical references, and literary quotations.

The book's primary purpose is to assist in the identification of popular landscape trees. It works as a field guide, offering the reader a carefully constructed key to ascertain the botanical and common names of trees from three distinct groups: conifers, broad-leaved or flowering trees, and palms. Within each of these groups, trees are arranged alphabetically, with a page devoted to each species. Text about each tree's natural history is informative, thoughtful, and occasionally humorous; social or economic influences pertinent to individual species enliven the narrative.

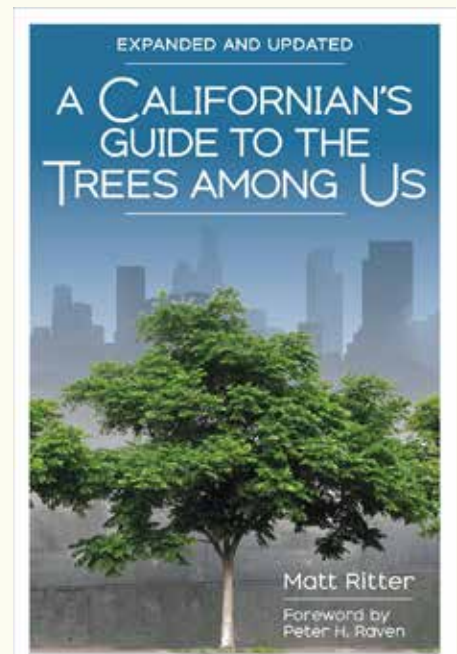
Garden and landscape history readers of *Eden* will appreciate literary quotations liberally scattered throughout Ritter's text. Content ranges in tone from the appreciative, such as this one, attributed to George Bernard Shaw, "Except during the nine months before he draws his first breath, no man manages his affairs as well as a tree does," to the amusing, including a quote attributed to Woody Allen, "As the poet said, 'Only God can make a tree' – probably because it's so hard to figure out how to get the bark on." Many of the

quotations are purely inspirational, like this one attributed to Robert Frost, "I'd like to go by climbing a birch tree, and climb black branches up a snow-white trunk toward heaven, till the tree could bear no more, but dipped its top and set me down again. That would be good both going and coming back. One could do worse than be a swinger of birches." Ritter's intent in including these quotations, I believe, is to encourage us to see ourselves as poetic beings, ones who walk among the trees of our landscape as coequals.

Annette Filice's line drawings are well-executed and make a substantial contribution to *Trees*. Many of these drawings have labels that help in understanding the components of different parts of a tree. And the book includes delightful graphics, including, for example, a chart showing gradients of available flower color, sequenced throughout the calendar year.

Excellent color photographs of the trees are to be found on every page. Many more photographs fill the book with highlights of fruits, flowers, nuts and seeds, and bark textures. I love the way some of the photographs are arranged to include colorful details, such as the range of fall coloration on Chinese tallow leaves, for example, or the gamut of colors on a lineup of ginkgo leaves. Some of the images have a strange, fuzzy edge to them, which detracts from the otherwise crisp, overall quality of the book, but this is a minor distraction.

I particularly like the highlighted boxes



with lists of summarized information that are sprinkled throughout Ritter's book. A list of significant trees of great age or size, inserted in the book's section on *Ficus macrophylla*, for example, lists eight of California's "Notorious Moreton Bay Figs." The oldest was planted in Mission Park, Ventura in 1874(!), and the coordinates of the tree's exact location are included so you can easily go and see it for yourself.

The light touch that Ritter brings to his book is apparent even in the potentially mundane, a list of trees that shouldn't be planted near walkways. His list avoids the negative and is entitled, "The Ten Trees Most Likely to Trip You on the Sidewalk." (The list includes Floss Silk Tree and Southern Magnolia (slippery fruits or leaves), and Sheoak and Queen Palm (hard, rounded fruits)).

As a landscape architect, my bookshelves are loaded with horticultural and botanical reference books, and I won't be discarding them soon. Just the same, *A Californian's Guide to the Trees Among Us* is already a favorite of mine.

A SALUTE TO

"Doctor Beatty"

David Streatfield

I salute and mourn the passing of the great "Doctor" Russ Beatty. Russ and I joined the Landscape Architecture department at UC Berkeley as faculty in 1967. I arrived in the winter quarter. Russ came in the following autumn quarter. Almost immediately, we became great friends.

There were five "Doctors" in the Landscape Architecture department. Only Bob Twiss held a doctorate. The four who really counted, however, were Michael Laurie, Russ Beatty, Tito Patri, and yours truly. Our 'doctorates' were self-assumed and stemmed directly from a *New Yorker* cartoon pinned behind the door in Michael's office. In this cartoon, two rather officious-looking academics are approached by two young lecturers/professors. "If you don't have a PhD, scram," they declared. This was our inspiration. None of us had or desired to have a PhD; But we invariably greeted each other as 'Doctor.' This was our badge of fellowship.

In the following summer, Russ taught LA 49 on the recommendation of Geraldine Knight Scott ("Gerry"). She had insisted that I, as a newcomer, teach it the previous summer. In her mind, this was clearly the perfect opportunity to become acquainted with the full richness of landscape architecture in California. This was indeed a splendid introduction to the state. Four weeks were spent visiting gardens and other designed landscapes in the Bay Area, accompanied by their landscape designers. This was followed by a backpacking expedition into the Sierras.

The high point of LA 49 for both of us was a day spent with Tommy Church. He insisted that the students bring a lunch and swimming clothes. An early arrival at his office was followed by doughnuts and coffee and a brisk lecture. Tommy explained his uncomplicated design process of producing sketch designs until one was accepted by the owner. He then went straight into refining the design in the development of working drawings.

We then piled into cars and drove down to the Peninsula. Tommy was now in his element. He showed us a range of projects, including a job dating from the 1930s and one under construction. Tommy literally ran the students into the ground!! Russ's experience the following year was similar.

For reasons that are lost in the mists of time, Russ and I decided to take a tour of estates in Santa Barbara. I think that Gerry may have suggested this. We started by visiting the adjoining Chase and Dickenson estates in Hope Ranch. The latter was especially memorable since we visited in the late afternoon with long shadows

playing on the ground. The glacially formidable Mrs. Dickenson had died, and her estate was on the market. We had free range of her very remarkable garden. It contained a sheltered garden of *divia*, one of the earliest places in California where these tender plants were grown out of doors. The estate was also noted for its long allee of silver trees, and *leucadendrons* grown from seeds sent from South Africa. Lush plantings of *Strelitzia regina* grew at the base of these towering silver trees. There was a splendid Meyer lemon hedge in the immaculately maintained kitchen garden.

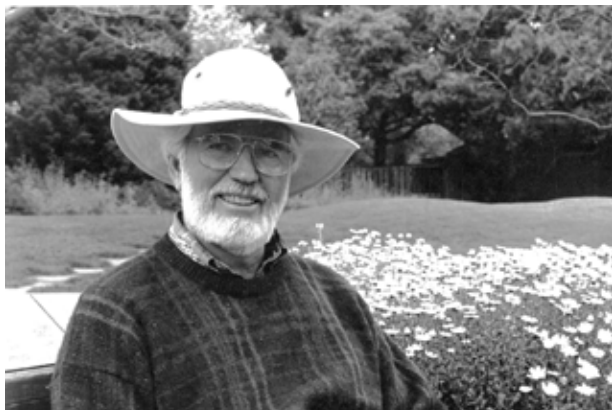
On the following days, the head gardener took us around the Donahue estate designed by A. E. Hanson. Gerry Scott had worked on this garden. We also visited the Steedman estate, Casa Del Herrera, in the company of the head gardener, who had worked there from the beginning. We also ventured up into the hills to see Las Tejas, which was then in a very sad state.

This trip ended memorably in San Marino, where we salivated over the extensive palm collection and the Desert Garden at the Huntington Library. The trip cemented a close friendship and created for both of us an enduring interest in historic gardens and landscapes. In many ways, our scholarly trajectories can be traced back to this trip. It was a seminal experience that changed our lives as teachers and scholars.

I have vivid memories of going to quite wild parties at Russ's house in Walnut Creek with Michael. Later, on my Farrand Fellowship at Berkeley, Russ arranged a house-sit for me at the home of one of his clients in Orinda. He had, of course, designed the garden.

In 1987 we collaborated with Renne Bradshaw on a restoration study of the garden and the remaining section of the farmyard at Rancho Los Alamitos, in Long Beach. We were fortunate to obtain this commission. Mrs. Preston Hotchkis had insisted that I take a tour of the house and her mother's garden with the last nurse to care for her mother. My visit had impressed Pamela Seager, the Director of the Rancho Los Alamitos Foundation, into believing that I knew the garden very well. This was really not the case. But this was an extraordinary commission for all of us. We all collaborated on developing the master plan. I wrote the history of the garden. This was an eye-opening introduction for me into the new world of women's history.

Russ continued to work on this commission for several years. When working there, one of my students, Christy O'Hara, unearthed the association with the Olmsted Brothers firm. This enabled the garden to be restored to its original



Top: Portrait of Russ Beatty. Courtesy of the Environmental Design Archives.

Bottom: Russ Beatty speaking at the dedication of the Research Building at the Morton Arboretum, 1982.

1920s state. Russ eventually succeeded in persuading the Foundation to move the remaining barns in the farmyard back into their original positions. More recently, farm animals have returned. This was a most satisfying commission.

Russ went on to be involved with numerous critical landscape restoration projects, most notably at Angel Island, and wrote numerous articles for *Pacific Horticulture*. It was very satisfying to see Russ become a significant adviser on the Selection Committee of the Garden Conservancy. He consulted on a major garden on the Tiburon Peninsula that was designed by both John McLaren and Tommy Church. He also consulted on the management of 'Green Gables' in Woodside, the Fleishhacker garden designed by Charles Greene. This is arguably the largest and one of the finest Arts and Crafts gardens in the country.

Russ made significant contributions to California Garden History. But he also had a great gift for forging lasting bonds of friendship. I miss Doctor Beatty very much.

California Eden: Heritage Landscapes of the Golden State

By Christine Edstrom O'Hara

The journal *Eden* is one of CGLHS's best membership benefits with its unique and interesting stories, and broad definition of "landscape." When I was president of CGLHS, board member Nancy Carol Carter suggested that with the upcoming twenty-fifth anniversary of the organization's founding, we should publish a book with early essays that would benefit from better graphics and updated text.

The current issues of *Eden* are exceptionally well-produced, but the oldest issues offered an opportunity to improve their production. By way of context, in 1996 the California Garden & Landscape History Society began publishing *Eden*, intended as an accessible but scholarly journal on the varied historic landscapes in California, emphasizing elisions in academic writing at the time. I read through twenty years of *Eden*, approximately 2,000 pages, creating an initial selection list.

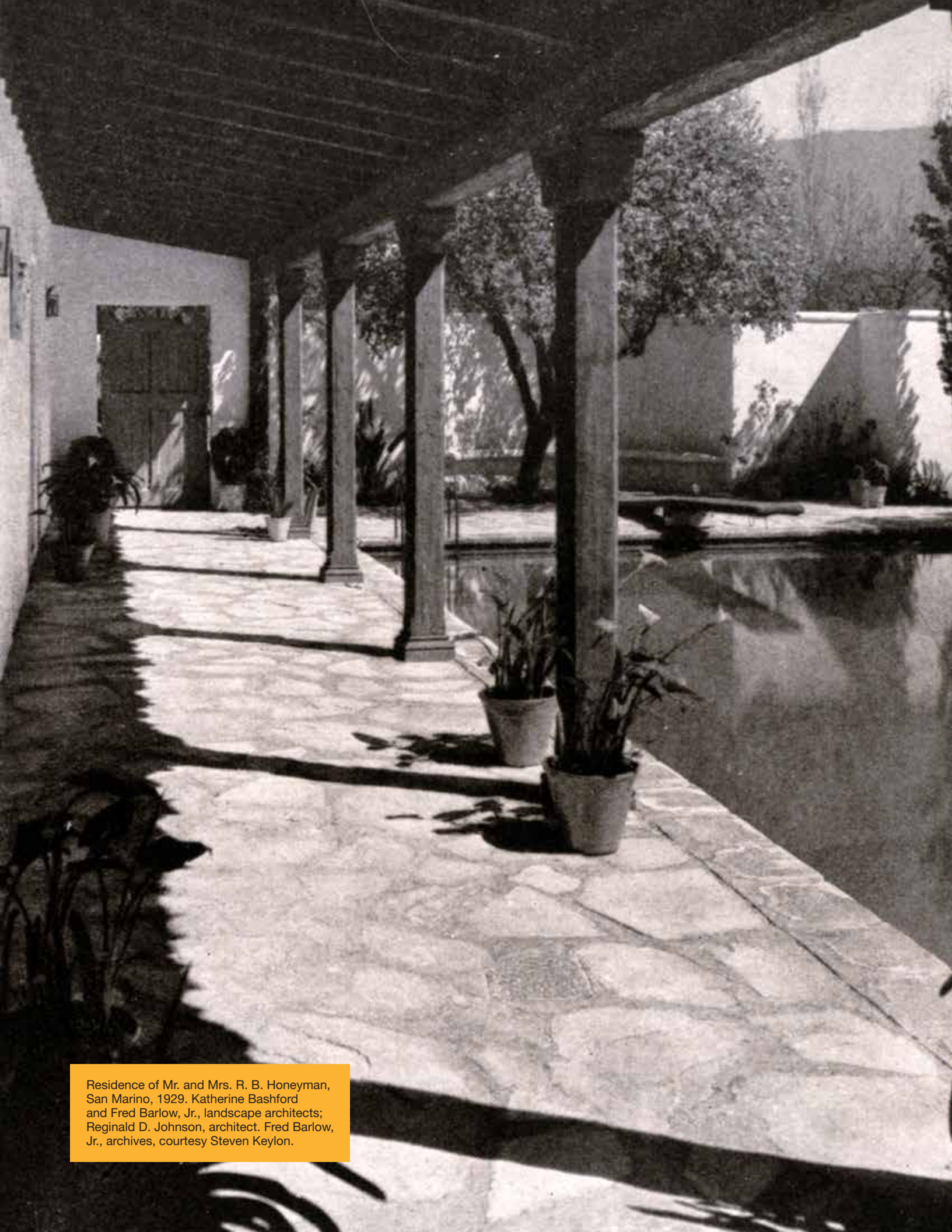
A committee comprised of Steven Keylon, Kelly Comras, Ann Scheid, and Susan Chamberlin, shortened the list to over fifty original essays to be considered for republication. Last year we found a publisher and we are excited by our forthcoming book, *California Eden: Heritage Landscapes of the Golden State*. Susan Chamberlin and I are coeditors. Given a 50,000-word limit, twenty-two essays were selected and shortened by the original authors (with some help from us) to provide more variety for readers.

The organization of the book is both

thematic and chronological with essays that are curated to showcase landscapes representing a range of time periods and geographic areas within California. As cultural landscape studies, the essays are robust in research, and examine influences and context for design, making this a compelling update on the original print versions. This collector's book will be coffee-table size, rich in color and historic imagery with photographs shown at a much larger size and in higher resolution than some of the early *Eden* issues.

California Eden showcases influential designers and formally designed gardens but also addresses vernacular landscapes, the role of women in horticulture and design fields, and topics such as shopping malls, streetscapes, golf courses, world expositions, town planning, cemeteries, plant nurseries, and Japanese gardens, as well as the challenge of historic preservation of these often-ephemeral places.

The book is intended to appeal not only to our members, but to a wide variety of readers, such as landscape architects and historians, architects, cultural geographers, garden enthusiasts, those with an interest in California history, women's studies, geography, and others who share an interest in California's unique and special places of social and cultural significance. For many of these stories, the places and their designers have not been published elsewhere apart from in *Eden*. We look forward to sharing this book with you in late 2023.



Residence of Mr. and Mrs. R. B. Honeyman, San Marino, 1929. Katherine Bashford and Fred Barlow, Jr., landscape architects; Reginald D. Johnson, architect. Fred Barlow, Jr., archives, courtesy Steven Keylon.

CGLHS 2022 President's Annual Report

Dear CGLHS Members,

Welcome to 2023! As the strains of Auld Lang Syne fade into the distance and we begin to focus our minds on the better and brighter things ahead, I would like to say how grateful I am that CGLHS will be going into the new year alongside you, our valued member. I am humbled by the ineffable show of support, participation, and energy the membership of CGLHS continues to bring to the organization, from showing up for our annual meetings (online, as of late) to showing up in person to our events, which we absolutely intend to have more of this year.

Of all the accomplishments that CGLHS could claim for 2022, I would say that successfully hosting our first annual conference in three years, the fabulous *Past, Present, and Future of the Los Angeles River*, was undoubtedly our proudest achievement. The presence of those of you who were able to join us magnified that success even more so. It was a conference years in the making, yet it proved that perseverance pays off! But as fascinating as it was to engage with the Los Angeles River, I sincerely feel that the opportunity to engage with those who were there was equally, if not more, valuable, and it was a joy to meet and get to know so many of you.

However, our Annual Conference was just one of the engaging events that brought our membership together in 2022. We began the year in April with a free in-person event: "A Walking Tour of San Francisco's Golden Gate Park," led by the Park's Historian-in-Residence Christopher Pollock, who has also contributed essays to our journal *Eden*. In May, CGLHS presented an online talk entitled "Garden History of the Monterey Peninsula," presented by former board member David A. Laws, followed several days later by another free-for-members walking tour of Monterey itself, led by architectural and landscape historian Mimi Sheridan and featuring visits and discussion of many of the locations highlighted in the online presentation.

For our summer offerings CGLHS hosted two online presentations on the theme of recently published books: "Olmsted and Yosemite: Civil War, Abolition, and the National Park Idea" presented by co-authors Rolf Diamant and Ethan Carr, and "The Northwest Gardens of Lord and Schryver" written and presented by Valencia Libby, both of which were both well-attended, and for good reason!

Autumn brought us the annual conference in Los Angeles, where we had a chance to reconnect with old friends and meet new ones. Some of our new friends include the keynote speaker Joe Edmiston, Executive Director of the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy, and Dr. Tilly Hinton of *LA River X*. We look forward to engaging with Dr. Hinton in the future, for deeper dives into the LA River and its cultural landscape legacy. Melanie Winter of *The River Project* brought forth her passion and advocacy for the river, as did the *LA Conservancy* and *FoLAR* (Friends of the LA River), who provided walking tours along the banks near the Frogtown neighborhood. We are very grateful to have had artist John Kosta share his passion for interpreting the river in his paintings and contribute his artwork to the Fall edition of *Eden*.

Finally, thanks to the generous contributions of our *Eden* Publisher's Circle members, we brought you all four issues for 2022 in full color, with a longer page count.

Having reflected upon our past year, I am feeling very sanguine about both the past and the future. I genuinely hope you feel the same and that this will encourage you to continue your engagement with CGLHS, for it is truly your organization. As a member, you have a stake in the variety and quality of our content. I will conclude with an appeal for members to become involved by letting us know how we can improve, and perhaps joining one of our many committees to represent your voice in future offerings from CGLHS. Thank you for being a member, and we look forward to seeing you in 2023!

Sincerely,

Keith W. Park



In April, CGLHS hosted “A Walking Tour of San Francisco’s Golden Gate Park,” led by the Park’s Historian-in-Residence Christopher Pollock. Photograph courtesy Eleanor Cox.



CGLHS president Keith Park, photographed at a UNESCO site called the Bialowieza forest, the last primeval stand of forest in Europe, on the border between Poland and Belarus. Photograph courtesy Keith Park.

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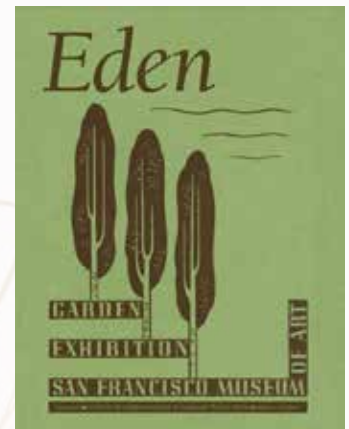
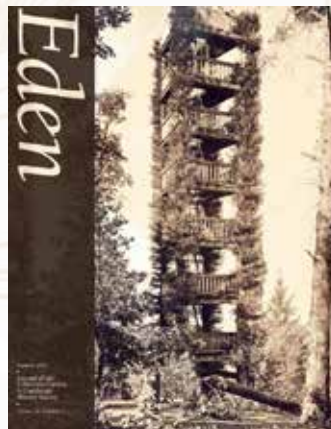
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Attendees of the CGLHS
Annual Conference at the
LA River, October 2022.
Photograph courtesy
Steven Keylon.



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Front Cover: Cover of the booklet *3 Cultural Gardens at the Presidio of Monterey, California* published by the DLI West Coast Branch (DLIWCB) in 1966. Courtesy of the DLFLC Command History office.

Back Cover: At the CGLHS Annual Conference, attendees visited the Sepulveda Basin, an area of the LA River that is surprisingly natural and verdant, one of three areas along the LA River with a soft bottom (vs. concrete). Photograph courtesy Leslie Comras.