



Berkeley Conference Set

April 12-14, 1997

The third state-wide meeting of the California Garden & Landscape History Society will be held in Berkeley from April 12-14 with garden visits, a day of meetings and talks, a visit to the archives, and a final day of further visits to gardens in the area.

Registration for the entire program is fifty dollars, which includes parking on the Sunday at the University Faculty Club. The registration form is included in this issue. Last date to join the group is April 1.

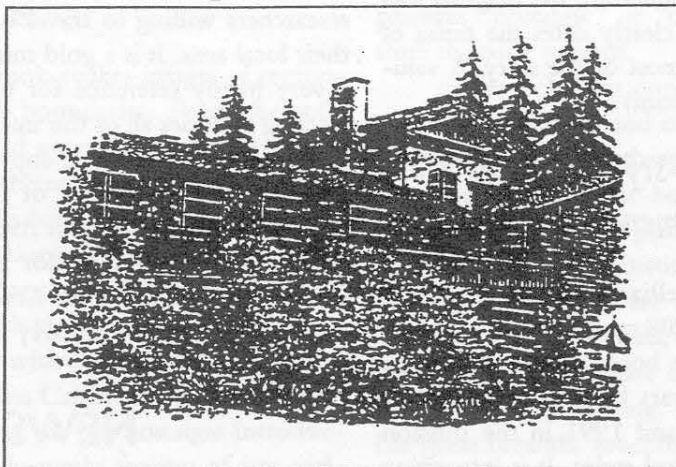
The committee started work on organizing this conference soon after the meeting in San Diego last November. The membership of the CG&LHS is close to 150 and may reach that number by the time of the Berkeley get-together.

The initial purpose of these meetings was to acquaint members with the various botanical and landscape archives in the state, to visit historic gardens, to meet people involved in preserving the history of horticulture in California, and to hear lectures by authors, landscape architects, historians. And, as Barbara Barton, our membership secretary, reminds us: to have fun.

On Saturday, April 12, the first garden to be visited was created by Scott and Jenny Fleming, who have created a native plant collection on a steep hillside. They have been collecting natives for over forty years.

The Blake Garden, maintained by the University of California Landscape Architecture Department, is an eleven-acre hillside collection of native and exotic plants. A variety of trees, drought-tolerant plants, a lily pond, a long arbor with vines are the main features of this garden. The house itself was built in 1920.

Marcia Donahue's unique garden in Berkeley is surely a creation of an artist. The front and back sections are an exuberant display of design, whimsical and fascinating. The collection was featured in the winter 1989 issue



UC FACULTY CLUB

of *Pacific Horticulture*.

In the late afternoon, members will have the rare privilege of visiting the 1921 Willis Polk House and the 1922-29 Olmsted Brothers garden, which are next to one another. There is an allee, a Thomas Church pool, a Wurster house, and a Theodore Osmunden barbecue and rose garden. A catered tea will be served during our visit here.

On Sunday, after morning coffee in the Faculty Club on the UC campus, announcements, introductions, a short business meeting, a lecture on the archives of the Landscape School will be followed by a buffet lunch.

In the afternoon Phoebe Cutler will address the group on the topic "Historic Gardens of the East Bay, 1915-1975.

The day will close with an election of officers and any unfinished business.

It is hoped that in the fall of this year the group will meet again at the Huntington Botanic Gardens in Southern California, probably in November. Future meetings are planned for UC Davis in the spring of 1998 and in Claremont in November of that year.

As CG&LHS grows, we hope that members will organize local groups so that a network will be established throughout the State. In that way, the work of the society will spread, local areas will become aware of our mission to preserve and perpetuate the history of gardening in California.

We operate on the membership funds alone. We are in the process of obtaining non-profit, tax-exempt status so that we will be eligible for donations and grants. Then our journal, *Eden*, can publish articles and photographs of historical importance.

For future conferences we hope that local groups will volunteer to do the planning and running of the programs.

BOOK REVIEWS

California Gardens

Winifred Starr Dobyns, Allen A. Knoll, publisher, Santa Barbara 1996, 231 pp. \$55. (Originally published in 1931.)

Although the photographs are the original black/white reproductions, they still convey the beauty of Southern California gardens in Santa Barbara, Montecito, Los Angeles, Beverly Hills, and a few in central California. Carol Greentree writes a new introduction; the original forward is followed by an essay that clearly dates the tastes of the period. The photographs tell most of the story. A valuable addition to any library. (Bill Grant)

Casa California, Spanish-style Houses from Santa Barbara to San Clemente

Text by Elizabeth McNellian/Photos by Melba Levick, Rizzoli Publishers, 1996, 208 pp. \$50.

This stunning coffee-table book is a perfect complement to the one above 65 years between them. The homes were built between 1922 and 1991 in the mission revival and the Mediterranean revival styles. It is interesting to compare the photographs of the former Fudger House in both books to see the changes that have taken place—and the mature plants in the garden today. If pictures are any indication, the new owners of these old homes have preserved them well. (BG)

A Photographic Garden History

Roger Phillips and Nicky Foy, Macmillan Publishers 1996, 320 pp. \$55.

Although there are only two American gardens featured in this large volume (one is rarely seen in books: The Living Desert in Palm Desert), it is a very handy reference for all the garden styles from Roman times to the present. With more than 900 photographs, the book covers gardens in all parts of the world. The pictures are excellent. (BG)

Directory of archival and Manuscript Repositories in California

4th edition. Compiled by Diane S. Nixon. Berkeley. Society of California Archivists. 1996

This useful directory is one way for scholars of California garden history to determine where holdings of interest might be located. Many different types of institutions are listed from government agencies, including state

historic parks to museum libraries. Arranged by county, 1,030 repositories in California are described in detail, providing collection strengths, size, accessibility, photocopy use, and more. There are five indexes listing institutions by name, county, type of institution, general subject, and names of people. Under types of institutions are listed arboreta, parks or forests, and military sites, each of which is sure to have pertinent information. General subjects include agriculture, architecture, biology, and California and the West. Special web sites of interest pertaining to landscape history are listed as well.

A resource like this is a useful starting point for researchers willing to travel or for those who cannot leave their local area. It is a gold mine of historical societies and is a very handy reference for us to use until the Wave Hill Catalog includes all of the information on California garden and landscape history. A copy of this book can be ordered direct from the Society of California Archivists, ASUC Store, Box 605, Telegraph Ave. and Bancroft Way, Berkeley, CA 947201. Price: \$40 for members, \$45 for non-members, \$4 for mailing costs. Academic, special, and large public libraries are likely to carry it too. (Laurie Hannah) ♡

NEWS ITEMS

Logo Contest

There must be an artist out there who can come up with a design for our logo that will appear on the masthead of this publication, our stationery: *Eden*. You do not have to draw the final design—just give us the idea, one that will immediately identify our group. A native plant? A tree? A recognizable landscape? Our official name is rather long—that is your biggest challenge.

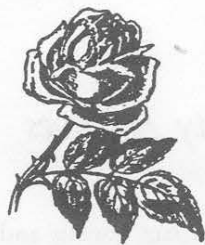
We will appoint a committee to review the submissions and award a prize to the winner. Send suggestions to Bill Grant, 1678 Pleasant Valley Road, Aptos 95003. (Fax: 408-722-6562)

San Francisco Landscape Show

CG&LHS will have a small booth at this annual San Francisco show, which runs from April 16-20. Membership forms will be available at the table.

Private Japanese Garden to be Sold

Those interested in seeing the oldest privately owned Japanese garden in Southern California, a classic designed in 1916 by Tokunosuke Kato and rarely seen by the public, should call Judy Skiff at (818) 355-2384 for an appointment. The Sierra Madre garden is now on the market. ♡



Redwoods and Roses

The Gardening Heritage of

California and the Old West

Maureen Gilmer

Taylor Publishing Co. Dallas

204 pp 1995 Photographs \$19.95

The very name of this book evokes images of regional contrasts within California's boundaries. From the soft-light hush of northern redwood groves to the sun-splashed rose gardens of the early Southland, the author's theme is the story of how everyday folks have made their gardens in the Far West. This is the only book of its kind that I know of, because it treats the ordinary, everyday traditions that pioneering peoples brought with them to California.

Gilmer begins her tale with a brief vignette of her own family history in small town Calabasas—near the headwaters of the Los Angeles River. In her nostalgic introduction, the author captures the leisurely feeling of her girlhood horseback visits to the local historic adobe, and convincingly tells us why she so sincerely cares about California's landscape heritage.

As a prologue to her saga, Gilmer gives her reader a capsule synopsis of California history—an always-helpful refresher course for many of us. She then flashes back to the probable origins of conscious plant management in earliest times: the controlled horticultural practices of Native Americans, as so persuasively described by Thomas Blackburn and Kat Anderson in 1993. Each ensuing chapter traces one of California's distinct phases of garden tradition, from the short Spanish mission era and the even shorter Mexican period, through the state's Americanization and Victorian prosperity years, to the turn of the century.

Redwoods and Roses is written for today's general-interest home gardener, a beginner's primer to the garden history of the Golden State: an introduction to the planting practices of common-folk newcomers since prehistoric times. It does not pretend to be a scholarly overview. Yet it contains lessons for scholars.

Most chapters are divided into three sections: a brief survey of a certain historic period, followed by a handful of detailed descriptions and stories of plants that might typify that period, followed in turn by a sampler of ideas for creating an "atmosphere" garden suggestive of the same period. Several chapters also contain special pages dedicated to hor-

ticulture topics relevant to their period, such as "The Second Great Eucalyptus Boon-doggle" in the Victorian chapter. These topical insertions are genuinely edifying, but make for choppy reading when they interrupt the flow.

I am charmed by Gilmer's emphasis on the unpretentious garden materials of the Far West. She focuses on plants and constructions so common and readily recognized that they have become symbolic of an era or a landscape style. These are durable, old standbys that continue to be useful today ... though perhaps the author overemphasizes "nostalgic" or "cute" treatments for creating old-time thematic gardens.

Every chapter contains archival photographs from regional collections and one chapter features late-Victorian lithographs. For me, these fascinating illustrations are alone worth the price of the book. Yet I was often frustrated by the lack of dates and place-names in their captions. These pictures beg for illuminating details. The two glossy sections of color photographs are unfortunately not uniform in the clarity of individual shots, and are also poorly captioned. If challenged to evaluate Gilmer's book in just three words, I would say, "Intriguing, but uneven." *Redwoods and Roses* has great breadth, touching lightly on many of California's regional and horticultural diversities. But the book achieves breadth at the sacrifice of depth. It reads something like a scrapbook of notes and snapshots; it is systematically organized, but its supporting data seem patchy, and often lacking in fluid transitions.

Some of the information in this book will seem sketchy to *Eden* readers. Yet any attempt to set forth comprehensive general information at this stage of our garden-history awareness must necessarily be done in stages. So Gilmer cannot be faulted for taking that first step.

However, the author does tend to glide over important distinctions between fact and fable. Her failure to tease them apart merely reinforces prolonged perpetuation of too-common misinformation. For instance, the myth of the romantic rose-bowered "Ramona" garden of the adobe era is based on Helen Hunt Jackson's careless anachronisms, set forth in her hastily written runaway best-seller. Yet, because the Ramona fable has become deeply embedded in the cultural literacy of our nation, Jackson's California garden misperceptions have endured intact to this day. For an entertaining, enlightening analysis of the long-term socioeconomic after-effects of Jackson's novel—including the touristic, regional economy boosts—see the 1991 essay by David Hurst Thomas called "Harvesting Ramona's Garden: Life in California's Mythical Mission Past," in which the author punctures our sentimental illusions about the real-life backdrop for Jackson's popular opus.

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Gilmer's casual use of Jackson's fictional rancho descriptions only underscores the strong need that historians and horticulturists have for each other, as they probe the past for the true stories of our authentic landscape legacy. In our mutual quests for the truths of California's garden history, perhaps we can all help each other find our own best routes to an honest picture of past reality.

Redwoods and Roses shares an unfortunate flaw with that acme of regional horticultural history, Victoria Padilla's *Southern California Gardens*: no footnotes. (Sadly, Padilla's chronology is not even mentioned in Giltner's bibliography—a truly regrettable omission.) Footnotes are a reader-friendly feature in any serious book, and they would have been most helpful in *Redwoods and Roses*, to help clarify and document the author's statements.

Maureen Gilmer's strengths in regional history coincide with my own weaknesses, so I learned a lot from her about rural Gold Rush country and Native American plant uses. Yet because the author's statements were not always backed up by source-citations, I cannot quite trust all her information.

The flaws in Gilmer's book point up our own clear need for some sort of statewide clearinghouse or switchboard for garden and landscape history data. *Redwoods and Roses* underscores the value of the very existence of the California Garden and Landscape History Society for all of us who are captivated by our state's distinctive horticultural history.

Carol Greentree



Impressions of San Diego Conference

Lucy Warren, Organizer of the November 1996 Meeting

While those of us in San Diego were initially a little intimidated about putting together a three day event after all of the gracious hospitality and marvelous gardens we experienced in Santa Barbara; it didn't take long before we were off and running, soon to realize that it was impossible to share San Diego's garden history in only one weekend!

As chair, I'd never put together such an ambitious program but once I began and the concept jelled, it seemed to take on a life of its own and flowed together. Each time I felt stuck or ran into a little snag, I'd be talking to someone who had just the right suggestion to plug the hole or wrap up the detail.

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San Diego Historical Society Archives

In our continuing listing of important garden and landscape history archives in the state, it is fitting that the San Diego HS research center, where members spent part of a day last November, should be next.

CG&LHS visitors were astounded at the depth of the collections and were shown items of particular concern with early horticultural history. Many early film records have been preserved on video cassettes, making them easily available to the researcher.

The center contains a library, manuscript and photographic collection. It is the region's largest repository of local historical materials. Original maps, manuscripts, architectural drawings, public records, oral histories, biographical files, and one of the nation's largest regional collections of historical photographs. Prints of more than 2 million images are available for purchase.

Annual awards are given by the Society to local history research work. The Bob Ward Horticultural History award is given annually for papers on the history of San Diego horticulture, botany, agriculture, gardens and parks.

Financed entirely by Society members, non-members pay a daily use fee of \$3 (\$1 for students with ID). Archives are open to the public on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday from 10 am to 4 pm (closed during the month of August).

Located in the Casa de Balboa, 1649 El Prado, Balboa Park. Mailing address is P O Box 81825, San Diego, CA 92138. Call (619) 232-6203 for information.



"I long for corrosive vulgarity at times, for outrageous curdling where the colours rasp; for coarse intruders sheltering the rarest viola, or for a sense of humour breaking through the mystique of sensitive discrimination. Gertrude and Vita, Oh Lord, how their shades have seeped through the compost."

—Mirabel Osler

Val Verde Appeal

Susan Chamberlain

Val Verde, the Montecito estate originally designed by Bertram Goodhue and Charles Gibbs Adams, is considered to be one of landscape architect Lockwood de Forest's masterpieces because of his extraordinary additions. It is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and featured in virtually every book on California gardens.

Dr. Warren Austin, Val Verde's 85-year old owner, is trying to endow and convert the estate into a museum with garden tours. The Santa Barbara County Planning Commission has conceptually approved the project, but there is organized opposition, and letters in support of the Val Verde Conditional Use Permit Application are needed for the upcoming Board of Supervisors hearing. To support this historic California garden of National importance write to:

The Santa Barbara Board of Supervisors
105 E. Anapamu St. Santa Barbara, CA 93101

"My intellectual progress (where there is any) always moves from little to big. Whatever understanding I stumble upon comes from seeing something small and specific, and watching it enlarge. A petal becomes a flower becomes a garden becomes *Eden*."

—Roger Rosenblatt

San Diego Conference

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And when the long anticipated event began, it was so exciting to interact with so many wonderful people. I think probably everyone who attended will remember seeing me everywhere, but the extra hour or so making name tags for each event proved invaluable to me, especially since I am one of those name-memory impaired people for which there is no hope.

From our pre-event tour of the San Diego Historical Society to leaving the Stein Farm, I realized what an incredible group of people we had gathered, a group involved in a fabulous diversity of aspects within a common interest. Professionals and amateurs coming to learn together and to have fun!

We listened, we toured, we laughed. We broke bread together and shared an exceptional weekend. On Sunday morning, as I listened to the interests and qualifications of those who attended, I couldn't help feeling a swell of pride that my efforts had contributed to bringing everyone together as friends, and sensing that many of us would use this friendship to expand our proficiency in our own communities.

San Diego responded with interest and we gained a number of delightful new members from the meeting. An added and unexpected bonus was that our expenses came in somewhat under our budget and we were thrilled to be able contribute to the CG&LHS treasury.

Organizations develop personalities, influenced in largest part by those who lead and participate. The first few meetings often set the pattern which continues into the future. My impression is that this will be a strong organization with a joyful agenda and generous attitude. For my part, I'm delighted to be involved and hope that future meeting chairs will enjoy the challenge and reap the rewards of appreciation which I felt so clearly. My thanks to everyone for all their support, encouragement and help.





Preserving Historical Literature

Norma Kobzina

An \$850,000 grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities is helping the University of California at Berkeley and eight other land-grant university libraries to participate in a cooperative effort to identify and preserve the historical literature pertaining to U.S. agricultural development and rural life. The U. C. Berkeley Biosciences and Natural Resources Library is responsible for the California portion of the project, which covers state-level literature from 1820–1945. U.C. Berkeley is working with the National Agricultural Library in this cooperative preservation effort. The historic literature of the states will be identified and then ranked by panels of scholars.

At Berkeley the preservation work will not begin until additional funds are available, but funding has been provided for one year to identify the relevant serials and monographs from land-grant and local libraries in California. Mann Library at Cornell University, Ithaca, New York, is coordinating and managing the effort under Project Director Sam Demas and Project Manager Wallace C. Olsen.

Norma Kobzina, librarian at the Biosciences and Natural Resources Library, will be working with librarians and researchers at other institutions in California, including Strybing Arboretum and Botanical Gardens, as well as U.C. Davis, and the California State Library, to identify and evaluate materials. The focus will be on rural life, along with agricultural disciplines important in California, namely enology and viticulture, conservation and sustainable development, biological control, forestry, and plant and soil science. Significant material from early groups of settlers in California will be identified. Along with the Native Americans of California, there were various groups of settlers who came to the State, bringing their agricultural heritage with them. Among these are the Spanish missionaries, followed by the Mexican,

Japanese, Chinese, Russian as well as other cultures moving west into California from other places in the United States.

Many of the publications to be examined are from U.C. Berkeley, College of Agriculture established in 1868, the first land-grant college in California. A portion of the California land-grant agricultural publications has been preserved through a previous micro-filming project. These include the *Bulletins*, *Circulars*, *Hilgardia*, *Giannini Foundation Papers*, and some of the papers of the School of Forestry at U.C. At Berkeley, the project will improve access to approximately 864 titles in 2,160 volumes, or the most important 17% of the estimated universe of materials in need of preservation.

Other university libraries participating in the project are Auburn University, Alabama; University of Connecticut, Storrs; Cornell University, Ithaca, N.Y.; University of Florida, Gainesville; University of Nebraska, Lincoln; Pennsylvania State University; Texas A & M; and the University of Wisconsin, Madison.

(From the Council on Botanical and Horticultural Libraries Newsletter, November 1996.)

"Over the years I've done a lot of flying across the country, and from the airplane it looks as if nobody knew what they were doing or where they were building. There's a near total absence of physical community in America today, no sequence of qualitative connections and experiences. What we landscape architects are about is to try to bring some intelligence into that pattern."

—Garrett Eckbo

ORGANIZERS

New members or those who have not attended any of the state-wide meetings might like to know some of the persons who have worked to make the Society a success.

Barbara Barton has acted as membership secretary, keeping a file on all those who have joined, banking the receipts, answering faxes, letters, and phone calls about our activities. She is the author of *Gardening By Mail*. She lives in Sebastopol.

Roberta Burke at the first meeting at UCSC volunteered to be acting secretary for the Society. She has attended all of the state get-togethers. Roberta lives in El Macero near Sacramento.

Virginia Gardner helped with the Santa Barbara meeting and has been a generous hostess at receptions she has held for the Society. She owns a botanical book service in Santa Barbara.

William Grant, founder, has edited *Eden*, and lives in Aptos.

Carol Greentree, has been writing articles for many years on California garden history and lives in La Jolla.

Laurie Hannah is librarian at the Santa Barbara Botanic Gardens and was the organizer of the state meeting in that city.

Joan and Peter Hockaday have done most of the planning for the Berkeley conference. They reside in Palo Alto.

Margaret Mori has been acting treasurer from the beginning. She resides in San Francisco.

Marcia Sage is an attorney in San Diego. She and her committee have organized the By-Laws of the Society.

David C. Streatfield made the opening address at the Santa Barbara meeting. He lives in Seattle, Washington.

Richard G. Turner, Jr. has been an acting director from the start. He is the new editor of *Pacific Horticulture* and lives in San Francisco.

Mitzi Van Sant, who lives in Menlo Park, has headed the steering committee for the Berkeley conference.

Lucy Warren from San Diego chaired the successful conference in that city last November.

Note: Nearly all parts of the state are represented in this list of people who have helped organize the initial activities of the Society. This is by no means a complete list of those who have worked behind the scenes to address letters, handle meeting details, organize meals, photocopy papers, make phone calls, etc.

"That road sign, 'Heavy Plant Crossing'—yes, we know what it means—always suggests the possibility that some gigantic swede or vast turnip, out for a stroll, will rear up in our path. Too many science fiction films, of course, and an overheated imagination of rambling habit. But you can plant a kiss, or a thought, or a bulb. You can even transplant a heart. And there is the Hardy Plant Society, Hampshire [England] branch, whose pleasant custom it is to adventure forth and look at gardens..."

—John Francis 1991

California Garden and Landscape History Society

Aims and Purposes

To celebrate the beauty, wealth, and diversity of California gardens and landscapes.



To aid and promote interests in, study of, and education about California gardens and landscape history.



To identify, document, restore, and preserve gardens and landscapes depicting California's culture and history.



To collect and/or coordinate resources and expertise about the history of California's gardens and landscapes.



To visit on various occasions historical gardens, landscapes, archives and libraries in different parts of the State.



To enjoy one another's company at meetings, garden visits, and other get-togethers.

Newsletter design donated by Abby Twining and Allen A. Knoll, Publishers of
Lotusland: A Photographic Odyssey, Southern California Gardens: An Illustrated History, and California Gardens.

 California Garden & Landscape History Society

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