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Sutro Baths: Caracalla at Lands End

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The nineteenth and twentieth century's self-proclaimed, largest indoor bath in the world would seem an unlikely subject for a journal devoted to landscape topics. However, San Francisco's Sutro Baths was the crescendo of a custom that, by altering the habits of whole populations, transformed the littoral of countless countries. At its most opulent the institution converted select locations into major spas with extensive parks and promenades. At its most humble, the experience was just a few tubs, and possibly a steam bath, with a few towels thrown in. In the West the practice of public bathing goes back to ancient Greece and Rome. It enjoyed a revival in Europe in the nineteenth century, an efflorescence that strongly affected Adolph Sutro (1830-1898), an immigrant from Aix-la-Chapelle in Alsace-Lorraine, who, as an adult, returned to Europe on numerous occasions for both business and pleasure.

Sutro Baths, as conceived by Sutro, was an attempt to combine attributes of the first-century Roman and nineteenth-century European spa and then to treat the whole in an open, frontier manner. Operative by 1894, the resulting behemoth survived until fire destroyed it in 1966. During the course of those 70-plus years the operation went through many transformations, including the introduction of an Hawaiian beach theme, the conversion of the baths into a skating rink, and the overlay of an aerial tram. Initially, an amusement area with chutes and shooting gallery (the site now memorialized by the "Merrie Way" parking lot) operated above the slope to the east of the baths. That, along with the neighboring Cliff House restaurant and bar to the south; Sutro's own semi-public gardens on the hill above; and, last but not least, a thousand seals cavorting on Seal Rock were serviced by two trains originating in

town. Altogether the coastal development pioneered by the one-time tobacco shop owner comprised in its heyday a significant entertainment package (Fig. 1).¹

Today this complex at "Lands End," the city's westernmost projection, makes do without railroads, seals, and "Tom Thumb" memorabilia. It is a key hub in a much larger leisure expanse—the 59-mile-long periphery of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area. At its heart are the periodically submerged ruins of the focal Sutro Baths visible from Merrie Way and from the Cliff House and its vicinity. The giant 150' x 400' cellar formed by the low, fragmentary inner walls of the five swimming tanks, settling basin, and filter tanks have been the subject of 30 years of intensive, on and off study, beginning with the 1980 *General Management Plan Environmental Analysis* Golden

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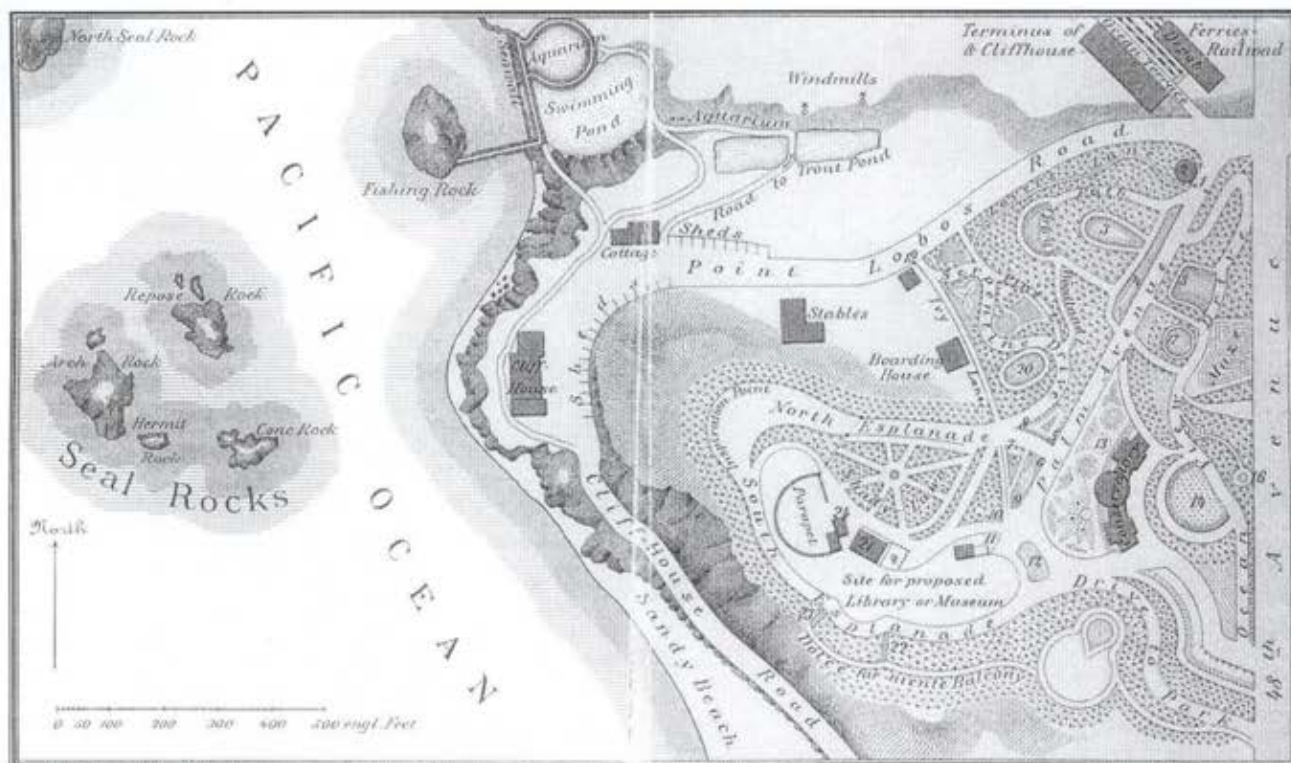


Fig. 1. This plan from a tourist album (c. 1890) shows the elaborate gardens of Sutro's residence as well as the swimming pond and aquarium that preceded the baths.

Gate Point Reyes that ensued from the National Park Service's assumption of control in 1977. (Fig. 2). It is unlikely that the crowds of tourists that flock to the site today connect the wall bases and random column bottoms with the festive, iridescent green, circa-1913 poster hanging in the entrance to the Cliff House, reproductions of which are for sale in the National Park Service gift shop next door (Figs. 3, 4). The poster depicts tall iron columns that support a glass roof soaring over a series of pools far below. Cartoon-like characters swim, stand on a platform that separates the principal L-shaped pool from a serried row of five minor pools, poise on diving boards, hang from gymnastic rings, or watch from the first and second-floor promenades. Industrial lights hang from the trusses

and large potted plants punctuate the tangential walks. Although painted in a surreal, static manner, the scene conveys a sense of gaiety and animation.

Multiple photos from 1894 to 1913 capture the visitors to San Francisco's Sutro Baths as they dance around May Poles, watch feats of daring and athletic prowess, listen to bands, careen down water slides, view exhibits, or just pose for the camera. The men—almost entirely—in their dark bathing suits with T-shirt style tops, embroidered with the proprietary "Sutro Baths" logo are far removed from the muscular males wrapped in filmy loin cloths and scantily clad ladies dipping in the *tepidarium* in one of numerous Roman bath scenes crafted by the London-based artist Sir Lawrence

Alma-Tadema (Fig. 5). However, not only was this hugely successful and influential Victorian artist painting at the same time as the inception and launching of the West Coast natatorium, but both he and Adolph Sutro, his contemporary on another continent, were drawing inspiration from the same august remains.

From one vantage the Sutro Baths were to the late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century United States what Alma-Tadema's feted Baths of Caracalla would have been to third-century Rome and the Diocletian Baths to the imperial empire one century later. The vastness of the Pacific Coast version, the splendor of its setting, and the opulence of its facilities created a national buzz. Although it fell short of fulfilling all of its

Caracalla at Lands End (continued)

founders' ambitions, the Sutro Baths represented the culmination in this country of a centuries-old tradition of enclosed or semi-enclosed public bathing dating back to classical Greece and Rome. Sutro expressed his awareness of that past and his debt to it in the spring of 1894 while speaking to a San Francisco journalist in anticipation of the complex's opening:

...[I] gave my building a frontage of 350 feet, which, if I am not mistaken, is the largest extent ever given to a similar structure. The largest of the Roman baths was said to have only 200 feet front and considerable less surface area. The interior had to be in keeping. Nothing short of an amphitheatre seemed to answer. That I did not quite copy, but the impression made on the mind by the design I have followed is very much the same. The vastness is all there—the great open room—and the circus, as it were...²

Sutro would have been familiar with the Diocletian Baths, ancient Rome's largest bath, for several reasons. To begin, this massive establishment was in the process of being excavated in the early 1880s, or simultaneously with a two-year stay the peripatetic San Franciscan made in Europe. Although the surviving archival material from that interlude does not mention Italy, Sutro's progress—from France to Greece to the Holy Land—would logically have included Rome. His extensive collection of books on classical Rome and its attractions gives further evidence for the bibliophile's first-hand knowledge

of that capital.³ Finally, familiarity with the Emperor Diocletian's achievement did not require an on-site visit. Paris was the one-time mining engineer's base for the major part of the extended period he was abroad. Paris was also where Prix de Rome winner Edmond Paulin, in or about 1884—to much fanfare—exhibited his huge, detailed drawings reconstructing that monument. (Paulin still ranks as the ultimate authority on the Diocletian Baths.)

Adolph Sutro did not rely solely on Roman precedent. Along with other sources he borrowed from both ancient Roman and eighteenth- and nineteenth-century European spa tradition. He would have been

familiar with the latter from his youth and from his later travels.⁴

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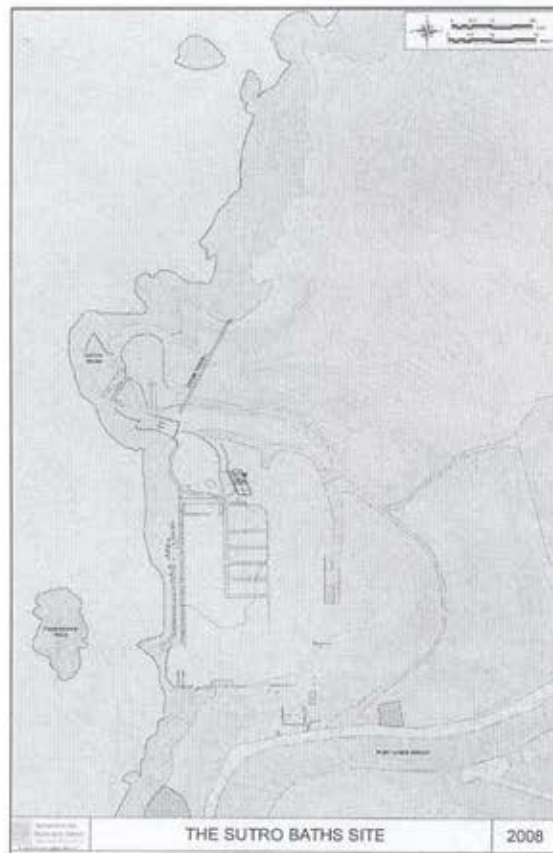


Fig. 2. Schematic plan created by Architectural Resources Group for a 2008 report.

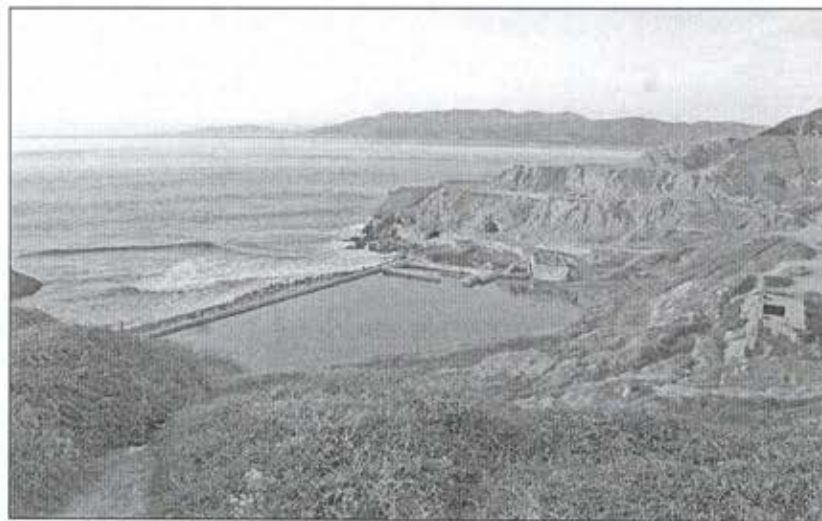


Fig. 3. Ruins of the Sutro Baths, 2008 (author's photograph).

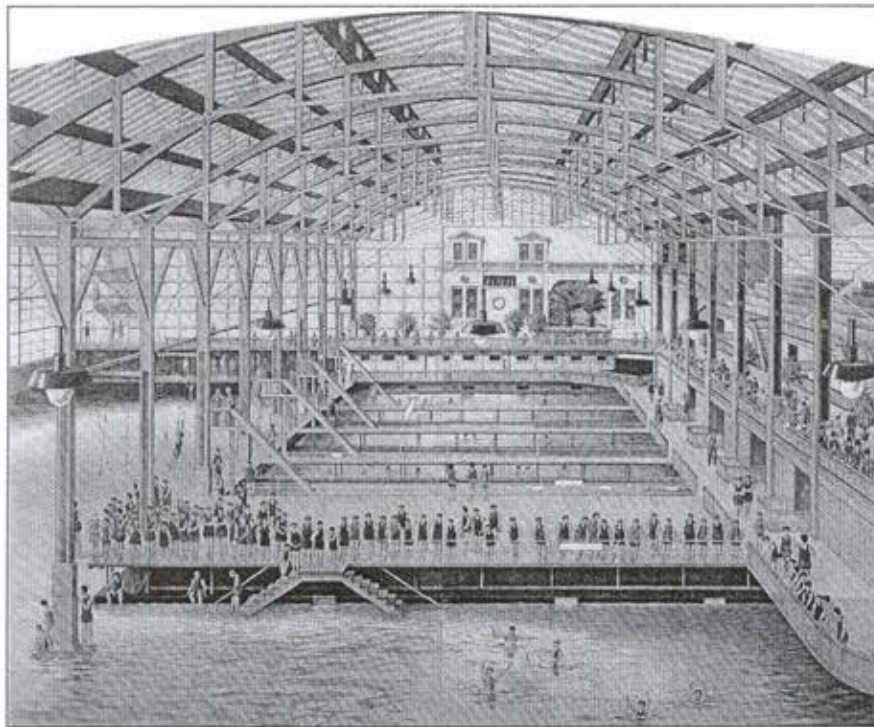


Fig. 4. Billboard poster c. 1913, chromolithograph, artist unknown.
(BANC PIC 1974.014-ROLL. The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.)

A plan taken from a *San Francisco Chronicle* article of 1891 illustrates this merger of ancient and modern influences (Fig. 6). The arrangement of a line of four identically-sized pools with a fifth larger one at the end closely approximated the standard Roman format as practiced from Pompeii onward.⁵ These divisions allowed the sequential gradation of temperature from cold (*frigidarium*) to increasing degrees of warmth (*tepidarium* followed by *calderium*), a practice carried over into nineteenth-century spas. As shown by Gell and Gandy's well known engraving of the *thermae* at Pompeii, the tri-partite arrangement of three pools with ascending temperatures dictated the architecture (Fig. 7). Ever the antiquarian, Sutro would have been pleased when the original single dome plan for his baths

transmogrified into a triple-domed design in line with ancient precedent. (Fig. 8).

More nineteenth-century Europe than ancient Rome was the presence of an esplanade, as the one shown embracing the baths in the *Chronicle* sketch. The promenade was a critical part of the Victorian and Edwardian spa experience. The renowned thermal resort Baden-Baden in southeastern Germany boasted its Lichtentaler Allée, a luxuriously planted walk through a park of the same name. The town of Bath in southern England had a fully enclosed promenade. The Pump Room, of Jane Austen fame, was the all-inclusive venue for strolling, drinking the waters, and listening to musicians. A mid-century British doctor observed that the German spas

were not only cheaper but provided more in the way of promenades.⁶ By 1894, when Sutro had finally managed to span his baths with glass and steel, the "esplanade" of the 1891 plan had disappeared, subsumed, as it were, into the great bulk of the edifice. Here this function was reapportioned to three places on three levels: walks in front of the stadium seating on the first and second floors and a promenade among potted plants and museum cases on the fifth, or topmost level.

As vital to the whole experience as the promenade was music. Continuing his critical appraisal of the spa scene in mid-century England, the same doctor maintained that French and German mineral springs provided more entertainment. He also noted that in Germany concerts were free. (Perhaps one given in 1853 by Berlioz in Baden-Baden was an exception to this custom.)⁷ During the summer the concerts at the Sutro Baths were included with the price of admission, although a mechanical orchestra substituted for a live one on weekdays.

Even if he had wanted to, Sutro could not have easily used American models. His bath was considerably advanced over the movement in this country. Although advocates had launched a hygiene campaign in New York City in the late 1880s, the city did not open a bath until 1901. Chicago beat that by several years, completing its first one the same year the Sutro Baths initially opened. Sutro could have found local inspiration. Oakland residents had been enjoying that city's behemoth brick

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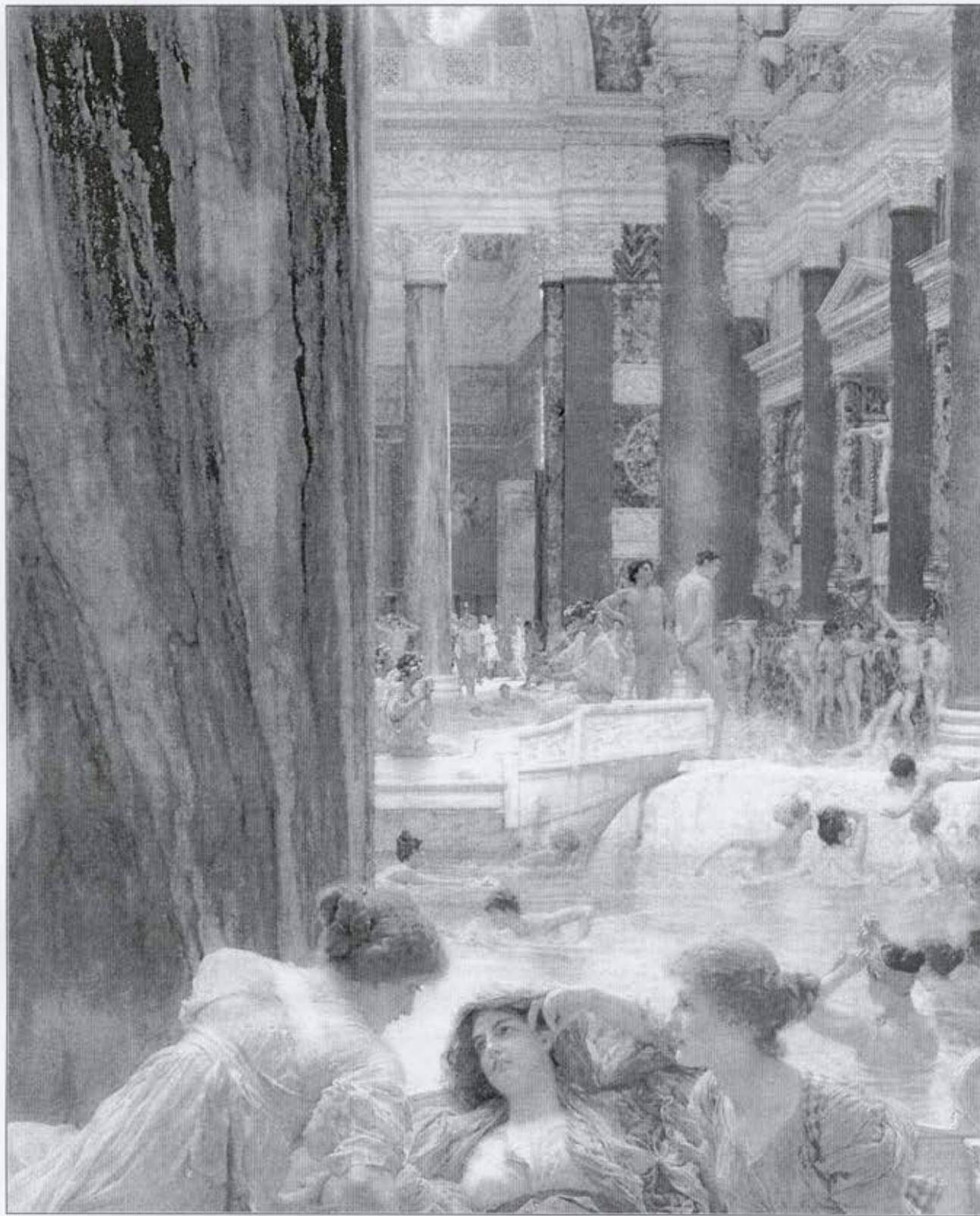


Fig. 5. "The Baths of Caracalla," by Sir Lawrence Alma-Tadema (private collection, 1899). Biographer Russell Ash (Sir Lawrence Alma-Tadema, New York, 1989) noted that the ruins of these Roman baths were famed as the location where Shelley wrote *Prometheus Unbound*. "Dedicated in AD 212, they were of gigantic dimensions with three bathing halls capable of accommodating 1,600 bathers. Alma-Tadema was a widely popular artist and his paintings had a great influence on art patrons such as Adolph Sutro."

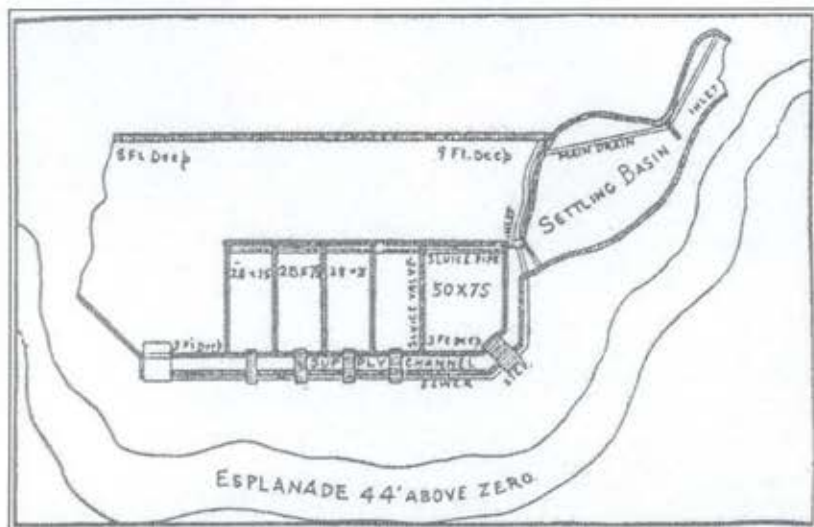


Fig. 6. Sutro Baths plan (San Francisco Chronicle, 5 August 1891).

and glass Piedmont Baths since the beginning of the 1890s. However, judging by the necessity of the University of California's Women's Boat Club to trek from Berkeley over to Lands End for swimming lessons every Saturday afternoon, the offerings of the Piedmont Baths were limited.⁸ A notable and even

earlier West Coast model was the bathhouse at the Hotel del Monte, Monterey. Among the San Franciscans and Eastern socialites who thronged there was Sutro himself, as evidenced by his signature in an 1880 guest register, the first year the hotel opened. The Del Monte bathhouse featured

glass panels flanking the roof ridgeline as well as side wall windows. Much smaller than Sutro's later elaboration on the theme, it offered a choice of public or private bathing rooms, and amenities such as a diving board, a slide, and a rudimentary visitor's gallery enlivened with potted and hanging plants (Fig. 9).⁹

San Francisco proper enjoyed a thriving commercial bath scene. Four years before Sutro welcomed private parties to his monster development, citizens could choose from 30 small-scale baths and two swimming pools. The pools, Harbor View and that at the Sheraton Palace Hotel, stood out from the crowd of steam, tub and/or sauna baths variously described as "Russian" (dry, similar to the modern sauna), "Turkish or Hamman" (a progression from warm to hot to cool, close to the Roman practice), or

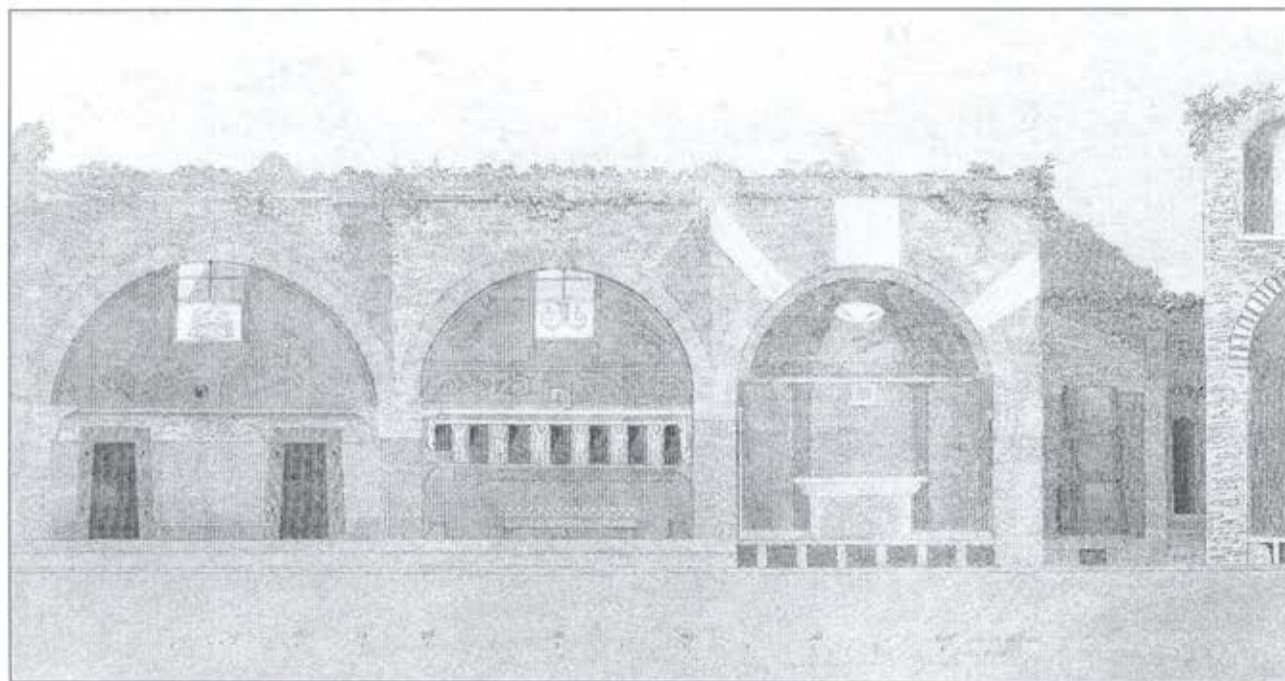


Fig. 7. Section of baths at Pompeii (Sir William Gell & John P. Gandy, *Pompeiana* [London, 1852]).

Caracalla at Lands End (continued)

"Roman-Irish" (dry). The Harbor View, which in 1915 succumbed to the encroachment of the Pan-Pacific International Exposition, advertised hot salt water and sported a Graeco-Roman temple entrance much like Sutro's, as well as a shooting gallery. However, it was an undistinguished, fort-like complex that, with the possible exception of the aforesaid features, would have offered little inspiration to the ambitious developer of San Francisco's Lands End (Fig. 10).¹⁰

More importantly, Sutro's motivation was more idealistic than that of the proprietors of the for-profit establishments, and less hygiene-directed than the supporters of the civic baths. He intended to create, at the very least, a self-supporting attraction, but he also firmly subscribed to the perceived health benefits of cold water. Raised in Prussia until the age of 19, Sutro would have been heavily influenced by the faith developed in that region in the benefits of regular washing and swimming.¹¹ Nineteenth-century German health advocates believed that swimming in cold water exercised the muscles and limbs, invigorated the circulation, and warded off lung disease (*Nineteenth-century German*

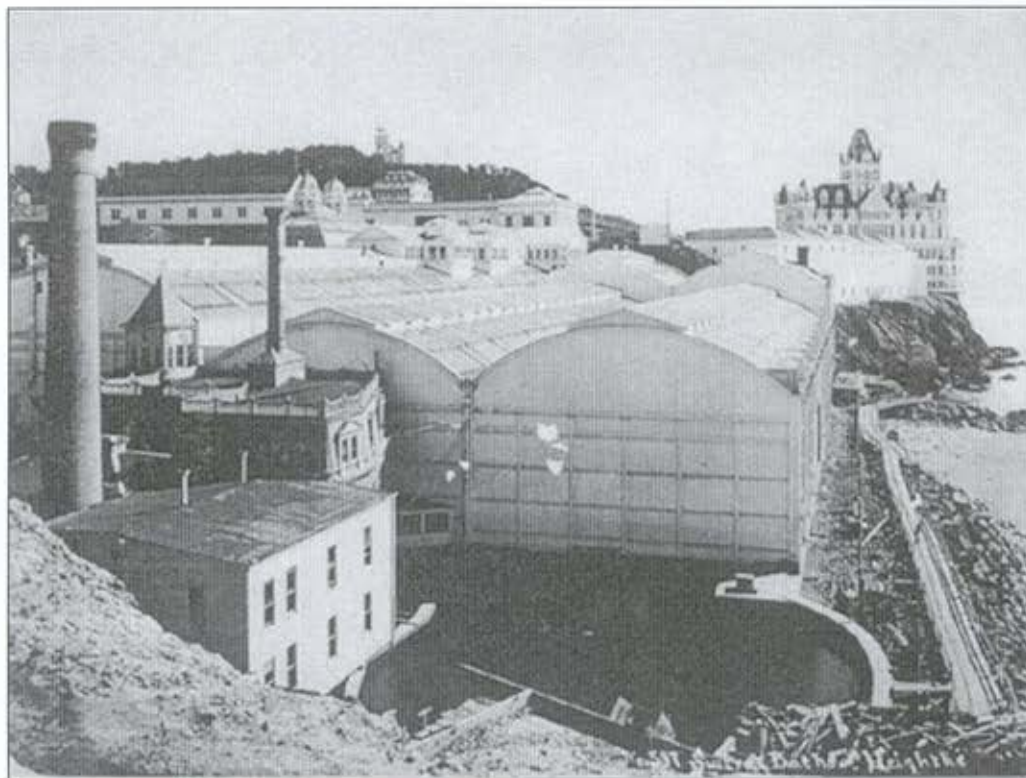


Fig. 8. Sutro Baths, looking south from Point Lobos. Triple domes of the baths behind the power plant and settling basin in the foreground, the Cliff House at right rear. (Roy D. Graves Pictorial Collection, Series I: San Francisco Views, subseries I: San Francisco pre-1906, V. 4: Pioneers, San Francisco:75. Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.)

Cities, Brian K. Ladd in the *Journal of Urban History*). From the late 1870s on, German cities excelled in building civic baths. Increasingly, and whenever possible, a swimming pool was constructed, since the combination of exercise and bathing was considered the optimum scenario.¹² An early example on a local level of this unadulterated faith in cold-water bathing was, before Sutro had advanced very far in his venture, already operating across the bay in Oakland. There the private girls' school, the Convent of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart, had created a version of the contemporary floating bath by literally fencing off part of Lake Merritt for its exclusive swimming and boating use (Fig. 11).¹³

The practice of cold-water swimming formed part of the ethos of the German *Turnverein* movement promoting physical culture. Gymnastics was an even larger activity of this international organization. With 40,000 members and 317 clubs the *Turnverein* (or Turners) reached its peak in the United States in 1894, the year of the unofficial opening of the Sutro Baths. The inclusion of gymnastic equipment—three trapezes and 30 gymnastic rings—was atypical of modern European natatoriums; although, along with the footprint of the pools, this amenity can be traced to Roman antecedents.¹⁴ The primacy Sutro accorded to the precedent of antiquity—among the many

(Continued on page 8.)



Fig. 9. Interior of Hotel del Monte steam bathhouse. It measured 50'x150' and contained four separate tanks maintained at varying temperatures. Note the diving board at left foreground and the slide at far right. The man (dark figure) leaning against the boxed palm at the far end of the bathhouse provides some sense of scale. (Hotel del Monte, Monterey, California promotional booklet, c. 1887, M. Graham.)

influences shaping this monument—was immediately made apparent to the visitor. The Graeco-Roman entry off Point Lobos Road could have been lifted straight from the pages of its owner's copy of Vitruvius.¹⁵

Sutro deviated from German practice in the scale of his undertaking, but also in its comparatively democratic approach. He did not, as was common European practice, build a separate pool for the working class, or narrow usage of a common pool by manipulating fees and hours.¹⁶ To this end Sutro continued a practice of championing the common man, a policy he often declaimed and one he openly demonstrated: in the 1870s when he took the side of the miner against the mine-operator, in 1885 when he opened his Sutro Heights

estate to the public, and, more opportunistically, in 1894 when he opposed the high fee of the Southern Pacific-owned line to his facilities, and, in the same year, in his successful run as the Populist candidate for mayor of San Francisco.

Confirmed in his faith in the advantages of sea-bathing and fixated on his dramatic cliff site, the tunnel magnate desired something "large, pretentious, in keeping with the Heights and the great ocean itself."¹⁷ Sutro was not content with merely resurrecting and enlarging upon the past. Having successfully experimented with advanced technology on the Comstock Lode, he was eager once more to seek out the bold and new. Towards that end he looked to the modern, cosmopolitan capitals

of the Continent, with Paris and London as his chief lodestones. A well-worn plan, at one time preserved in his library, of the parks of the "City of Light" would have reminded Sutro of the places he frequented during his extended stay there.¹⁸ Deserving of frequent visits would have been the three large conservatories and the open-air aquarium at the *Jardin des Plantes*. We can be certain that the inquisitive Californian also spent time at the *Bois de Boulogne*'s glass house with interior promenade; besides commissioning

a similar structure, Sutro toyed with the idea of camel rides, a distinctive feature of the *Bois*, for the Merrie Way. London, to which Sutro traveled at least six times in the course of his career, boasted the famed Crystal Palace and the huge Palm House in Kew Gardens, the guide for which the self-taught engineer also owned. When he built the greenhouse at the Heights in 1883, he was, in effect, preparing for the behemoth to follow.

Through a competition held in the summer of 1891, Sutro found the team of Emil S. Lemme and C.J. Colley to design and build his behemoth. Twenty-eight years old at the time, Lemme had trained at the University of Illinois in a pragmatic Central European approach that was contrary to the programmatic formalism of the Beaux-Arts school. Sutro desired

continuity with imperial Rome, but he also wanted to maintain a sense of closeness with the surrounding nature by using the broad spans of glass and steel he had experienced in the Parisian and London parks. Lemme's specialty was the calculation of the safe load for beams and girders. He brought with him from Champagne, Illinois a philosophy that ranked engineering equal with, if not over, aesthetics.¹⁹ With Lemme's plan as the springboard, the entertainment

impresario steered his bathing project from the initial concept of an open-air swimming pool conjoined with a rock-bound aquarium to the final form of a 150' x 275' glass and iron bathing palace, or the vaunted "largest and finest public baths in the world."²⁰

As seen in the 1890 engraved plan of his 20-acre estate (which also shows the original uncovered pool and adjoining, proposed fish habitat), Sutro's interest lay equally with gardening as it did with architecture and engineering. Already, in the fall of 1882, his manager W.H.R. Adamson had successfully planted the slope to the south of Point Lobos Road, the one stretching down from Sutro's

hilltop residence, in bent grass, several cartloads of which had been donated to him by the "new superintendent" of Golden Gate Park.²¹ Nurseryman Charles Abraham, operating from his business on Greenwich Street in today's Cow Hollow, was later given the responsibility for the north side of the same road. In the fall of 1892 he was busily directing the grounds crews to apply clay and sand to the slope and to dig ditches against erosion. One of Sutro's agents reported that Abraham was installing the "Mezembriethemum Grandi flora Superba" (*sic*) "a beautiful plant."²² (As recommended by a 1993 study of the Sutro Heights area that vegetal hero of a former century has

recently been replaced with a mix of native shrubs and groundcover.)²³

Nor did the greening of Lands End stop with the exterior of the Baths. Broad planting beds accompanied the 150 steps of the grand entry stairway. Full-sized palms soared from either side of the second tier down. A third specimen rose from the floor of the pools. One hundred and one flower tubs were distributed among the five floors. Pots of dracaenas, yuccas and aspidistras accompanied the displays of stuffed cougars, Egyptian and Peruvian mummies, and cases of shells, i.e. the Victorian parlor and the private



Fig. 10. The Pan-Pacific International Exposition of 1915 displaced the Harbor View Baths, far right. (Crocker-Langley Directory, 1896).

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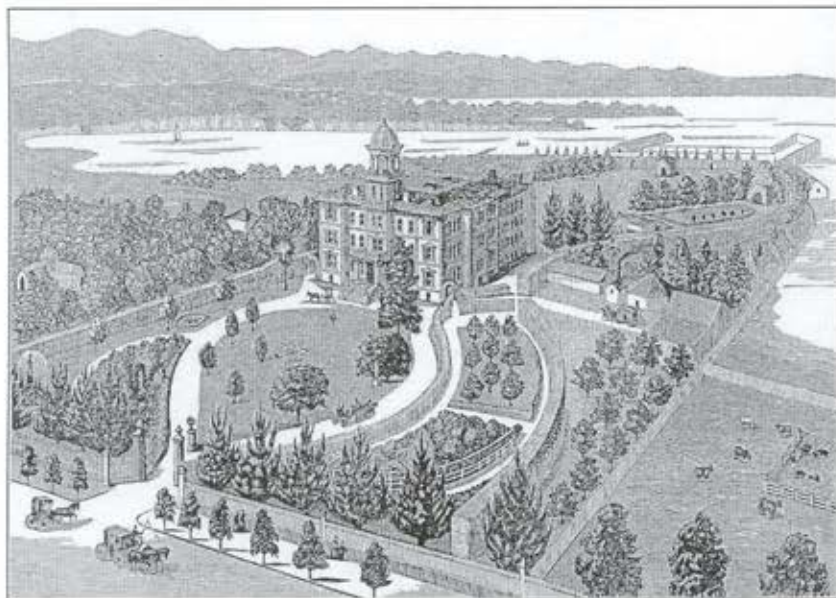


Fig. 11. Convent of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart (later College of the Holy Names), Lake Merritt. The "swimming lakelet" was the fenced-in L-shaped area at top right, flanked by a boathouse, "exercise being necessary to healthy physical development." (Oakland Tribune, Special Illustrated Edition, 1888).

collection of curiosities writ large (Fig. 12).²⁴

This was a project of immense hubris that contained within itself the seeds of failure. From the official opening day in 1896 the crowds never flocked to the Baths in numbers adequate enough to ensure its survival. Sutro's heirs struggled to make the Baths self-supporting. In 1951 they gratefully passed the task to the owner of the Cliff House and the nearby amusement park Playland-at-the-Beach. Desperate measures such as the installation of the aerial tram failed to save the complex. The process of demolition was in progress when the entire structure self-immolated.

Its sad subsequent history notwithstanding, the Sutro Baths was a world class spectacle. With its five

floors, seven pools, three promenades, three Babcock and Wilcox 200-horsepower boilers, 101 flower tubs, a French restaurant, Tom Thumb memorabilia, and 15,500 rentable bathing suits, Sutro Baths was the most flamboyant exemplar in this country, and, arguably, the modern Western world, of a more than two-thousand-year-old public bathing tradition.²⁵ The remnants of the Diocletian Baths having been subsumed into a church and a museum, the most dramatic evocation today of this persistent social institution are the ruins of the Baths of Caracalla. Both a major tourist attraction and a popular venue for the staging of operas, these baths are, after the Coliseum, the largest ruin in Rome. Too cold and too wet for opera, the cavernous footprint of the Sutro Baths is no less this country's Caracalla.

Epilogue

For the West Coast, Sutro Baths was the ultimate model for the modern, leisure-oriented natatorium. Far smaller than the San Francisco mega-structure, Santa Cruz's 1904 Neptune Casino, Seattle's Luna Park of 1907 and Crystal Pool in 1915 were fanciful interpretations of the tradition. Although the community bath as an institution was beginning to fade in the 1920s, Vigger's Seaside Baths and Natatorium in Seaside, Oregon, and Richmond, California's recently renovated Municipal Natatorium of 1924 (popularly known as "The Plunge") were products of that decade. No bath in any decade would ever manage to emulate San Francisco's extravaganza.

Endnotes

1. The wherewithal to purchase and construct this entertainment complex derived from royalties on the takings of the mines along Nevada's Comstock Lode. A self-taught engineer, Sutro, in the first of his giant construction endeavors, built a tunnel for ventilating and draining the mines. He sold out his interest in a timely manner before that vein was discovered to be exhausted.
2. *San Francisco Evening Bulletin*, 7 April 1894 from John A. Martini, "Sutro Baths: A Developmental History," in Architectural Resources Group, *Historical Assessment of the Sutro Baths Site* (San Francisco: Architectural Resources Group, July 2008): 4. This report represents the third attempt, following ones in 1979 and 1993, to gain national preservation status for the Lands End site.
3. In its index, the California State Library identifies the source of twenty books on ancient Rome and classical architecture (and all the other books given by San Francisco's one-time mayor) with the phrase "Sutro Library." That phrase connotes yet another grandiose but uncompleted civic project. Adolph Sutro intended to build a library and donate it to the city. Instead the California State

Caracalla at Lands End (continued)

Library inherited the portion of the collection that survived the 1906 earthquake and fire. As per Sutro's desire, these books remain in his adopted city.

4. James Delgado, *Historic Structure Report, Historic Data Section, Sutro Heights Park*, GGNRA, South District, San Francisco, CA (NPS: S.F. Division of Resources Management and Planning, 1983): 5-8; Adolph Sutro Papers, BANC MSS C-B 465, Carton 2, V. 41, Letter Book, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley. Sutro was in Europe in 1883 and from '84 to '86 and in France and Germany in '89.

5. Fikret Yegül, *Baths and Bathing in Classical Antiquity* (Cambridge, MA: Architectural History Foundation & MIT, 1992): 61.

6. Edwin Lee, *The Watering Places of England, with a summary of their medicinal topography and remedial resources*, 4th ed. (London: J. Churchill, 1859). This is one of at least 18 books owned by Sutro on the subject of mineral waters and therapeutic bathing.

7. Alev Lytle Croutier, *Taking the Waters: Spirit, Art, Sensuality* (N.Y.: Abbeville, 1992).

8. *Blue and Gold* (Berkeley: University of California, 1901): 168.

9. "The New Glass-Covered Steam Bathing Establishment at Monterey," *Monterey Californian*, 4 December 1880. The guest register is in the archives of the Pebble Beach Company. The Del Monte offered cold sea water baths and steam baths of varying temperatures. In "Looking Seaward. A Hint Suggestive of the Growth of the City," the *San Francisco Bulletin* of 9 April 1889 urged Mr. Sutro not only to "complete the bathing place he has so long had uncompleted" but also to build a family hotel or to "offer a portion of his land" for same so that San Francisco could compete with the Del Monte in terms of hotel accommodations that offered clean sea-water bathing. "The health and moral benefits to flow from there cannot well be over-estimated. Eastern and other visitors will spend much of the time there that they now devote to Santa Cruz, Monterey, Santa Barbara and Coronado Beach."

10. Marilyn Thornton Williams, *Washing the Great Unwashed: Public Baths in Urban America, 1840-1920* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1991): 11,

17-18. With its "surf baths" and "hot sea baths," both on the edge of the Bay, Harbor View was San Francisco's version of the "floating baths" that became popular in Boston and New York in the late 1860s, continuing into the 1880s and '90s. Docks defined these river or ocean-side spaces, which also included changing rooms.

11. Ladd, 12. A turn of the century national survey made the disconcerting discovery that bathing was still very rare. The report concluded that one in 38 Germans bathed once a year, or, interpreted another way (as the report did), some residents only had a bath every 38 years.

12. Cologne enjoyed a particularly well-appointed example of such an institution. Dating from 1885, it had three pools, one for men, a second for women, and a third for workers and children. There were also first, second, and third class bathtubs, Russian and Roman-Irish baths, a restaurant, and a barber shop. Unlike British comparables, it did not contain laundry facilities.

13. Williams, 11. Between 1868 and 1888 New York City had 15 floating baths in the East and Hudson rivers.

14. Yegül, 7. Fikret Yegül maintains that the institution of the bath evolved in Greece from the gymnasium, place for the military and athletic training of young citizens.

15. Augustus J.C. Hare's *Walks in Rome*, 2nd ed. (London: Daldy, Ibster, 1875) maintains that the Diocletian Baths covered 440,00 square yards. Sutro Baths (275'x150') at 41,250 square feet offered no contest.

16. The working class, as Sutro and his peers would have defined it, would not have included Asians, who lived in a parallel, but separate world. We know from items reporting fires in the contemporary media that the Japanese had their own communal baths.

17. *S.F. Evening Bulletin*, 7 March 1894.

18. *Plan of Parks on the Ribbon System: Souvenir of the Grand Warehouse of the Bon Marche* (Paris: A. Lenegre, 1885).

19. Desmond F. Smith has done extensive research on Lemme and Colley. In "Emil S. Lemme (1863-1921)," *Champagne County (IL) Genealogical Society Quarterly* 30 (June 2008):4, he cites Lemme's University

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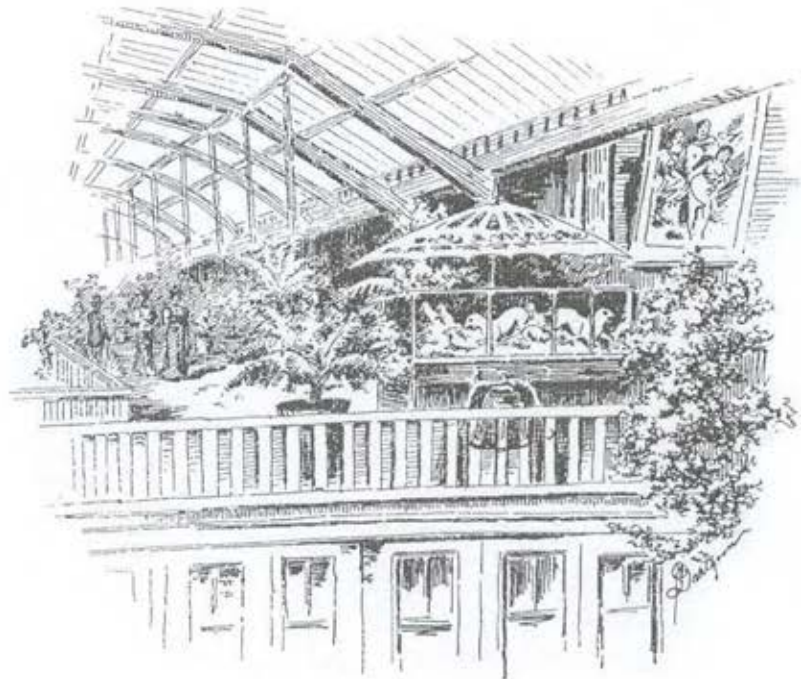


Fig. 12. Visitors promenade through the art gallery at Sutro Baths. A glass display case of stuffed seals acquired from Woodward's Gardens can be seen in the foreground. Illustration by Carl Dahlgren. (Adolph Sutro, A Brief Story of Brilliant Life by Eugenia Kellogg Holmes, 1895, M. Graham collection.)

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of Illinois teacher, Nathan Ricker, as being the first university graduate in architecture in this country.

20. Edith Sessions Tupper extensively quotes Sutro in an interview published as "Sutro and His Work," *Colorado Special Gazette*, 8 September 1895.

21. W.H.R. Adamson to Adolph Sutro, 8 October 1882, Adolph Sutro Papers, Bancroft Library. The name of the "new superintendent" was read as "McLaren," but may instead be J.J. "McKewen," the assistant head whom McLaren replaced in 1887.) Six months later Adamson triumphantly reported that the bent grass had "taken."

22. A.O. Harrison to Sutro, 14, 15 October 1892; W.C. Little to Sutro, 18 October 1892, Sutro Papers. This may be one of the earliest recorded plantings of the now reviled ice plant (*Mesembryanthemum*).

23. National Park Service, Golden Gate National Recreation Area, *Sutro Heights Historic District: Comprehensive Design and Environmental Assessment*, vol. 1 (EDAW in association with Land and Community Associates & five other consultants, September 1993).

24. "Knocked Down. Adolph Sutro the Victor in a Lively Contest. He Buys a Lot of the Woodward's Gardens Curiosities. They Will Go to Increase His Collection at Sutro Heights." *San Francisco Evening Bulletin*, 6 April 1893. Sutro acquired many of these curios from Woodward's Gardens, from 1865 San Francisco's earliest combination arboretum/botanical garden/amusement park/zoo/art and natural history museum. Upon its demise Sutro transferred many of its exhibits to his complex.

25. A 1910 appraisal of Sutro's estate, cited in John Martini's *Sutro Bath's Physical Development Chronology* (unpublished document, 2008) lists the boilers and bathing suits. Tom Thumb memorabilia is cited in "Pieces of History for Sale," *Indiana (PA) Evening Gazette*, 16 January 1971.

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Fig. 13. Twin cupolas mark the eastern or intended principal entry. Seal Rock is to the right and the "Greek Temple" entry to the far left. (Taber, 1895. Roy D. Graves Pictorial Collection, Series 1: S.F. Views, subseries 1: S.F. <1906, V. 4: Pioneers, San Francisco:76. Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.

CALIFORNIA PIONEERS OF LANDSCAPE DESIGN

The second volume in the *Pioneers* series will be forthcoming this fall if all goes well with the publisher's schedule. This edition will contain biographical sketches of a number of Californians, yet there are many more who still remain relatively undiscovered. In our last issue, we appealed to our readers for additional information about Johannes Reimers, the designer of Fresno's Roeding Park.

Another character of interest is a landscape gardener named Robert Armstrong. Some of you may recall that name being mentioned in these pages back in 2005 when we reviewed early Napa County nurseries for our conference there. R. Armstrong & Co. bought up Leonard Coates' Napa Valley Nursery in 1895, only to have the venture fail and the property revert to the previous owner in the following year. Being curious about Armstrong's claim to have served an apprenticeship in England, worked two and a half years as superintendent at Timothy Hopkins' Sherwood Hall Nursery in Menlo Park, and to have then "engaged in business for himself" at Mountain View, we kept an eye out for any further mention of him. Along with other bits and pieces, a fairly extensive sketch was turned up in the *History of Sacramento County, California* (Willis, 1913), reprinted here with some paraphrasing and additions.

The overall impression given is one of a restless man, always seeking a better position. Of English parentage and ancestry, Armstrong was born in Cumberland on 23 June 1860. Immediately after his graduation from the Evans Academy in 1876, Armstrong was apprenticed to the

nursery business with Little & Balltayne, one of the largest firms of the kind in Cumberland. There he learned every detail in regard to plant life and the culture of flowers, so that when he completed his trade and left the nursery in 1882, it was with a full preparation for a successful career. He married Miss Martha Heward of Cumberland in June 1882, just prior to removing to Edinburgh, Scotland, where he was employed as a journeyman nurseryman until March 1884, when he immigrated to the United States, settling temporarily at Boston.

For a few months he was employed there in laying out grounds and caring for the gardens owned by wealthy Boston merchant C. Johnston. During July of the same year, he went to Newport, Rhode Island, where he became superintendent of the grounds and gardens of August Belmont. Upon resigning from that position in September 1886, Armstrong went to New York City where he secured employment as manager of the plant department for the J.M. Hodgson Floral Company on Fifth Avenue. He continued there until 1891. Records show that he was made a Mason at Doylestown, Pennsylvania and therefore must have spent some time working there as well, though it must have been one of his less successful episodes, as this period, like the one at Napa, was omitted from the Willis sketch.

Coming to California in 1891, Armstrong is said to have worked for five years as superintendent and manager of Sherwood Hall Nursery. The Napa newspaper's account stated that only half that period had been spent at Menlo Park; thereafter he was presumably setting up his

own nursery at Mountain View (Santa Clara County) in May 1894. Evidence to support either statement is still to be found. The Mountain View venture evidently proved unsuitable in some respect, as Armstrong next tried to set up in the business of growing violets, sweet peas, etc. for the cut flower trade by purchasing the Napa Valley Nursery from Leonard Coates. The 1895 San Francisco city directory also showed that he had a nursery outlet at 301 Bush Street, in partnership with Arthur Cann and William/Alfred Parker. (Cann later opened his own nursery/flower shop in San Jose.) The Napa newspaper reported that "It is the intention of the new firm to erect extensive hot houses and rent more land than was held by Mr. Coates and to go into the business of floriculture to supply the San Francisco market with cut flowers and hot house plants. It is said that two acres will be put into sweet peas this Spring, and that other plants will be grown in proportion." A further item in the *Napa Register* of 25 January 1895 gave these additional details:

Florist and Nurseryman. Mr. Robert Armstrong, leading member of the firm that recently bought the Napa Valley Nurseries of Mr. Leonard Coates, has arrived and with his family occupies the residence at corner the of Clay and Coombs streets, opposite Maple Hall Rink. His business associates are Arthur Cann and Alfred Parker, two young men who will have charge of the floral department to be established in connection with the nursery business built up by Mr. Coates. Mr. Armstrong is well up in the business of

(Continued on page 14.)

florist and nurseryman, having served an apprenticeship in England. He was two and a half years Superintendent for Mr. Timothy Hopkins whose great flower farm is in San Mateo county and since last May has been engaged in business for himself at Mountain View, Santa Clara county. It is his intention to grow the California violet, one of the choicest blossoms now known to florists, for the market. Mr. Carbone of Ocean View is the propagator of that particular plant.

This venture failed within the year, per an announcement in the 8 May 1896 *Napa Register*, and Armstrong next moved to Oakland as superintendent of the W.J. Dingee estate, 'Fernwood,' where he remained until 1901. From there he soon went south to Montecito (Santa Barbara County) where he was said to have laid out grounds for the residence of numerous millionaires, including Isaac George Waterman ('Mira Vista'), T.C. Underhill, James Murphy, E.C. Driver and John Davidson. David Myrick (*Montecito and Santa Barbara: Volume II - The Days of the Great Estates* (1991, 2nd ed. 2001) said that Armstrong assisted landscape architect John J. Whipple by building a large greenhouse below Mt. Carmel Church to provide plants for 'Piranhurst' and for 'The Breakers' estate of Deming Jarvis. Myrick did not list any of these other client's names in his index.

Armstrong was the only landscape gardener listed as such in the 1904 Santa Barbara County directory, but in that same year, he was also engaged to work in Los Angeles County. As manager for the Abbott Kinney Company, Armstrong drew up the plans for the beach town of

Venice. A 1905 *Los Angeles Times* advertisement stated that Robert Armstrong was the supervising landscape gardener for a real estate development called Venice of America (and Venice Annex #2). The Dan Burks Investment Co. was managing the project. Burks was president of the company, and David Evans served as vice president. The landscaping was only briefly described as consisting of ornamental trees, palms, shrubs, and flowers. In 1905, Armstrong was also named as a county vice president of the newly re-formed Southern California Horticultural Association.

During 1906 he had a contract for laying out the athletic grounds at Hollywood and the Arroyo Seco at Pasadena. He visited Paris in August 1906 and reported back via the September *Gardening* magazine that American horticulture compared favorably with that of France. He was returning to the U.S. by way of Scotland in September. After a number of years of apparently successful activity in southern California, Armstrong moved north again in 1910, this time to Oakland, where he was first given charge of planting and developing the holdings of the Oakland Water Company near Piedmont (Alameda). W.J. Dingee was president of that company.

This employment too was short-lived, as the 1911 Oakland city directory listed Robert A. Armstrong as gardener for the Oakland Park Commission, (Henry F. Vogt, secretary, 1312 Broadway), residence 24 Olive Street. This would have been during the short reign of Oscar Prager (q.v. *Eden* Spring 2006). According to a report in the *Los Angeles Times* on 11 June 1911, Armstrong had just left the employ of the Oakland parks department to work as chief state

gardener at Capitol Park in Sacramento. He remained there only about three months, just long enough to be credited with drawing up the plans for the "California section" of Capitol Park, three and one-half acres located on the southeast side of the property which were to be decorated with native California plants. The idea for this garden was credited to A. Cammetti, supervising agent of the Foothills Agricultural Experiment Station. The governor of the state asked the counties to send donations of trees, shrubs, plants and bulbs to landscape it. In 1914, another governor appealed to the schoolchildren of California to send in plants from the counties, suggesting that the first appeal of 1911 had little response.

The last that is known of Armstrong (to date) is that he next took a position as general manager of the Eastlawn cemetery and conservatories in Sacramento, where he remained in 1913 at age 53. One of his sons was also employed as a clerk in the conservatory store.

These are only the bare bones of one career, and there is much more that could be done to flesh out this biography if one had the time and energy to devote to it. Local newspaper reports and historical society records for the cities where Armstrong found employment would be one place to begin.

There are many more still relatively unknown California pioneers of landscape design waiting to be rediscovered and work has already begun on the third volume of the *Pioneers* series. Who among us will answer the call to help document the careers of other forgotten men and women?



Preservation Issues

Santa Barbara

The Pearl Chase Society newsletter, *The Capital* (April 2009) reports the following updates on Santa Barbara preservation issues:

Val Verde: A notice in the *Santa Barbara News-Press* on 11 February reported that the Val Verde estate was in foreclosure and would go up for auction on 3 March. The Heath Horton & Warren R. Austin Val Verde Foundation tried to preserve this property, but ran into much opposition regarding public visitation and events from the neighbors. On February 27 the Austin Val Verde Foundation filed for bankruptcy thereby postponing the scheduled auction until the bankruptcy court convenes a meeting of all the creditors. The 17-acre estate is listed for sale with an asking price of \$19 million.

Casa del Herrero: The Secretary of the Interior awarded Casa del Herrero a National Historic Landmark designation in February, making it the third NHL in Santa Barbara, the other two being the County Courthouse and the Mission. The Casa is open for public tours from February through November. Reservations may be made by calling 805.565.5653 or via email to casatour@silcom.com.

Botanic Garden: The most recent issue under contention at the Garden is the erection of a 1,200 square foot structure designed by artist Herb Parker in the Meadow. The County Historic Landmarks Advisory Committee's (CHLAC) decision to allow the "temporary" environmental sculpture, which was to be left in place for three years, was appealed to the Board of Supervisors. Though the appeal argued that the exhibit violates the historic landscape design concept and also violates the existing CUP creating a usage beyond that permitted, on 17 March the Supervisors voted to allow the

structure but for two years instead of three. To alleviate the concerns of Mission Canyon residents about wildfires, the Supervisors ordered that the Garden be closed on red flag warning days.

At the same time, CHLAC suggested that the Easton Aqueduct Trail, the Indian Trail and the Pritchett Trail should be added as historic resources to the Draft Environmental Impact Report, and stated that all historic trails must be identified, photographed and, if possible, preserved as dirt trails in their current locations. Unpaved trails are an important design feature of the Landmark parcels that exemplify the naturalistic and informal appearance characteristic of the 1926-1950 period of significance of the Garden. The Class I impact of paving the Garden's trails is significant and unavoidable with mitigation. Installation of new concrete interlocking pavers on the trails should be prohibited and replacement of existing pavers with naturalistic materials more compatible with the historic design of the trails should be considered. The CHLAC further requested that the Garden's Cultural Landscape Master Plan include documentation of the design intent behind the landmarked parcels of the Garden. Without this information, the baseline with respect to the Garden's historical resources is incomplete and potentially inaccurate.

Franceschi House: Due to the ongoing efforts of the Pearl Chase Society, who assumed responsibility for it and raised funds to restore it, the house is at present in stable condition. Further progress on the house awaits the repair of retaining walls near the building, a responsibility of City Parks. City Parks is currently reprioritizing its budget and projects, and further work on the house awaits the outcome of their deliberations.

Solvang

The *Santa Barbara News-Press* of 12 March 2009 announced that "California State Parks recently purchased 39 acres next to Mission Santa Ines, which includes the historic grist and fulling mills, from the Santa Barbara Trust for Historic Preservation." These mills are considered particularly significant as they are the only two agricultural elements attached to a mission that are still standing. The property was sold to the Trust in 1996. Though the land is now owned by State Parks, it still remains part of the larger Mission Santa Inez National Historic Landmark District. The next step is to hold a series of public meetings to receive input from the local community. This will lead towards the creation of an Initial Public Use Plan to be completed by Spring 2010. Information on these meetings and on the new park is available on the Trust's website, www.sbthp.org.

Historic American Landscape Survey

The Northern California HALS group has been meeting quarterly for the last four years with a view to broadening public knowledge about HALS. A federal program started in 2000, HALS is designed to document the nation's significant landscapes and store this documentation in the Library of Congress for the use of all. It is modeled on the Historic American Building Survey program that was founded in the 1930s. The NorCal chapter now has a website; visit www.HALSca.org to find out when and where the next meeting will be held, check out the landscapes inventory, FAQs and many links. In the meantime, HALS has succeeded in garnering signatures for \$800,000-worth of funding legislation in 2009. Keep your fingers crossed, and thanks to all those who helped by sending supportive letters to their legislators.



A Message from the President

On March 6th, your newly elected Board of Directors held its semi-annual business meeting at San Diego. The next day it met again for a long-range strategic planning session, in which we were kept on task by a facilitator. We were asked some very basic questions about who we are, what we want to do, why we are a group, and what are our strengths and weaknesses. The discussion was spirited and wide-ranging, with the unexpected result that at the end of the day we reconvened as a Board and voted to radically restructure the organization by establishing several new committees. The intent is to enable and encourage participation of the general membership and reduce burnout of those dedicated individuals who have tackled the necessary work pretty much by themselves, and done it again and again. We hope the general membership will consider serving on a committee; committee members do not have to attend the semi-annual business meetings (but are welcome to do so). The more hands the lighter the lifting.

The most important new creation is the Communications Committee, which will be an umbrella over both our journal *Eden* and the website, with the exposure and content of the website to be greatly increased. These were determined to be our most effective vehicles for informing members and reaching

out to the public. Our mission or purpose for existing remains to support preservation of California's gardens and landscapes through advocacy and by serving as a clearing-house of information and expertise on preservation issues and sites and educating the public, policymakers, and students as to the importance of landscapes and gardens in the history of this state.

The second-most important committee is the Conference Committee. This will provide continuity, coordination and support for those actively involved in dealing with the logistics of our annual conferences. We expect to continue our tradition of exploring the state's gardens and landscapes by holding annual conferences in various locations, generally alternating between northern and southern California. Our conferences are where we really get to enjoy each other's company and to educate ourselves through lectures and excursions.

We established a Finance Committee, currently chaired by our new Treasurer, who is busy reorganizing our record-keeping methods and how we define income, expenses, budgets and other such arcane matters. When this is working smoothly, we may have a need to set up an independent Audit Committee as well.

We also established an Advisory Committee, to be composed of members-at-large, former board members, and possibly honorary members who are willing to work on limited and defined tasks congenial to their expertise and interests. We invite the membership-at-large to step up to the plate and let us know their availability and areas of interest.

Setting new goals and objectives to best achieve our mission is still in process as the committees make arrangements to meet and further discuss their options. Nevertheless it is clear that we intend to be a more active organization, in advocacy, education, and the delight of discovering and sharing our rich landscape past.

It was decided that we would no longer issue a Membership Directory as there are difficulties about keeping it current, even within the space of one year; the cost of printing keeps going up; and also because of privacy issues. Due to the latter, we also will no longer list names and addresses of new members in *Eden*. If any member needs a list of contacts, they can send a request for same to the Membership Secretary, Judy Horton, and she will be glad to provide a copy of her up-to-date membership database, along with a gentle reminder that it is not to be used for any commercial purpose.

Cheers!

Thomas Brown
President



Members in the News

In Memorium:

Carola Ashford (1947-2009)

It is with infinite sadness that we report the passing of CGLHS member Carola Ann Ashford, who died of pancreatic cancer on February 24th.

Carola was one of that rare breed, a native Californian. Born in Oakland, she grew up in the Contra Costa County town of Alamo. After earning degrees in criminology and early childhood education and teaching for a time, she turned her favorite pastime of gardening into her profession by earning a degree in landscape architecture at Sonoma State University in 1997.

Carola joined CGLHS in 2001 and upon reading in *Eden* of the Garden Conservancy's Marco Polo Stefano Fellowship, she applied and was selected for an internship working on the garden restoration project at Alcatraz in 2004. Her job initially was to work in the gardens with the volunteers, to update the plant inventory and conduct research into the history of the gardens, especially seeking photographs of the gardens from the 1950s and '60s. "I am so excited about this unusually popular tourist destination being the site of a historic garden preservation effort," Ashford remarked. "So many people will plug into the importance of these gardens to the military families, the prison staff and their families, and the inmates. I would hope that our restoration work will tell the compelling story of people connecting to gardens to enrich their lives, and the importance of preserving these kinds of connections."



Carola on the Rock
(Garden Conservancy, 2004).

Carola's range of skills, willingness to work, and infectious enthusiasm led the Conservancy to name her its project manager for the Alcatraz garden restoration effort at the end of her fellowship year. In the Winter 2008 issue of *Pacific Horticulture* magazine, Carola wrote of the progress made on this project ("Gardens Tell the Other Story of Alcatraz"). After several years of basic brush clearing, they'd reached the exciting point of replanting four historic garden areas around the island. "These newly re-established gardens tell the story of life outside 'the big house'" Carola wrote. "They illustrate, in a dramatic way, the importance of gardens to the human spirit and the healing benefits gardens can provide. They [also] serve as a demonstration of the aesthetic possibilities of sustainable gardening with plants gathered decades ago from around the world." We only wish the gardens could have provided physical as well as mental healing for Carola.

Conservancy Preservation Projects Director Bill Noble commented that "The restored gardens are a visible testimony to Carola's special combination of creativity, hard work and quiet persistence, and to her view that gardens can bring together people from all walks of life."

In the spring of 2008 the CGLHS board held their business meeting at San Francisco and made arrangements with Carola to tour the island. Shortly thereafter we asked her to serve on the board as a member-at-large for the 2009-11 term. Initially she accepted with pleasure, but when she was diagnosed in June she regretfully withdrew her name from the ballot.

Carola is survived by her husband Gene Ng, a daughter, two stepsons, and two brothers. Donations may be sent to the Pancreatic Cancer Action Network in Carola's memory. To support the legacy of the landscape restoration that Carola initiated at Alcatraz, the Golden Gate Parks Conservancy has set up the Carola Ashford Alcatraz Gardens Fund. Contributions may be made by contacting Kathryn Morelli, Director of Development, at kmorelli@parkconservancy.org or 415.561.3000.

A memorial for Carola will be held at 1 P.M. on 26 April in the backyard garden she painstakingly worked to develop over the past two decades at her family home: 225 San Francisco Boulevard, San Anselmo, Marin County.



Book Reviews & News

We regret to inform you that Peggy Darnall suffered a fall while working in her hillside home garden last month and broke her arm in the process. Consequently, the Book Reviews & News section for this quarter is concentrated on "news" rather than "reviews." Below are just the highlights of what is new and of possible interest to our readers. We are pleased to report that the authors featured below are all members of CGLHS.

The Global Migrations of Ornamental Plants: How the World Got into Your Garden, by Judith M. Taylor, with a foreword by Peter H. Raven, director of the Missouri Botanical Garden (St. Louis: Missouri Botanical Garden Press, 2009), hardcover, 312 pages, \$40. "*The Global Migration of Ornamental Plants* traces the journey of the familiar plants we grow in our gardens from their far-flung roots to our backyards." This is Taylor's third book, following *The Olive in California*, and *Tangible Memories: Californians and Their Gardens, 1800-1950* co-authored with the late Harry M. Butterfield. She is already hard at work on her next book, tentatively titled *Visions of Loveliensness: the Work of Forgotten Flower Breeders* (Krieger Publishers) and currently scheduled for release in 2010). See her article on begonias in the spring issue of *Pacific Horticulture*. The Missouri Botanic Garden will celebrate its 150th anniversary this year by hosting the APGA annual conference at St. Louis on 23-27 June. The theme is "The Global Garden." For details visit their website, www.publicgardens.com.

Another World Lies Beyond: Creating Liu Fang Yuan, the Huntington's Chinese Garden, a collection of essays edited by T. June Li, curator of the Chinese Garden at San Marino (Henry E. Huntington Library and Art Gallery, 2009), hardcover, 127 pages, full color illustrations, \$34.95. This book is divided into three sections. The first covers the history of the recently completed garden construction. The second deals with understanding the symbolism used throughout the garden and the significance of the choices that were made. Three appendices augment this section, explaining the names used for sections of the garden and their historical references; listing the different types of wood materials used in the various garden structures; and brief biographical sketches of the poets, calligraphers and artists whose work can be found in the garden. The last section of the book covers the botanical plants that were chosen to furnish this garden, including an essay by garden director James Folsom ("Chinese Plants and Liu Fang Yuan: A Botanical Heritage") and a glossary of the plants used. There is also a selected bibliography, including a list of references in the Chinese language. A majority of the illustrations are either of photographs taken at gardens in China or artist's renderings of historic Chinese gardens from various museums.

Living Modern: A Biography of Greenwood Common, by Waverly Lowell, Curator of the Environmental Design Archives at U.C. Berkeley will be published by William Stout Publishers (San Francisco) in May 2009. This is number five in the Berkeley/Design/Book series, a project intended to make the resources of the Archives more widely available to the public. This book provides a social and design history of an uncommon modernist enclave in the Berkeley hills. A lecture and book signing will follow its publication. Berkeley/Design/Books No. 1 was *Maybeck's Landscapes: Drawing in Nature* by Dianne Harris (2004). Number 2 was Marc Treib's *The Donnell and Eckbo Gardens: Modern California Masterworks* (2005) and number 3 was *Modern Public Gardens: Robert Royston and the Suburban Park*, by Reuben M. Rainey and J.C. Miller (2006). Fourth in the series was CGLHS member Treib's *Appropriate: The Houses of Joseph Esherick*, released in the fall of 2008, the first major book to address the architecture and life of that Bay Area designer.

Beatrix Farrand: Private Gardens, Public Landscapes, by Judith B. Tankard (Monacelli Press/Random House, hardcover, 240 pp., \$60) is expected to be released in Fall 2009. We'll provide a review in a later issue. You can place an advance order now with www.randomhouse.com. The book contains a chapter devoted to Farrand's time in California. Tankard, who is the author of *Gardens of the Arts and Crafts Movement* (2004) and *The Gardens of Ellen Biddle Shipman* as well as co-author of *Gertrude Jekyll: A Vision of Garden and Wood*, *Gertrude Jekyll at Munsted Wood*, and most recently, *A Place of Beauty: Artists and Gardens of the Cornish Colony*, invites you to check out the newly revised Farrand Society website, www.beatrixfarrandsociety.org.

Book Reviews & News (continued)

Coming Attractions: 2009

Shaping the American Landscape: New Profiles from the Pioneers of American Landscape Design Project, Charles A. Birnbaum editor (University of Virginia Press) is promised for Fall 2009. Details to follow.

Historic Virginia Gardens: Preservation Work of the Garden Club of Virginia, 1875-2007, by Margaret Page Bemiss, with photographs by Roger Foley (University of Virginia Press), cloth cover, 304 pages, \$49.95. Forthcoming in April.

Unbounded Practice: Women and Landscape Architecture in the Early Twentieth Century by Thaisa Way, Assistant Professor, College of the Built Environment at the University of Washington (University of Virginia Press), cloth cover, 288 pages, \$50.00. Forthcoming in April.

Orders may be placed with UVA Press, P.O. Box 400318, Charlottesville, VA 22904-4318. Toll-free tel: 877.288.6400. Email: vapress@virginia.edu.

The following reprinted books are promised for release in Spring 2009, concluding the ASLA's Centennial Reprint Series, begun in 1999 by the Library of American Landscape History in partnership with the University of Massachusetts Press:

Country Life: A Handbook of Agriculture, Horticulture, and Landscape Gardening (1866) by Robert Morris Copeland, with a new introduction by William H. Tishler, professor emeritus of landscape architecture at the University of Wisconsin-Madison

and editor of *Midwestern Landscape Architecture* (2000).

Landscape for Living (1950) by Garrett Eckbo, with an introduction by CGLHS member David C. Streatfield, professor emeritus of landscape architecture at the University of Washington and author of *California Gardens: Creating a New Eden* (1994). "Streatfield chronicles Eckbo's life up to 1950, well into his early career as a landscape designer, author, and social activist."

The Art of Landscape Architecture (1915) by Samuel Parsons Jr., sums up the theories and built work that inspired America's first generation of landscape architects. A protégé of Calvert Vaux, Parsons (1844-1923) worked as superintendent of planting in Central Park and landscape architect to the City of New York for nearly thirty years. The book contains a new introduction by Francis R. Kowsky, professor emeritus of art history at Buffalo State College and author of *Country, Park and City: The Architecture and Life of Calvert Vaux*.

Orders may be placed through the Library of American Landscape History, P.O. Box 1323, Amherst, MA 01004-1323. Tel: 413.549.4860.

Commentary on these three volumes was excerpted from the Winter 2009 newsletter of The Alliance for Historic Landscape Preservation. To become a member, send a check for \$35 payable to AHLHP, care of Debbie Smith, 129 Lauryn, Natchitoches, LA 71457. Website: www.ahlp.org.

Periodicals

The Spring 2009 issue of *Sitelines* 4, no. 11 is now available from the Foundation for Landscape Studies, 7 West 81st Street, New York, NY 10024. This issue's theme is "The Landscapes of Antiquity" and features essays by Paula Deitz ("Garden Letter from Greece"), John A. Pinto ("Hadrian's Villa and the Landscape of Allusion"), and Kathryn Gleason ("Digging Ancient Gardens").

Catalogues

Raymond Sutton Jr. is pleased to announce the release of their April Natural History Catalog #197, including an interesting archive on Luther Burbank "The Plant Wizard." The catalog is available in softcover form upon request, but also may be seen on their website at www.suttonbooks.com/rsh/images/pdfs/197.pdf. Raymond M. Sutton Jr. Books, ABAA, 430 Main St, Williamsburg KY 40769 USA. Phone: 606-549-3464. Fax: 606-549-3469.

Exhibitions

"Past Tents: The Way We Camped," based on the book of the same name by the Bancroft Library's Head of Public Services, Susan Snyder, is an exhibit of photographs and items from the collections of the Bancroft Library and the California Historical Society archives. From 13 April through 5 June the Old Courthouse Museum, 211 West Santa Ana Blvd, Santa Ana will be hosting this exhibition of western camping memorabilia. Tel: 714.973.6607.



Coming Events

For details about two interesting French and English historic garden tours, visit the website: www.jeffsainsburytours.com.

First Sunday of each month:

Through November, garden tours will be held at 2:30 P.M. at Rancho Los Cerritos Historic Site, 4600 Virginia Road, Long Beach. Tours are free. To reserve a space or for more details, call 562.570.1755 or visit their website at www.rancholoscerritos.org.

Through 23 April: "Ours to Keep" is an exhibit celebrating the 75th anniversary of the East Bay Regional Park District. Visit the Contra Costa County History Center, 610 Main Street, Martinez on Tuesdays through Thursday, 9 A.M. to 4 P.M. Tel: 925.229.1042.

16-30 April: "In the Footsteps of Frank Lloyd Wright: The Gardens of Japan" is the theme of a study tour sponsored by the Foundation for Landscape Studies. They will visit gardens, waterfalls, shrines and temples that Wright visited and photographed. Highlights include visits to the Rikugi-en garden in Tokyo, the Buddhist shrines at Nikko, and the Kiyomizu-dera (Pure Water Temple) in Kyoto. For full details please contact Elizabeth Barlow Rogers at rogerseb@aol.com.

16-19 April: "The Culture of Leisure – Rethinking the California Dream" is the theme of this year's California Preservation Foundation annual conference, to be held at Palm Springs. For details, visit www.californiapreservation.org. Or contact them at California Preservation Foundation, 5 Third Street, Suite 424, San Francisco 94103. Tel: 415.495.0349.

18 April: Casa del Herrero celebrates its successful nomination as Santa Barbara's latest National Historic Landmark from 2-3 P.M. in the Mural Room of the Historic Santa Barbara Courthouse. Guest speaker Charles A. Birnbaum, FASLA, president of The Cultural Landscape Foundation, will address "The Casa in Context - More than Just A Pretty Garden." Fee: \$15. Reservations: 805.565.5653.

18 & 26 April: The Garden Conservancy kicks off its annual *Open Days* with alternating dates in northern and southern California. On 18 April you may visit the Lillie garden in Atherton on the San Francisco Peninsula, originally designed by Thomas Church. In Los Angeles County, you have a choice of six gardens to visit on 26 April, among them Henry Greene's Wildwood Park. The story of *Greene & Greene* author Edward R. Bosley's (2000) rediscovery of this collection of 1920s bungalows with the aid of archival records was reprinted in our Spring 2004 *Eden*.

2 & 9 May: Return to northern California on 2 May for more Conservancy visits in Palo Alto and Atherton, including the Meisel garden, located in Lindenwood, the former estate of silver magnate, James Flood. If you visit this one, be sure and tour the entire Flood estate as remnants of original walls, urns and statuary, including one spectacular fountain, may still be found scattered around this subdivision and many of them are visible from the street. On 9 May you have the opportunity to visit six more Los Angeles gardens, including one that features the work of CGLHS member Laura Morton at Casa de los Arcos, a 1934 Spanish Colonial Revival house.

17 May: On this date, the Conservancy offers two large properties in Marin County that are worth visiting, if for nothing more than their spectacular views of San Francisco Bay. One at Belvedere is the original location of the Belvedere Golf and Country Club, built in 1914. The other in Tiburon covers eight acres, including a hillside rose garden, a state-of-the-art conservatory, and a century-old boathouse. A third property, also in Tiburon, the Ring Mountain Hillside Garden has been featured in *Horticulture* magazine and in Saxon Holt's recent book, *Grasses: Uncommon Garden Design*.

The Conservancy is now offering memberships at the individual rate of \$50, which includes a copy of the *Open Days Directory* and one book of six tickets for garden admissions. Additional books of tickets are \$15 apiece. Contact: The Garden Conservancy, P.O. Box 219, Cold Spring, New York 19516. Tel: 845.265.2029. Website: www.gardenconservancy.org.

17 May: The Pearl Chase Society's 11th Annual Historic Homes Tour includes one designed by Francis Townsend Underhill, and newly restored. Tickets \$50. Call 805.961.3938 for details.

27-30 May: The Annual Meeting of The Alliance for Historic Landscape Preservation will be held in St. Louis. This year's theme is "At the Confluence of the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers: Managing Regional Change in Urban and Suburban Cultural Landscapes." For full details or to register for the conference, see their website, www.ahlp.org.

6 June: Rancho Los Alamitos is celebrating the re-opening of their Native Garden, closed since 1995, with a special event, a "Southern California

SAVE THE DATE: October 22-25, 2009 in San Francisco. CGLHS Annual Conference

Shaping the American Landscape: New Profiles from the Pioneers of American Landscape Design Project is the title of the forthcoming second volume (to be released this fall) in the Pioneers series (with volume three already in the works). California has a large presence in volume two. From the northern part of the state, we have John McLaren and the editor's perennial favorite, Rudolph Ulrich. McLaren is of particular interest as his career spanned a period from the 1870s through the early 1940s. Ulrich spent only about fifteen years of his career in California, but gained national fame through his work at three international expositions. From the early to mid-1900s, there were Geraldine Knight Scott and Butler Sturtevant, both graduates of U.C. Berkeley's landscape program, Harry Shephard, H.L. Vaughn and his wife Adele, who taught at Berkeley. Then there are the mid-century modern men: Douglas Bayliss, Garrett Eckbo, Lawrence Halprin, Theodore Osmundson, and Robert Royston. Eckbo's career spans both the northern and southern parts of the state. These people will provide the basis of this year's conference, to be co-sponsored by The Garden Conservancy and The Cultural Landscape Foundation. We'll have further details in our Summer issue.

McLaren's Other Landscapes: Of course, everyone is aware of John McLaren's long-term connection to Golden Gate Park. We may be less familiar with his work on the private estates and public subdivisions of the San Francisco Peninsula, work done in conjunction with his son, landscape architect Donald McLaren, or his consulting work offering services to other city's parks, some as distant as Ashland, Oregon. David Streatfield (author of *California Gardens: Creating A New Eden*) writes that Tiburon's Keil Cove in Marin County was designed by McLaren c. 1900, "using a carefully chosen mixture of native and exotic trees..." to create the effect of naturalistic scenery rather than a cultivated garden. As the property has a Garden Conservancy easement, we hope to be able to tour this private garden during this conference.

Heritage Home & Garden Faire" from noon to 4:30 P.M. Attend seminars and enjoy garden tours and a plant sale. CGLHS member Christy O'Hara will be a featured speaker. For full details (they're still planning) call 562.431.3541 or visit the website: www.rancholosalamitos.com.

10-13 June, 2009: The Vernacular Architecture Forum Annual Meeting at Butte, Montana, "Mining Metropolis: An Island in a Stockman's Paradise?" For full details visit their website: www.vafweb.org.

14-26 June: The University of Virginia and Monticello invite you to attend the Historic Landscape Institute's annual program, "Preserving Jefferson's Gardens and Landscapes." This two-week event provides educational experience in the theory and practice of

historic landscape preservation. Completed applications must be received by 20 April. Tuition is \$800 and includes some meals but not lodging. Send a one-page resumé and statement of personal reasons for wanting to participate and a \$25 non-refundable application fee to The Historic Landscape Institute, Monticello, POB 316, Charlottesville, VA 22902. Tel: 434.984.9836. Email: phatch@monticello.org.

18-21 September: ASLA Annual Conference at Chicago, "Beyond Sustainability: Regenerating Places and People." Details on their website, www.asla.org.

26-27 September: The Pacific Horticulture symposium "Gardening Under Mediterranean Skies" will this year be

held at Santa Barbara, with co-hosting by the Mediterranean Plant Society and the SBBG. Contact 760.295.2173 or medskies@sdhortsoc.org.

May 2010: "Foreign Trends on American Soil" is the theme of the 2010 History of Landscape Architecture Symposium at the University of Maryland, College Park, MD. Topics of interest include the reception and legacy of foreign horticulture and design literature, as well as the impact of the work of overseas designers and critics on contemporary practice. Contact Raffaella Fabiani Giannetto, Ph.D., Asst. Prof. of Landscape Architecture, Dept. of Plant Science and Landscape Architecture, UMD, 2140 Plant Sciences Building, College Park, MD 20742. Email: rfg@umd.edu. Tel: 301.405.4341.



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Eden: Call for Content

Eden solicits your submissions of scholarly papers, short articles, book reviews, information about coming events, news about members' activities and honors, interesting archives or websites you have discovered. In short, send us anything pertaining to California's landscape history that may be of interest to members.

For book reviews, notices of interesting magazine articles, museum exhibits and the like, write to Assistant Editor Margaretta J. Darnall, 1154 Sunnyside Road, Oakland, CA 94610.

For items pertaining to preservation issues, for now contact Marlea Graham - see address below.

All other submissions should be sent to Editor Marlea Graham, 100 Bear Oaks Drive, Briones, CA 94553-9754. Telephone: 925.335.9182. Email: maggie94553@earthlink.net.

Deadlines for all submissions are the first days of March, June, September and December.

Back Issues of *Eden*

All issues of *Eden*, beginning with Volume 1, No. 1 (May 1996) onward, are available for purchase. Prices range from \$2.50 for single issues (under 20 pages) to \$5.00 for double issues (up to 36 pages). To order, write or email Editor Marlea Graham (contact information above). You may also obtain access to back issues at the following libraries which have full sets of *Eden*: Environmental Design Library, U.C. Berkeley; Helen Crocker-Russell Library, S.F. Botanical Garden; Science Library, U.C. Riverside; Blakely Library, Santa Barbara Botanic Garden; L.A. City & County Arboretum; Copley Library, University of San Diego; Homestead Museum, San Diego; Brooklyn Botanic Garden, New York.

Eden

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- To celebrate the beauty, wealth, and diversity of California gardens and landscapes.
- To aid and promote interest in, study of, and education about California garden and landscape history.
- To collect and/or coordinate resources and expertise about the history of California's gardens and landscapes.
- To visit on occasion 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.

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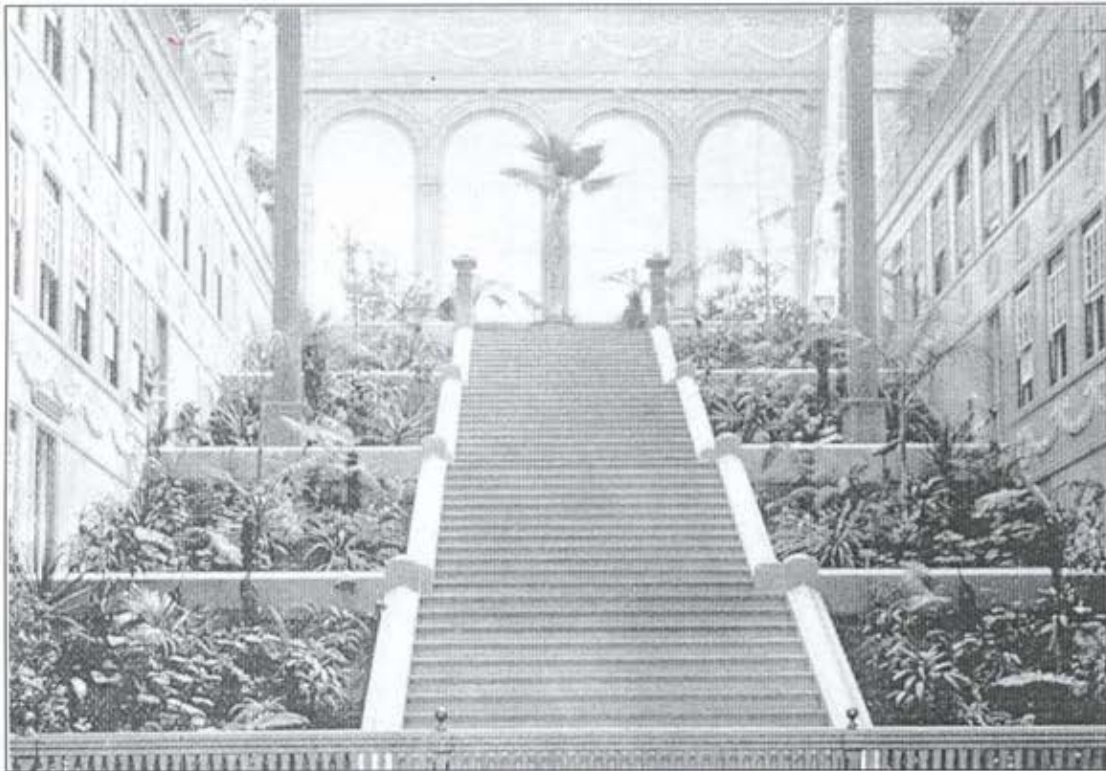


Fig. 14. Grand entry staircase, Sutro Baths. Flanking planting beds were filled with palms and other exotic items. (Adolph Sutro, *A Brief Story of A Brilliant Life* by Eugenia Kellogg Holmes, 1895, M. Graham collection.)



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