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The Evolution and Restoration Of Pasadena's Washington Park

Betty Sword

The author has lived in Pasadena for 25 years, most of them spent within two blocks of Washington Park. For the past 10 years she has been active in championing the park by participating in revising the Master Plan, helping to write the grant for the restoration, and taking part in the selection of the design team. Formerly a member of the Pasadena Recreation and Parks Commission, for several years she has served as president of the Friends of Washington Park. She is also an avid practitioner of gardening with California native plants, at both her home and Washington Park.

Then a public park renovation effort received the 2007 Southern California American Society of Landscape Architects Honor Award, new attention was deservedly given to an historic park in the city of Pasadena, which in the early 1920s had established one of its early public parks initially as a "sunken garden." The design award, in the subcategory of historic preservation and restoration, went to a three-entity design team: Troller Mayer Associates, Inc., Landscape Architects (with Richard Mayer, ASLA, Principal in Charge); Robert C. Perry, FASLA, Perry & Associates Collaborative; and Steven Kuchenski, AIA, Onyx Architects. The award was a significant distinction, because competing applicants had included the restoration of the famed Griffith Observatory in Los Angeles' Griffith Park.

Located at the southeast corner of the intersection of two of Pasadena's major streets, Washington Boulevard and El Molino Avenue, and within the Washington Square Historic Landmark District, Washington Park had been initially designed in the early 1920s by noted landscape architect Ralph D. Cornell and horticulturalist Theodore Payne.

The first public park on the north side of Pasadena, in its early years it was hailed as one of the city's most beautiful places. For its first 50 years, it was a popular spot for families, business, civic, and church groups to hold their get-togethers, and space often had to be reserved. Quoting from a 1950s news snippet: "It IS a garden of 'Eden.' The gardeners and nurserymen seem to take a real delight in their selection of plants, shrubs and trees, giving regular attention to them ... to keep this park a place of beauty and joy not only to the neighborhood, but to anyone stopping off for an hour or two of relaxation." 1

But as often happens over time with landscaped public premises in urban neighborhoods, its appearance deteriorated from both overuse and misuse, as well as (Continued on page 2.)



Washington Park in its early days, looking east toward the original picnic area and El Molino Avenue, and showing its now-historic stone bridge. (Courtesy of the Pasadena Museum of History Archives.)



The old stone bridge and stone steps leading down to the wash area. (Photo by B. Sword.)

benign neglect, so that by the 1980s it was clearly in need of major resuscitation. Much of the original lovely landscaping had been removed by the City and several areas had been allowed to turn to weeds and ivy patches. Picnic structures had collapsed and been hauled away, and the park seemed a dumping ground for mismatched picnic tables from the City's supply yards and metal trashcans that soon became badly dented versions of their former selves. Two prominent dumpsters were an invitation for lazy souls to ditch whatever they were inclined to dispose of improperly, including but not limited to mattresses and appliances. As care was neglected and economic reality took its toll on the surrounding neighborhood, the park became increasingly a place for criminal activity, including drug and gang activity, and a sleeping place for the unfortunate homeless.

In the mid-1980s neighbors formed the Washington Park Task Force to resolve some of these problems and made considerable headway. In 1992, as the problems reappeared, a group calling itself the Friends of Washington Park (FWP) was formed to champion the park—to "take it back" from the combined negative influence of neglect and outright misuse, and then return it to its rightful place at the heart of the Pasadena community. Combining with other neighborhood groups, FWP put on social and recreational events, attracting local residents into the oft-avoided park as a way to build rapport and commitment.

This coalition of local activists worked with the Pasadena City Public Works, Human Services and Recreation, and Police departments to improve the various services needed to upgrade the park. For their successful grass-roots organizing in support of the park, FWP and nearby neighborhood associations were given the 1993 Neighborhood of the Year Award by Neighborhoods USA. This diligent collaborative effort paid off, for ultimately it led to this historic park's preservation and later restoration.

Today, Washington Park in its newly revitalized form retains most of its historic, picturesque hardscape—such as lovely river rock structures, including the much admired arched stone bridge, and many of its original trees, planted in the 1920s. Various prominent physical components within the park are traceable to different time periods in its evolution. For instance, a stone wall constructed in 1940 by the WPA—the Works Projects Administration, launched during the Depression years—follows a diagonal path through the park.

Originally only 3.1 acres, in 1945 the park was expanded by 2.12 acres, so that it now occupies over 5 acres of prime Pasadena real estate. The first park amenities included a tennis court, picnic areas, and a children's playground. Improvements over the years added a basketball court, two handball courts, a multi-use field (for baseball, softball, soccer, etc.), and a parking lot. More recently an improved children's play area, "tot lot," and adult exercise equipment have been added. In between the park's inception and today, some infrastructure for oncepopular activities, such as horseshoes and shuffleboard, and children's equipment, such as a merry-go-round and "rockabye," have come and gone.

Washington Park's Earlier Incarnations

For many years, the large vacant lot at the southeast corner of El Molino and Washington Boulevard was a wooded and weedy, often trash-strewn eyesore with a deep wash cutting and meandering through it. Old maps show that the wash—in California usually called an arroyo, which goes dry in the long summer-weather months—may once have been part of a stream called Woodbury Creek. In more recent times, though, after it was re-routed in a concrete-lined open channel, it became known inelegantly as "the East Side Storm Drain."

Research in the City's files indicates that a City Engineer's report in 1907 provided the earliest description of the area, stating that in about 1882 a wide shallow swale ran through the area and about one-fourth mile south of Washington Boulevard was lost by absorption. The present channel was cut when runoff become greater as surrounding lands were brought under cultivation, forming the deep wash.²

The large drop in elevation at the site, which had made the sizable lot unusable for residential development, actually inspired some Pasadenans to envisage creating a new sunken garden. Reports of such a possibility surfaced in the local paper as early as 1916, and reportedly had been discussed for several years by that time and repeatedly thereafter. Typical of the viewpoints expressed in these early articles is this one: "The land in question is a depressed runway at that point that could be turned into most beautiful sunken gardens that would be an added attraction to the city and the park department is very desirous of acquiring it to add it to the city park system."

But what is it about a "sunken garden" that holds such perennial interest for people? Possibly it is the potential for variable landscape environments-shady, dry, wet-and special hidden places, all in one place. Adults who grew up in this very area talk about their happy childhood hours spent in Washington Park, playing hide-andseek down in the heavily planted arroyo and under the bridge. Of course, at the time, Pasadena's Busch Gardens, often called "Busch Sunken Gardens," was a major local destination, eventually attracting over a million visitors during its years of operation (1905-1939). The 30-acre estate of Adolphus Busch sat above the Arroyo Seco (where the 110 Freeway runs) and also included a large portion of it. Often referred to at that time as "the eighth wonder of the world," it featured 14 miles of pathways, a hundred imported sculptures, and 100,000 plants and shrubs.4

Pressure on the City to buy the lot for a park became highly controversial. At that time many residents thought Pasadena didn't need neighborhood parks, since a goodly number of the most vocal ones had large, beautifully landscaped front yards of their own that lent ample horticultural ambience to the residential streets, especially in the city's upper-class sections. In that time period, the need for neighborhood parks, which would conveniently offer publicly accessible space for recreational and leisure activities for ordinary citizens, including working-class families, was not universally accepted. The *Pasadena Star-News* reported on the controversy on July 20, 1920:

At a meeting of the Northeast Improvement Association, the following resolution was approved: "Resolved, that we heartily endorse the policy of gradually establishing neighborhood parks and breathing spots in all parts of the city. The claim that such parks are not needed because Pasadena is itself a beautiful park is fallacious. The private grounds which give Pasadena her reputation are not open to neighboring children for playgrounds, and the public streets are neither safe nor suitable for such purposes. Extensive playgrounds at Brookside Park are of unquestioned importance, but the time and expense required to visit Brookside Park prohibit using it as a substitute for neighborhood parks.⁵

In 1916, when interest in the site for a park was first noted, it was owned by I, Serrurier. By 1919 the land had changed hands and was owned by Abraham I. Shapiro, who refused to accept several offers by the City, and asked far more than the land was deemed worth. Subsequently, the City began condemnation proceedings in the summer of 1920, which were completed in late February of 1921.

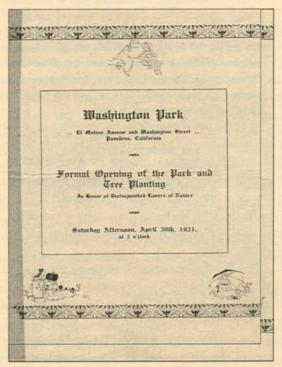
The lot was eventually procured by the City for \$8,500 in March of 1921, with about a fifth of it raised by neighborhood park supporters. It was dedicated as a park in April of that year, just two weeks after residents petitioned to name it after President George Washington. The victory of obtaining the lot for a public park, after lengthy community meetings and commission discussions, was seen as probably laying the whole debate over the desirability of establishing neighborhood parks finally to rest.

At the opening day dedication ceremony, on April 30, 1921, the first landscaping action took place when a grove of "Memorial Oaks" was planted at the southwest corner of the new park. The individual trees were dedicated in honor of "Distinguished Lovers of Nature": John Burroughs, John Muir, Theodore Parker Lukens, Dr.

(Continued on page 4.)

Charles Frederick Holder, Dr. Garrett Newkirk, and Dr. Warren Dawnes Parker. John Muir and John Burroughs of course were well known as nature writers and environmentalists. Lukens, a two-term mayor of Pasadena, had been the first supervisor of what became the Angeles Forest Reserve, and he was called the "Father of Forestry" locally for his efforts to introduce reforestation in the hills above the city. Dr. Parker, a distinguished educator and neighborhood resident, had been a leading advocate for the park before his death, and his widow donated \$1,000 to help purchase the site. Drs. Holder and Newkirk were prominent Pasadena naturalists. Holder was a founder and president of the Tournament of Roses.

Boy Scouts assisted in the ceremony, standing guard at the sites of the memorial trees, that, according to newspaper accounts, were later registered in the national honor roll of the American Forestry Association. In all, it was a grand celebration, with band music, singing, and many speeches by numerous dignitaries, including members of the Audubon Society and Browning Club.



The 1921 formal opening and tree planting program cover. (Courtesy of the Pasadena Museum of History Archives.)

The Park's Original Design by Payne and Cornell

After Washington Park was established, it took almost two years before the City unveiled plans for a design of the premises, created in a teamwork effort by locally based landscape architect Ralph Cornell and horticulturist Theodore Payne. In a 1912 article, Cornell had set down his vision for just such an endeavor:

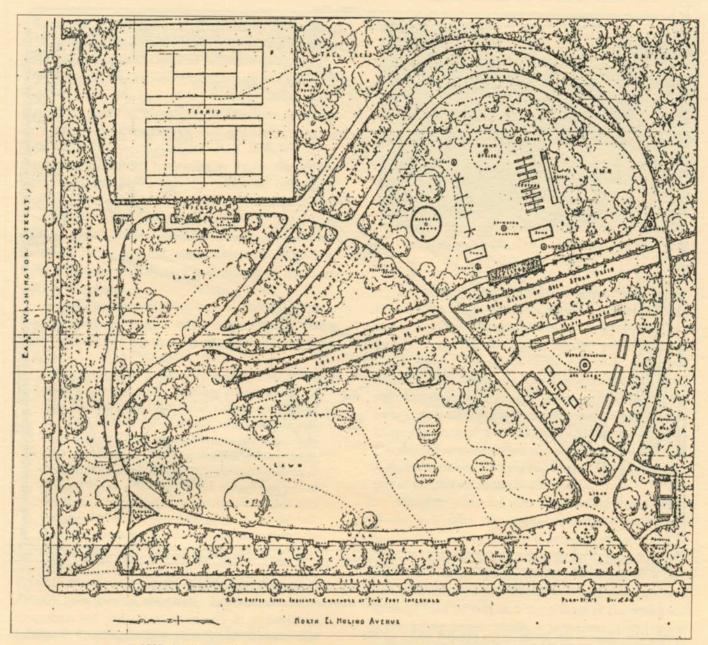
What could be more interesting and educational, to the people at large, than a public park devoted to plants indigenous to our dry and semi-arid lands, and representative of the many forms of plant life that are found along our coast slopes? A dry ground park, planted only to native trees, shrubs and flowers, would be one of the greatest possible assets to Southern California, and especially to the community whose park board was sufficiently aggressive and far seeing to establish such a system of planting.⁶

Here was a very early expression of what has now become a dominant theme in landscaping concepts and realized efforts in the state, particularly in the Southland, in both private and public places.

In November 1922 the Pasadena Star-News published a drawing of the plans for Washington Park. A caption under the drawing read: "Plans prepared by Ralph D. Cornell and Theodore Payne, Landscape Architects, under direction of Jacob Albrecht, City Superintendent of Parks, for Planting and other Improvements in Pasadena's Proposed Sunken Gardens in Northeast Residence Section."7 The Payne-Cornell plans took advantage of the topography created by the storm basin, producing a layout that included graceful paths in a subtle oval pattern, with diagonal paths crossing in the middle. Two parallel walkways, one above and one below, followed along the northeastern edge of the ravine. The plan also called for walkways crossing the open channelized drain, with rustic fences along its length. Tennis courts, picnic tables, and play and seating areas would provide a variety of activities for park-goers, and a generous use of trees and shrubbery befit the reputations of the designers.

The Star-News illustration is the only known copy of the early plan, and not much planting detail was provided in it. Many existing pepper trees and the memorial oaks are labeled, along with "Tall Trees," "Flowers," "Lawn," and "Conifers." Other annotations include "California Pepper Trees Along Walk" and "Native Shrubs on Bank." It appears the lot had previously been heavily planted with non-native California pepper trees, and Payne and Cornell decided to retain them. This is not surprising, considering Cornell's comments on the tree in a 1913 article, "California Street Trees":

Among our commonest and, I think, most beautiful street trees is the pepper tree (Schinus molle) which receives much censure and faultfinding from the multitudes.... The combination of the rugged, twisted trunk and feathery, drooping foliage is hard to excel. This tree will turn a barren, sun-beaten street into an inviting, shady lane so effectively and in so short a time that we should not bar it from our midst for a few minor faults."



1922 plan by Theodore Payne and Ralph Cornell for Pasadena's new "Sunken Gardens."

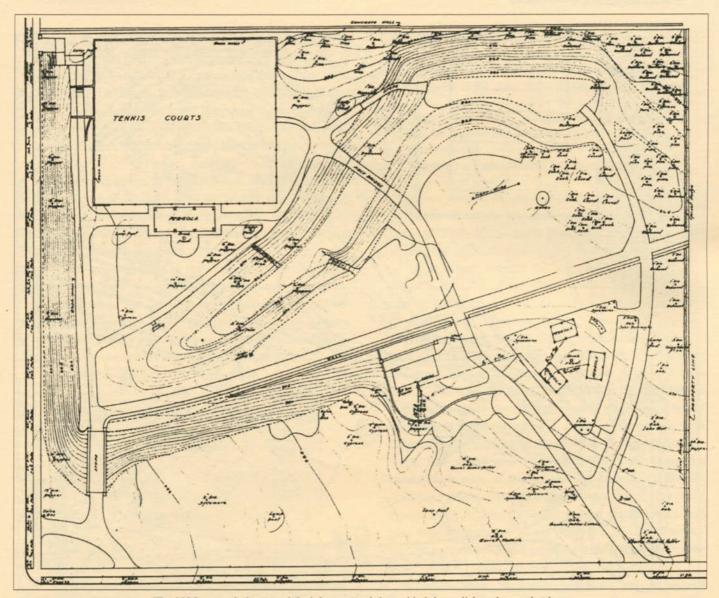
The construction of facilities and hardscaping prior to planting most of the new vegetation began in 1923. City administrators estimated that the entire cost of the improvements would be between \$15,000 and \$18,000. However, only \$1,400 had been appropriated in this first year for the park's initial installations, which included the creation of two tennis courts, the construction of some paths and several rustic bridges, and a few pieces of playground equipment. Most likely not much beyond those features got completed before the design plan was modified to resemble the 1925 drawing discussed below.

Design Changes

A topographical map created by the Department of Parks in 1933, and plotted from a 1925 stadia survey of the park, shows various modifications made to the original Cornell—Payne plan. It reveals a layout quite similar to what exists today in the original western part of the park. A walk through the park with this drawing in hand shows just how much of this work remains intact.

Although it's not known, probably the original designers were involved in making changes to their initial plans. The results largely follow their original concepts but include some simplifications most noticeable in the

(Continued on page 6.)



The 1925 revised plan simplified the original, but added the well-loved stone bridge. (Courtesy of the Pasadena Museum of History Archives.)

pathways. Gone is the lower of the parallel walks on the north side of the arroyo, and new is the arched bridge that is so central to the park's appearance today. Also gone from the original plan, unfortunately, is the lovely curved path along the El Molino side, which had incorporated several built-in seats. An early photo shows a curved walk on that side of the park, though the pathway in the photo does not match the simple curve of the Payne–Cornell drawing. No remnants of it remain now. The "Comfort Station" was moved from the far southwestern corner of the park to a more central location. Three formal entry points of the original plans were retained.

The small rustic bridges crossing the open storm drain, and barely visible in an early photo, were removed at some point, and the open channel disappeared from view when a 1940 WPA project covered the storm drain with a reinforced concrete walkway through the park. A stone retaining wall along the walk was put in to protect the walk from and adjacent slope and the higher ground on the El Molino side of the park. The project cost \$3,600, of which the City of Pasadena's share was \$600. An indentation in the wall most likely once held a commemorative plaque acknowledging the WPA, whose projects provided employment for many people during the Great Depression. (Many such WPA accomplishments can still be seen in public parks and buildings around the nation.)

Viewing that 1925 map even allows one to accurately locate numerous trees from the early plantings. Coastal redwoods, live oaks, sycamores, and deodar cedars are among the surviving trees. Today four of the six original "Memorial Oaks" are still standing—those that had been dedicated to Muir, Burroughs, Lukens, and Newkirk. At

the Restoration Celebration in 2006, two replacement live oaks, provided by Pasadena Beautiful, were planted by participants to honor the spirit of the 1921 celebration.

Inevitably, the original landscaping has changed considerably over time. In 1946 the Audubon Society cataloged the plants in a number of Pasadena locations, including Payne's Washington Park and Caltech garden areas. The list for Washington Park included native species introduced into cultivation by Payne. Among the native trees and plants were the memorial oaks, *Rhus laurina* (Laurel sumac), a Catalina cherry (*Prunus lyonii*), a magnificent Torrey pine (*Pinus torreyana*), and species such as the California sycamore (*Platanus racemosa*). Sadly, the Torrey pine and several other originals pines in the park became victims of a pest infestation and were recently removed.

A 1990 assessment done by the Pasadena Public Works Department implies that a major removal of the early Payne/Cornell landscaping took place at some point in time:

Through the use of a variety of materials Cornell and Payne reinforced order. Carefully placed clusters of trees, trimmed hedges and flower beds presented a formal and proper welcome at the main park entrance. Once within the park, trimmed hedges and flower beds gave way to native plants and scattered boulders creating a natural sunken garden. While the interior spaces of the park remain almost unchanged, a significant loss of formalism is recognized at the park's main entrance with the removal of trimmed hedges and a flower bed. Removal of other minor softscape materials includes, for the most part, native plantings on the slopes of the wash ravine."

Possibly the presence of the prickly pear (*Opuntia littoralis*), seen growing abundantly in the wash area, was considered too hazardous to remain in a public park because of its abundant spines and bristle-covered fruits.



The lush planting along the El Molino sidewalk is gone today. (Courtesy of the Pasadena Museum of History Archives.)



The main stairs and a section of the WPA-built stone wall. (Photo by B. Sword.)

By the 1990s, much of the park landscaping had been overtaken by weeds, and sadly, during a time of increased crime, a number of mature trees had been removed in a move to "open the park up" to improve police visibility. Unfortunately, Pasadena's Tree Protection Ordinance, passed in 2002, came too late. The original picnic structures had decayed with neglect, age, and abuse, and had been completely removed. Asphalt surfaces were crumbling, and some of the stonework was in need of repair. The original restrooms were outdated and in bad disrepair. A second restroom building had been added in the eastern side of the park, in the area added in 1945.

Persistent problems with crime and the overall decay of the park were the original sparks that ignited the neighbors to action, putting increasing pressure on City officials to remedy the situation. By 2002, much had been improved in that regard, including the hiring of a park supervisor assigned specifically to Washington Park, and residents were moving on to the concept of preserving and improving the historic character of the park. They became quite motivated when the City began considering plans to place a soccer field in the park that would have necessitated the removal of approximately twenty trees, bringing in tons of in-fill, and adding chain-link fencing and retaining walls and destroying much of the park's historic character. It was that possibility that renewed residents' interest in seeing the Master Plan for Washington Park updated.

> (See "The Payne-Cornell Partnership" on page 8. The article itself continues on page 17.)

The Payne—Cornell Partnership

Ralph Cornell and Theodore Payne first met in 1910 and in 1919 formed a five-year business partnership under the name Ralph D. Cornell and Theodore Payne, Landscape Architects, with offices in the I.W. Hellman Building in Los Angeles. Since both men had sufficient income from other projects, the purpose of this new firm was to pursue large-scale landscape efforts, and it was during this time that the design for Washington Park was created. Among other projects, they collaborated on the creation of the Torrey Pines Reserve, the grounds at Occidental College, the Mason estate in Pasadena, the C.C. Teague residence in Santa Paula, and various other residences, parks, and subdivisions. They were also retained by the City of Pasadena for several years in an advisory capacity to the Park Department. Though the partnership was financially successful and "a very enjoyable experience for both of us," according to Payne, it ended amicably in 1924 when Cornell received a very attractive offer of partnership in another firm. Despite the end of their joint venture, the two men formed a lifelong friendship and spent many happy hours in the countryside collecting native plant seeds. 11

Ralph Cornell (1890-1972)** was born in Holdridge, Nebraska, and moved with his family to Long Beach in 1908. He entered the relatively new profession of landscape architecture after study at Pomona College and Harvard University Graduate School of Landscape Architecture. Upon graduating from Harvard, he was offered a position with the firm of Frederick Law Olmstead, Jr., but accepted a position in Toronto, Canada instead. When World War I broke out, he enlisted, and upon return from military service, he opened the first landscape architecture practice in Los Angeles in 1919. Cornell's outstanding design ability, vision, and sensitivity led to an amazing variety of commissions, including the landscape plans for Pomona College, the University of Hawaii, and the UCLA campus, cemeteries, subdivisions, civic cent

Forgotten Rose, Forgotten Creator

William A. Grant

Footfalls echo in the memory Down the passage which we did not take Towards the door we never opened Into the rose garden.

T.S. Eliot. Four Ouartets

Bill Grant is well known to most members as the primary founder of CGLHS. For many years he was an English Literature professor at Cabrillo College in Santa Cruz. An ardent, lifelong rosarian. he contributed to Botanica's Roses ("over 1,000 Pages and Over 2,000 Plants Listed"). This article originally appeared in Pacific Horticulture in Summer 1993 (Vol. 54, No. 2) and is reprinted with permission. It has been slightly amended by Marlea Graham, who also supplied the Endnotes.

FRANCIS E. LESTER was a nurseryman and rose hybridizer whose name was given to one of Europe's most popular climbing roses. Fifty years ago he was well known among rosarians, especially those who loved species and heritage roses. Americans who visit public and private gardens in Europe often see a glorious rose climbing up a tree, draping a wall or fence, or used as hedge and are surprised to learn it is the American rose 'Francis E. Lester' that originated in Watsonville, California.

A creator of a great rose is not without fame, save in his own country, to rephrase St. Matthew. Bev Dobson's essential guide to roses in commerce lists thirteen suppliers of 'Francis E. Lester' worldwide, including England, France, New Zealand, Australia, and Germany, among others. But it is not possible today to purchase this rose from an American or Canadian nursery. At few American public or private gardens can it be seen.1

Listed as a hybrid musk by some, as a multiflora climber or rambler by others, one parent of this rose is the hybrid musk 'Kathleen'; the other is unnamed. The flowers are creamy white, single, frequently in clusters, with a strong perfume. It is non-recurrent, but flowers heavily in June, with a few additional flowers at summer's end. Small, bright red hips decorate the plant in fall. Gerd Krüssmann describes the flower in The Complete Book of Roses: "White to creamy white, single, many together, small, strong scent, non-recurrent, June, some flowers in the autumn; firm hips in the autumn, buds light pink; growth very strong to 13.2 feet/4m."

"Few roses give more flower and scent at midsummer," writes Graham Thomas. "Excellent as a lax bush or supported by a stump or hedgerow." He likes the "rich orange and bananas" perfume.

In Australia it is a "spectacular performer, covering itself with a tremendous display of palest pink and white single blooms on very large, pyramidal heads," says Trevor Nottle, whose books often feature old roses.

David Austin, the famous hybridizer of the new "English roses," says that 'Francis E. Lester' is "the surest and most reliable of rambler roses" and that it blooms in "exceptional abundance."

The rose was offered in commerce soon after Lester's death in 1945, chosen no doubt from among the many hybrids he cultivated at the time. It disappeared from catalogs in the 1950s, possibly because many thought it would be too large for their gardens. While the rose can be grown in smaller gardens, especially up trees, the fact that it is called a rambler unfairly limits its popularity, 'Wind Chimes,' another rose Lester created, is a vigorous hybrid musk with profuse recurrent bloom.



Francis E. Lester

(Continued on page 10.)

A native of Penrith, in the English Lake District, Lester emigrated to the United States with his seven brothers and sisters and his widower father in April 1889. The family had a history of botanical interests. Lester's father was an avid naturalist, and his sister, Gertrude Ellen Lester, became famous for her work with California plants. She was a writer, lecturer, and seed collector, and was made honorary president of the California Native Plant Society in recognition of her pioneering work. Brother and sister each married into the Rowntree family, Quakers famous for chocolate manufacturing.²

Francis Lester settled at Mesilla Park, New Mexico, just south of Las Cruces, in 1891. There he was employed until 1909 as registrar at the New Mexico State Agricultural College and Experiment Station. His involvement with local agriculture is presumed to have been extensive, given that he also served terms as president of the Mesilla Valley National Farm Loan Association and the State Farm Bureau Federation, as well as director of the Dona Ana County Farm Bureau.

About 1892, Lester started a successful mail order business on the side that dealt in Mexican and Indian crafts, including everything from wool rugs to cacti, silk shawls and even Chihuahuas.³ On 11 November 1893 he married Margaret Rowntree and brought her back to New Mexico. (His son from this marriage, Edward, died at Sacramento County on 6 August 1946, just eight months after his father's death.)

Lester's deep interest in roses was first expressed in an article he wrote for the 1924 American Rose Annual, a publication of the American Rose Society, in which he stated, "For more than 25 years I have been trying to solve the novel problems of garden rose-culture in the unusual climate of southern New Mexico, yet I feel I have only just begun."

Lester and his wife divorced, and he moved to Monterey, California, in 1926. He and his new wife, Marjorie, opened a nursery there featuring old roses and perennials.⁴ He became president of the chamber of commerce and chairman of the city parks and playgrounds. He also proposed and helped to develop Friendly Plaza as well as a municipal rose garden, which has not survived.

Through his nursery he made friends with other growers, continued writing more articles for American Rose Society publications, and his first catalog, *Roses of Monterey*.⁵ While not the first catalog to feature species and old roses (several nurseries on the East Coast preceded him), it set a standard for the future.

Lester moved his nursery to Watsonville in 1937, continuing the use of the name Lester Rose Gardens. He published his list in pamphlet form under the name Roses of Yesterday. His first creation he named 'Monterey,' which he described as "quite distinct and the most continuously blooming hybrid tea rose we know of. Large golden buds marked with vermilion open to large, very double, highly fragrant flowers of gold." A search has failed to find this rose today.

His fame grew as he published more articles and a book, My Friend the Rose, in 1942 (reprinted in 1953), which has become a collector's item. In this book he speaks of trips to the Mother Lode in search of old roses. Exploring old cemeteries, visiting old homes and ranches, he and his wife discovered many roses that ultimately became part of his own garden and nursery. One of these he at first named for his wife, but it was later identified as the hybrid multiflora 'Laure Davoust.'

The search became the central passion of his life, and his writing reflects this when he speaks of heritage roses: "Constantly they seem to be quietly asking us if in our hurried and artificial lives we have not surrendered too many of the old values and forgotten that there are old truths and old virtues, proved by the ages, that we might do well to take again into our lives."

Books in Germany, France, and England have perpetuated the name of he rose but not of its originator. In this country even the rose has been subject to neglect. Six years ago I had to send overseas to purchase a plant of 'Francis E. Lester' from Peer Beales in England. It is now climbing through a plum tree and creating a carpet of bloom on top. The hips give a second flush of color that makes this rose a favorite.

It is sad that Lester never enjoyed the fame the rose named in his honor achieved in Europe. Books in Germany, France, and England have perpetuated the name of the rose but not of its originator. In this country even the rose has been subject to neglect. Six years ago I had to send overseas to purchase a plant of 'Francis E. Lester' from Peter Beales in England. It is now climbing through a plum tree and creating a carpet of bloom on top. The hips give a second flush of color that makes this rose a favorite.

Thomas Christopher's *In Search of Old Roses* describes finding the rose in Miriam Wilkins' garden near Berkeley, California. As founder of the Heritage Roses Group, Mrs. Wilkins (1918-2009) was the first to acknowledge that no rose less deserved neglect.

Endnotes for "Forgotten Rose, Forgotten Creator"—compiled by Marlea Graham

- 1. Following the first publication of this article in 1993, the Santa Barbara wholesale nursery San Marcos Growers took it upon themselves to make the 'Francis E. Lester' rose again available to the American market. The 2009 Combined Rose List (compiled and edited by Beverly R. Dobson and Peter Schneider) shows ten American and Canadian suppliers who now stock the rose. Within California, Roses of Yesterday & Today sells it by mail order. Russian River Roses at Healdsburg will sell on site only, no mail order shipping. San Marcos Growers continues to supply the wholesale market, as does Otto & Sons Nursery at Fillmore, California. Vintage Gardens in Sebastopol will supply the rose only as a custom rooting order. Other mail order suppliers are located in Oregon, Utah, South Carolina and Canada.
- Lester Rowntree (1879-1979) was the author of two famous books, Hardy Californians (1936) and Flowering Shrubs of California
 (1939), numerous articles written for the Santa Barbara Gardener from 1925-1942, and four children's books. The California
 Academy of Science at Golden Gate Park holds the Rowntree Archive of horticultural manuscripts that did not reach publication.
- 3. A copy of the Francis E. Lester Company's 103-page, c. 1907 Indian & Mexican Handicraft catalogue is held in storage at the University of California's Northern Regional Library Facility (in Richmond). Lester was apparently one who was not afraid to try his hand at anything. In his book, My Friend the Rose, Lester offered this additional intriguing hint about his time in New Mexico: "Some years ago I was the fortunate owner of several ranches, on one of which I raised pigs for a nearby market." The Francis E. Lester Company was so successful that, by 1910, Lester had quit his job with the college and was employing a staff of 50 in his mail order business. His advertisements appeared in a diverse range of popular publications, from Sunset and House Beautiful to the Overland Monthly and Good Housekeeping. A 1907 ad claimed that the company was the "largest retailer [of] Indian & Mexican Handicrafts in the World," and had been selling "for the past 15 years." [Rural Uplook Service (Liberty Hyde Bailey, 1930); Unpacking Culture: Art and Commodity in Colonial and Post-Colonial Worlds (Phillips and Steiner, 1999). Google Books, 3/1/10-3/31/10.]
- The first business, at 224 Laine Street, Monterey, was called The Garden Nurseries and offered a range of flowers. By 1932, the name was changed to Lester Rose Gardens, on Soledad Dr. [Directory of California Nurserymen and Florists, 1927-28; 1931-32.]
- A copy of the 32-page, c. 1930 Roses of Monterey catalogue is held in storage at the University of California's Northern Regional Library Facility (in Richmond).

DARLEA GRAHAM

Ave atque vale

The cornerstone of CGLHS has always been Marlea Graham. I knew what she was capable of doing when I worked with her on the Heritage Roses Group for a number of years. She is never daunted by the chores she has chosen to fulfill.

Our publication EDEN began as a small printed newsletter, but it has grown into an impressive journal that will be around for a long time! It doesn't take much imagination to realize how much work goes into each issue. The research, the photos, the nudging of contributors to get their contributions in on time—the routine never changes. So the person editing the journal must have the patience of Job, the diplomacy of an ambassador, and the skill of an artist.

As we have been friends for years, I will add that we have had some real rows. But they were always about the society and its goals. I lost many of my arguments, especially about my writing style; but I never questioned her authority (except about grammar).

It is our hope that she will remain an inspiration, not only to the new editor but to the rest of us. We have high goals. Her record will show we were always on the right path.

Glad she will be around for a long time.

-William Grant

A Note from Eden's New Editor

s you may have read in the Winter 2009 newsletter, Marlea Graham's desired retirement from the editor's position she's held so capably throughout most of CGLHS's 15 years of existence finally happened when I agreed to take her place, at the invitation of the directors' board. Luckily for us all, she'll continue to make major contributions to *Eden* and serve as an excellent advisor. Relieved of the main editorial duties, she can now focus far more on the research and writing of articles that she loves and excels at.

Before my undertaking this Spring issue, Marlea—in person, initially—introduced me to the process of assembling the multiple ingredients and working them into the basic format. She also detailed in writing the innumerable tasks that she undertook when preparing each new issue for printing, then handling the stages thereafter, including mailing out over 200 copies of the publication. Few of you are probably aware of how much work Marlea did, often unassisted. Taking over from her is indeed a daunting assignment.

Now, to introduce myself: I've been an author and editor of books and articles for over 50 years, and in both roles have taken on a wide range of subjects. I've also been often involved with nonprofit organizations—generating newsletters and other public-relations materials. When writing and word-processing texts, I've usually worked with graphics people, so my experience in hands-on printing preparations, as required now with *Eden*, has been minimal. I'm now learning desktop publishing. In preparing to take over as *Eden*'s editor, I've spent many hours going through the back issues of what has become a respectable quarterly journal for professionals and other serious landscape-gardening aficionados. I am impressed with the depth and variety of articles, reports, reviews, and other features. And I'm reading about landscape design, including its history and efforts connected with site preservation, which usually involve research, restoration, and even re-creation. As for plants and gardens, I can say that I've always been closely connected with them, starting in early childhood.

To accommodate the major articles in this editor's fledgling issue, I've had to tighten up the text by altering some past design elements by using a slightly smaller type size and two columns (not three) and justifying lines at the margin and hyphenating some words, instead of leaving it all ragged right.

A magazine can only be as good as its contributors, and this publication can't pay journalists to write about the history of landscape gardening in California. I'll be able to produce an *Eden* to others' satisfaction only if CGLHS members who are enthusiastic and well informed about particular subjects will contribute to its contents, and also provide helpful suggestions about how the journal might be made even better. (What do *you* like best to read about?) Also, reports on garden and landscape preservation concerns and projects would be good to receive from *all* California regions.

Therefore I'm hoping that *Eden*'s readers will supply ideas and—especially—articles, whether written by themselves or someone else for whom they'll provide contacts; send provocative published articles that we can consider reprinting, with permission; submit small pieces for inclusion in sections like Coming Events, Members in the News, Preservation Issues, Book Reviews & News, and Websites to Visit; and even come up with humorous pieces and decorative graphics.

So I urge *all of you* to help create future *Edens*! If you're at all uncertain about your skills in producing finished writing, be assured that I am accustomed as an editor to working closely with authors when generating articles and other pieces for publication. You may contact me directly by phone (310-459-0190) or via e-mail (eden.editor@gmail.com) or postal mail (501 Palisades Drive, #315 / Pacific Palisades, CA 90272).

-Barbara Marinacci

Roses of Yesterday & Today, 1945–2010:

The Transformation from Lester Rose Gardens

Marlea Graham

The author is well known to Eden readers as its longstanding editor, who recently retired from this demanding position after over a dozen years of dedicated service. She will continue to contribute articles and research findings to the journal as her time permits.

"ROSE enthusiasts and rose growers everywhere will be shocked to learn of the sudden passing of Francis E. Lester, Watsonville, California, on December 6, 1945, at the age of 77." This notice appeared in *The American Rose Magazine*'s January/February 1946 issue. Possibly even more shocking was the announcement in the 1945-46 Lester Rose Gardens catalogue: "Hail and Farewell. Francis E. Lester is gone.... We who carry on, cannot hope to take his place, for that place is his alone. We shall do our humble best to maintain his high ideals of integrity and service; to keep love for the rose before profit, and to see that the charm and sentiment of the old fashioned roses is not forgotten."

The catalogue listed the new proprietors as Mrs. Francis E. Lester and Will Tillotson.

How did this seemingly rather sudden change come about? Accounts vary, some saying that the partnership between Frank Lester and Tillotson took place just before Lester's death, another that he died before the agreement was completed, and that it was Mrs. Lester who entered into the partnership, presumably because she could not carry on the business alone. This was the story according to Dorothy Stemler (in *The Book of Old Roses*, 1966):

In the early 1940s, Dorothy Stemler and Will Tillotson, for whom she worked as corresponding secretary at his California citrus business, began to develop an interest in gardening. Remembering some of the old moss roses he had known as a child, Will Tillotson wanted to track them down and shortly afterwards they discovered the Lester Rose Gardens. Their friendship with the British couple Frank and Marjorie Lester, and their interest in old, rare, and unusual roses grew rapidly. When Will Tillotson retired, he decided to spend more time on this hobby and bought property in Watsonville near the Lesters, with whom he became a partner until Frank's death. In 1948 Mrs. Stemler joined the staff to help with the business that was doubling each year. They worked together, she as the "Honorable Secretary" and he as the "C.W." (Catalogue Writer) to bring this unique rose business to its present fame and to make its catalog a beautiful literary piece. Upon his death, Dorothy Stemler inherited the business ...

Stemler's story is accurate, but Natalie G. O'Connor's (see endnote 1) is more detailed. Frank Lester advertised his rose nursery in the Los Angeles Times among other places, and it was most likely there that Tillotson first learned of Lester Rose Gardens. There is some doubt as to whether Marjorie Lester was actually British. The 1930 U.S. Census noted that she and her parents were born in the United States, but the specific state of origin was not noted. Tillotson too described Mrs. Lester as "British to the bone."

Some Ancestry.com records show that Will Tillotson was a native of Brooklyn, New York, born in 1889. Though O'Connor states that he came west from New York with his family at the age of 19 (c. 1908), the 1910 census showed him still living with his family in Manhattan. He came west to California with



Will Tillotson

his family sometime after 1910 and engaged in the citrus business at Los Angeles and Riverside until 1942, when his name no longer appeared in the Riverside directory.

Stemler had worked as secretary for Tillotson from 1939 to 1941 and remained in Riverside through the war years, working for a series of law firms, but the Watson-ville city directories confirm that she and her children (son, Douglas, and daughter, Patricia) were sharing Tillotson's post office address from 1948 on, along with the latter's second wife, Joan.² Rick Hamman, author of "Partners in Progress: Roses of Yesterday and Today," in Santa Cruz County: Restless Paradise: An Illustrated History (1987), wrote that "Dorothy Stemler arrived with her children in Brown's Valley, took up a house a short distance from the nursery.... The business was not large enough to support her family and herself on a full-time basis. As a result, she had to take a job in Watsonville

during the day as a law secretary for the Wyckoff law firm. At night she continued working for Lester and Tillotson, doing everything from book work to order filling to the cutting of the scion buds."

The year 1948 brought the report of another change. Tillotson noted in his business diary on 18 February: "Lester Rose Gardens is about to form a partnership with Newton Wiley." This appears to have been only a reference to the forthcoming marriage alliance between Stemler's daughter Patricia and Newton Wiley (1919–1998), a local man born and raised in Monterey County. If there was ever a business partnership as well, it must have been a silent one. The marriage produced a son, Newton Douglas Wiley, on 3 September 1948, but the 1949-50 "revised and enlarged" catalogue still named only Mrs. Lester and Will Tillotson as the proprietors of Lester Rose Gardens. An ad in the November 1951 issue of *Sunset*



Mrs. Dorothy Stemler

magazine featured the firm's name as Lester & Tillotson Rose Gardens.

The business was growing, but trouble was looming on the horizon. O'Connor's account states that, "In the summer of 1952 the partnership between Will and Mrs. Lester

was dissolved, and Will carried on in his own name." The reasons for this parting were not recorded, but clearly it was not an amicable split. Marjorie Lester did not give up her husband's business willingly; rather she began her own private War of the Roses with Tillotson.

Speculation includes the theory that Lester had recently remarried and attempted to bring her new husband into the partnership by main force. It seems likely that she lacked the financial or legal clout to carry out such a plan, hence the dissolution. Tillotson appears to have fired the next shot with the issuance of a new 1953 price list with the title "Will Tillotson, Watsonville. Formerly of Lester & Tillotson Rose Gardens."

Then came his 1954-55 catalogue, titled as formerly, "Roses of Yesterday and Today," but with the return address of "Will Tillotson, Rose Specialist, 802 Brown Valley Road, Watsonville." By way of introducing nursery personnel, he mentioned "the 'Honorable Secretary,' Mrs. Dorothy Stemler, who will be your chief

correspondent ... Fred Hamisch, who watches over the planting of the understock, the budding, cultivation, fertilization, pest control and harvesting—the head man behind the many all-important growing operations.... Alas, the catalog-writer [Tillotson] is not a likable character, and there be some who say unkind things about him. I have not approved of him since birth, but seem to be 'stuck' with him...." The Watsonville city directories for 1954 through 1956 listed both "Roses of Yesterday & Today" (Tillotson) and "Roses of Yesteryear" (Lester/Ouayle).

A rival catalogue was finally issued in 1955; this one titled "Marjorie Lester Gardens, Roses of Yesterday and Rare Perennials," with the return address at 959 Brown's Valley Road, Watsonville. The signature was "Marjorie Lester Quayle," the cover featured a sketch of the Lester's cottage, and the content was markedly less flamboyant than Tillotson's. "We make no extravagant claims in the pages of our booklet," wrote Marjorie. "The roses listed are old friends that we have grown and loved in our gardens, and we shall give them the sincere acclaim due old friends."

But Marjorie's attempts to compete with Tillotson were doomed. In December 1955, the sylvan creek that ran through the Lester Rose Gardens turned into a raging torrent that swept away the nursery and much of the garden as well. In a final effort to recover from the dual disaster of a disrupted partnership and a devastating flood, the Quayles prevailed on the kindness of John H. van

Barneveld, a professional rose grower located at La Puente, California.4 His 1956 catalogue described unusual joining of forces. "It is a pleasure to tell you that Marjorie Lester Gardens will use our catalogue and rose plants too and we are most enthusiastic about Marjorie Lester knows a great deal about roses, and particularly about the old roses found in the West, while Byron Quayle, with whom she faces the future, is



Marjorie Lester Quayle

a very fine person and 'a power for work.""

This partnership evidently proved unsatisfactory to all parties, and the Quayles seem to have surrendered after that. They eventually withdrew to Fayetteville, Arkansas. Meanwhile, Tillotson's catalogues had impressed garden writer Katharine S. White to such a degree that she praised them lavishly in an article she wrote for *The New Yorker* magazine in 1958, later reprinted in her 1979 collection of essays, *Onward and Upward in the Garden*:

Another writer with a style of his own is Will Tillotson, the grower and catalogue writer for Will Tilliotson's Roses, Watsonville, California. The two catalogues I have-1955 and 1956-were lent me by a friend who runs a beauty parlor, and I must not keep them long, because though she has never bought a Tillotson rose, she reads Tillotson every night before she goes to sleep. (Catalogue readers, quite as much as catalogue writers, are a group apart.) The Tillotson catalogues are titled "Roses of Yesterday and Today" for the good reason that Will Tillotson, though he does grow and sell any rare or modern roses he happens to admire, specializes in oldfashioned roses. The catalogues are period pieces, too. The 1956 cover reproduces Sargent's "The Lady with the Rose," and 1955's is Fragonard's "The Swing," from the Frick Collection. I don't wonder that my friend finds these fat little books good to look at and to read. The many uncolored photographs of roses are enchanting, and I never tire of Mr. Tillotson's prose. He is a quoter. Bits of wisdom or poetry scattered through the 1956 book range from Yuan Chung-lang, a Chinese sage of the sixteenth century, to Leigh Hunt and Browning. The favorite source of Tillotson wisdom, though, is Dean Hole's Book about Roses, published in England in 1869. He quotes him again and again. The catalogue's descriptions of roses are informative and occasionally rhapsodic; if the date of the rose' origination is known, it is given.

Alas, White published her paean to Tillotson's catalogues too late for him the enjoy the additional fame and fortune it brought to the firm. He died in 1957 while on a rose-buying trip in England, and family members buried him in New York. In his will, he left the Brown's Valley house and nursery to "the Honorable Secretary," Dorothy Stemler, noting that "I would like to be remembered occasionally by mention in her catalogues"—originated by Tillotson to promote the old-fashioned roses he sold.

In 1959, White wrote again in *The New Yorker*, "The most beautiful, and still my favorite of all the rose books, is "Roses of Yesterday and Today," the Will Tillotson catalogue, of which Dorothy Stemler is now the editor.... The catalogue is now her own; the tone is a bit less rapturous and the whole presentation is more down to earth, yet still full of charm. The photographs of the roses, which were always hers, are better than ever."

By 1963, the Stemlers had expanded the business from Lester's annual sales of approximately 1000 roses of 160 varieties to 90,000 roses budded yearly from more than 200 cultivars; yet old rose expert Edith Schurr (see endnote 1) credited Stemler with no more than pro



1959 catalogue cover

ducing a catalogue "so beautiful that when it is printed every fall it instantly becomes a collector's item." while "Mr. Tillotson in his time did more than any other person to create interest in old roses. He advertised extensively, traveled a great deal, and was known and admired by outstanding rosarians in the U.S. and in Europe." Dorothy had done too good a job of

effacing herself in Will's favor. Her own contributions went unacknowledged.

Following her mother's death in 1976, Patricia Stemler Wiley took over the business, officially changing the name from "Will Tillotson's Roses" to "Roses of Yesterday and Today" (RYT). Today the business is still carried on by the Wiley family, daughter-in-law Guinivere Vestal Wiley being the current designated company representative.⁵

In 1998, Pat Wiley donated a collection of old rose books, RYT catalogues, and Will Tillotson's business diaries to the McHenry Library at UC Santa Cruz, a valuable resource for historians.⁶ During the presentation ceremony, she commented that this was truly the end of an era. With the trend towards Internet shopping, she believed there was no longer any need or desire for such a thing as a rose catalogue. Nevertheless, RYT continues to produce their catalogues to this day.⁷ Being a traditionalist, this writer disagrees with this gloomy forecast. For me, today's hand-held computers and e-books can't compete with a printed-paper catalogue as truly satisfying bedtime reading material.





The display garden at Roses of Yesterday and Today is open daily from 9 am to
4 pm. The best time to see the old roses in bloom is in April/May, but during our
October conference in Santa Cruz we will have the opportunity to visit there—and
expect that some of the remontant roses such as 'Old Blush' may still be throwing
out a bloom or three.

We hope you will join us there.

DEBERBBBBBBBBBBBBBBBBBBBBBBBBBB

Endnotes:

- The California Dept. of Agriculture's 1943-44 Directory of Nurserymen still listed only Francis and Marjorie Lester as proprietors of Lester Rose Gardens, It was Natalie G. O'Connor ("Plantsmen in Profile, X: Will Tillotson's Roses," Baileya 2, no. 1 [March 1968]: 17-22) who reported that Tillotson did not join with Lester until 1945. "He went into partnership with Mr. Lester, but the aging Quaker became ill not long after, and died the same year." A short account written by Edith Schurr ("In Appreciation." The American Rose Magazine 23, No. 3 [March 1975]: 10) stated that Lester died before the partnership agreement was completed and that it was Mrs. Lester and Tillotson who formed the new partnership.
- 2. The later whereabouts of Joan Tillotson remain a mystery.
- 3. Oregon State University archives hold a copy of this document.
- Van Barneveld may best be remembered for his involvement with the Rose Hills Memorial Garden at Whittier. The garden was landscaped in 1959 by Cornell, Bridgers, and Troller, "working in cooperation with noted rosarians and rose growers." Tillotson's Roses contributed some of the plants ("Pageant of Roses," L.A. Times 22 April 1959: D10). Van Barneveld was also director of the American Rose Society's Pacific Southwest District from 1960 to 1967.
- Guinivere Wiley's article on "The History of Roses of Yesterday and Today" (Heritage Roses 31, No. 4 [November 2006]: 8-9) presented no new material and mistakenly stated that "When Marjorie Lester passed away the business became 'Will Tillotson's Roses." In fact, she died in January 1979, more than 20 years after Tillotson (Ancestry.com).
- Unfortunately, the McHenry Library at UCSC is closed for renovation until the end of 2010. Tillotson's business diaries could not be perused for this article.
- The 2009-10 edition includes descriptions of 140 roses and can be ordered from their Website for \$5. Their 1996 catalog describes 229 varieties and copies are offered as a reference work for \$7. There is also a DVD/VHS video for \$20 plus tax (CA) and \$5 shipping. Website: www.rosesofyesterday.com. Tillotson continues to be remembered in the catalogues and with a quote posted on the Website.

Illustration Notes:

In the 1952-53 catalogue, Tillotson described himself, Mrs. Lester, and Mrs. Stemler, rather in the same manner as he used for roses in the catalogue: "Marjorie Winifred Lester, widow of the late Francis E. Lester, well-known authority on old roses. Dainty ... chiseled ... fifty-ish, British to the bone. Greets the garden visitors, keeps a watchful eye on the packing operations (and her partner), supplies the Lester tradition." Marjorie Lester's portrait appeared in the 1945-46 Lester's Rose Gardens catalog.

The "Honorable Secretary," Dorothy C. Stemler, was described by Tillotson as "hard-working and efficient, begs her physical attributes remain undescribed. Spends much of the summer in the growing fields ... knows more about the personal traits of our roses than any of us." The portrait of Stemler sitting at a table, preparing to write another catalogue, appeared in the 1959 version.

Tillotson called himself "irrepressible, and feels that the less said the better. Variously described, according to taste, as something midway between Monty Woolly and an old goat (the beard and the stubbornness, no doubt). Grows the roses WE like, regardless of profit ... is Jack of All Trades in our business and certainly master of none. Enjoys some people, shuns others. You definitely wouldn't like him." The portrait of Tillotson also appeared in the 1959 catalogue.

Will Tillotson's Roses 1959 catalogue cover: The illustration is "L'Amante Inquiete" by Antoine Watteau (1684-1721).

Washington Park's Renovation

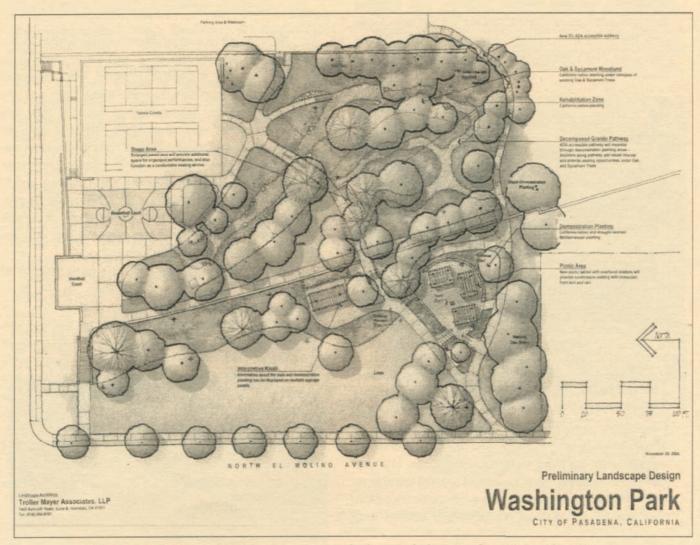
A Master Plan for the park renaissance was developed in 2002, during a series of community workshops conducted by the City Landscape Architect, Todd Holmes of the Parks and Natural Resources Division of the Department of Public Works. Community input stressed the residents' desires to preserve and restore the historic infrastructure and beauty of the park, to bring the park into compliance with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements, and to emphasize the park's association with Payne and Cornell by the planting of California native trees and plants.

The City of Pasadena, the Friends of Washington Park (FWP), and the Theodore Payne Foundation for Wildflowers and Native Plants (TPF) partnered in 2003 to propose completion of the first phase of the Master Plan via a grant from the San Gabriel and Los Angeles Rivers and Mountains Conservancy under the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhoods, and

Coastal Protection Bond Act of 2000 (Proposition 40). The Washington Park project was selected in June of 2003 to receive \$331,000. Significantly, it was the only proposal in the "Urban Core" category to be approved for full funding.

From the beginning of the process, the local community via FWP and TPF was involved in a collaborative effort with the City in the grant application process, the review of the proposals coming in from different landscape design and architecture firms, interviewing finalists, and the selection of the winning design team. Approximately twelve proposals were received, and after several weeks three finalists remained.

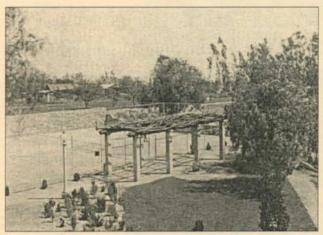
The review panel made the final decision in favor of the Troller Mayer / Perry Associates / Onyx proposal being impressed with the depth of expertise represented by the team and their combined enthusiasm for the project. Furthermore, an interesting historical connection existed between Troller Mayer Associates and Ralph



The Troller Mayer Associates plan for restoring and enhancing the historic infrastructure and gardens.

Cornell in a partnership that began in 1955 in a firm later known as Cornell, Bridgers, Troller & Hazlett, in which Cornell was the Principal. Both Troller Mayer and Perry have long, illustrious histories in Southern California. Robert Perry is well-known for his books: Landscape Plants for Western Regions, and Trees and Shrubs for Dry California Landscapes. He has recently released Landscape Plants for California Gardens, and this well-received tome may well become the definitive volume on gardening for water conservation in California. Though a more recent Pasadena architectural firm, Onyx's principals have been active here since 1985.

Fortuitously, at the time design work commenced, some photos of the park's earliest days had recently been uncovered at the Pasadena Museum of History. They showed rustic old pergolas covering the picnic tables and marking the entry to the tennis courts. Inspired by the photos, the Onyx architect, Steve Kuchenski, designed similar structures, with dramatic pole roofs letting in filtered sunlight for the new picnic area and an interpretive kiosk. Everyone involved felt the discovery of the photos was an auspicious beginning to the process.



A 1928-29 photo of the rustic pergola at the tennis court entrance. (Courtesy of the Pasadena Museum of History Archives.)

A state-of-the-art demonstration garden had been a core part of the initial grant proposal, with the garden designed to show the public sustainable landscape and plant palette examples and principles, including use of drought-tolerant native plants and water conservation methods. City Staff and members of FWP, the TPF and the California Native Plant Society all worked together to create interpretive signage that would describe the park's flora and fauna, the local Mediterranean climate, and

information about the importance and uses of native plants. Additional signage was developed to describe the park's history and its current uses. The team also completed plans for extensive re-landscaping, including new irrigation and plants indigenous to Southern California.



New picnic pergolas, inspired by the originals. (Photo by B. Sword.)

Ground was broken on the restoration project in August of 2005 with the removal of non-native plants in the project area. The engineering firm of Vido Samarzich Inc., chosen to carry out the restoration, began with the construction of an ADA-compliant sidewalk that connected the eastern upper level of the park with the western side. A dilapidated and unused restroom building was demolished to make way for the interpretive kiosk area. Asphalt sidewalks were replaced with concrete, and in the picnic area decomposed granite replaced the deteriorating asphalt. A low river rock wall now curves through the picnic area, outlining a new sidewalk that provides wheelchair access to the picnic shelters.

Much of this work involved replicating the look of the original stonework and structures in the park, dating from the 1920s through the 1940s. The contractor made extraordinary efforts to see that this look was achieved, even searching at numerous stone yards for a variety of arroyo stones that would match those used in the existing structures. Original stone bricks that had lined the old asphalt pathways into the park were held in reserve, and as the asphalt was being replaced with concrete, the stones were rescued and reused in a new structure—a simple U-shaped "stage" for outdoor music and educational events. The Samarzich firm received a well-deserved commendation from the City for the excellence of their work.



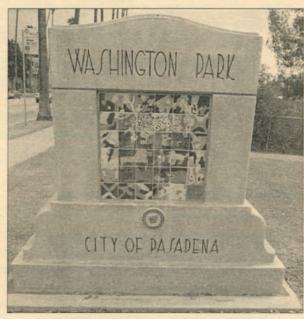
A Washington Park landscape today. (Photo by B. Sword.)

Finally, the first of over 1300 new plants, all indigenous to Southern California, were put in place as part of the Demonstration Garden. The Friends of Washington Park also participated in carrying out the implementation of the planting plan—and now provides hands-on support for maintaining the gardens. Since 2003, the FWP and the City Public Works Department have held planting days once or twice a year, each time adding several hundred native California plants to the landscaped areas. The Payne Foundation, a leader in educating and encouraging the public in the use of California native plants, supplies advice and ongoing support.¹³

The 2006 restoration fulfilled Phase I of the Master Plan. Other improvements in recent years have been the renovated playground, the construction of a stone and stucco picnic shelter in the playground area, and the addition of an outdoor adult exercise area using sturdy, colorful equipment—all aiding in encouraging community use of the park. A number of features of the plan remain to be completed. Among them are the replacing the current lights with historic lighting and safety lighting, replacement of the restroom facility with a community building combining restrooms with classroom and meeting space, the removal of chain link fencing, and completion of the planting plans.



The portion of the Master Plan accomplished by the ASLA award recipients, combined with the play areas and the adult exercise area, completes a major portion of the plan. Another significant desire of the Friends of Washington Park is to attain historic landmark designation for Washington Park. Undoubtedly the efforts of civic-minded neighbors will continue to be crucial in keeping the park's improvements on track and its historic charm intact.



The Washington Park monument, located at the main entrance at the intersection of Washington Blvd. and El Molino Ave., contains colorful decorative tiles created by area students as part of a community art project.

(Photo by B. Sword.)

A new interpretive kiosk area provides information about the park's landscaping and history. (Photo by B. Sword.)

End Notes:

- Pendleton, Agnes. "Pasadena Parks Washington Park," Pasadena Lens and Community Calendar, date obscured, but appears to be 1955.
- 2. The documentation is unsigned, with "1990" handwritten.
- 3. Many articles in both the Pasadena Star-News and Pasadena Evening Post between about 1916 and 1922 described the efforts to acquire the land for Washington Park. The first was: "Wash Land Park on Northside Suggested: City Beautiful Likely to Be Asked to Investigate Proposition: Serrurier Property May Be Put to Use: Land Cut Out by Old Storm Ditch May Become New Sunken Garden," Pasadena Star-News, June 16, 1916. One further argument used by opponents was that Northside residents had not helped pay for parks in the southern part of the City, since the north side had not been incorporated at that time, so it would be unfair to expect the south side residents to help pay for a park on the north side of the City.
- 4. The land was offered to the City twice, most recently in 1938, for a public park, but unfortunately the offers were rejected and the entire estate was developed as residential property. Some of the amazing structures, such as the "Old Mill," still exist today as part of the new residences. "An Enchanted Park: Celebrating the Centennial of Busch Gardens," Pasadena Museum of History Website, http://www.passadenahistory.org/thingstosee/buschgardens.htm, 2005.
- 5. "Endorse Park Project at Meeting Northeast Residents at a Gathering Last Night Take Action." Pasadena Star-News, July 20, 1920.
- 6. "Wanted: A Genuine Southern California Park," Pomona College Journal of Economic Botany, Ralph D. Cornell, February 1912.
- "Plans Completed by City for Making Washington Park One of Pasadena's Most Attractive Spots," Pasadena Star-News, November 11, 1922.
- 8. Cornell, Ralph D. "California Street Trees," Pomona College Journal of Economic Botany, May 1913, Vol. 3, No. 2.
- 9. "A Partial List of Plants Found in the Pasadena Parks and Environs, Compiled for the use of the Audubon Society in Their Walks," by Annie L. Glidden (1946). A copy of the Audubon list exists at the Pasadena Museum of History archives, Miscellaneous Parks Ephemera folder. The typewritten lists are greatly annotated with additional plants.
- 10. The documentation is unsigned, with "1990" handwritten in.
- 11. Only one of the half-dozen photos found was dated, that being one of the tennis court pergola, by which someone had noted "1928-29," but they appear to all be of a similar decade. The photo collection can be found at the Pasadena Museum of History, Box 29A.
- Payne, Theodore. Theodore Payne in His Own Words: A Voice for California Native Plants. Many Moons Press, Pasadena, 2004.
 A photo of the C.C. Teague residence is available in Santa Paula by Mary Alice Orcutt Henderson. Arcadia Publishing, Charleston, 2006.
- The nonprofit Theodore Payne Foundation, located at 10459 Tuxford Street in Sun Valley, is open Wednesday through Sunday. Call 818-768-1802 for hours and information about upcoming programs.

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Book Review

Another World Lies Beyond: Creating Liu Fang Yuan, the Huntington's Chinese Garden. June Li, editor. San Marino, California: Huntington Library, 2009. 127 pp., \$24.95.

Liu Fang Yuan, the Garden of Flowing Fragrance, opened within the grounds of the Huntington Library in early 2008. Another World Lies Beyond is the story behind the garden, its construction, and layered meanings. June Li, the editor, is the garden's curator. The Garden of Flowing Fragrance is designed in the manner of traditional 17th-century scholar gardens of Suzhou in Sichuan in southern China. It is not a replica of a particular garden, and its pavilions and ornamental features, with the exception of limestone rocks from Lake Tai, were not imported, but were designed for the site.

This volume is divided into three sections, followed by a plan and appendices. The first section is devoted to the conceptual design and the actual construction of the garden. The second section explains the poetic inspirations and multiple meanings of the views and decorations, and the third discusses the Chinese plants in the garden. These three approaches are consistent with the appreciation of historic Chinese scholars' gardens. June Li places the Garden of Flowing Fragrance in the local context of Henry Huntington's Botanical Gardens, where its Japanese Garden, originally known as the "Oriental Garden," and its plant collections were already rich with Chinese material. The historic context of the late Ming, early Qing dynasty painting, poetry, and architecture is given equal attention. Appendices identify and translate the names, their origins, the poets, the calligraphy, the calligraphers, and artists of *Liu Fang Yuan*, as well as identifying the woods used in the garden structures.

The Chinese Garden at the Huntington will undoubtedly be the most successful of its sort in the United States. The grounds at the Huntington are large enough and the topography is varied enough to isolate the l2-acre garden from its surroundings, yet at the same time, capture and incorporate the backdrop of the San Gabriel Mountains several miles to the north in a manner similar to traditional Chinese gardens. The garden can only be described as young. Plants are small and have not acquired individual shapes which come with age and judicious pruning. The architectural features, furnishings, and paving are pristine and without the patina of age. However, the structure and quality of the garden are such that it promises to age well. Its proximity to the Japanese Garden demonstrates the differences between the two cultures.

Another World Lies Beyond is not a scholarly justification of the design of Liu Fang Yuan. It is rather an appreciation of all that went into the making of this extraordinary garden. Its authors are knowledgeable and share their learning with general readers without being condescending. The book succeeds in conveying the complexity and layers of meaning and enjoyment in Chinese gardens in general and in this one in particular. A four-page bibliography of sources in English, French, and Chinese is a valuable resource for further study.

-Margaretta J. Darnall, Book Reviews Editor







Coming Events

To see updated event listings, visit our Website: www.cglhs.org.

Be sure to read about CGLHS's new Southland Day Tours on page 24!

Programs and Conferences

Now through July: The Garden Conservancy's Open Days Program takes place in different California areas beginning in April. To obtain a copy of the *Open Days Directory* and/or to become a member, write to the Garden Conservancy, PO Box 219, Cold Spring, NY 10516. Visit the Website: www.gardenconservancy.org.

May 6-Nov. 5:: The Cultural Landscape Foundation will continue its celebration of their newest publication, Shaping the American Landscape: Profiles from the Pioneers of American Landscape Design, throughout 2010 with events in Dallas, TX; Waltham, MA; Indianapolis, IN; and Atlanta, GA. More information on the Website: www.tclf.org.

May 12–18: California Preservation Foundation conference. A workshop on Cultural Landscapes, using the Doyle Drive project as a case study. The link to the conference: <u>www.californiapreservation.org/</u>.

May 14–15: Any members with connections to a historic California zoo be interested in the symposium on "Designing Wildlife Habitats," sponsored by The Garden and Landscape Studies program at Dumbarton Oaks. Click on www.doaks/org/research/garden_landscape/doaks_gal_symposium_2010_05_14.html.

Aug. 22–27: "Portugal and Spain's Influence on Garden Culture and Open Space Development," a part of the 28th International Horticultural Congress at Lisbon, Portugal. For detailed information, visit the Website: www.ihc2010.org/seminars.asp?page=sm03_gardens_open_space.

Aug. 23–27: Conference in Latvia. Faculty of the Geography and Earth Sciences at University of Latvia organizing PECSRL (The Permanent European Conference for the Study of the Rural Landscape), the 24th session, "Living in Landscapes: Knowledge, Practice, Imagination." For details, go to http://www.geo.lu.lv/pecsrl/home/statement.

Sept. 10: In conjunction with the ASLA's Annual Meeting, TCLF will host a special garden program, a "curated" visit to three private gardens designed by James van Sweden and Oehme van Sweden & Associates. Website: http://www.tclf.org.

Sept. 25: TCLF is sponsoring their inaugural *What's Out There* Weekend, featuring a network of 30 sites around Washington, D.C. that will offer free guided tours. This is the prototype for an annual, nationwide series of such interpretive tours that will focus attention on our country's rich and diverse heritage of designed landscapes. Details are still to be determined. Check the Website from time to time for coming registration details:. http://www.tclf.org.

We've scheduled the CGLHS annual conference for 2010, to take place on October 15-17 in Santa Cruz (see next page). Please plan on joining us then & there!

But where might our conferences be held in the coming years? If you have recommendations for any location with various fascinating, history-rich landscaping and gardens and you're willing and able to participate in making arrangements for a conference there, please contact *conferences@cglhs.org*.

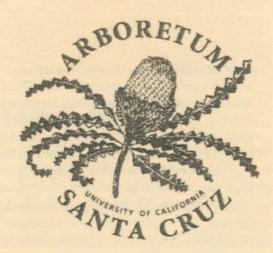
SAVE THE DATE: CGLHS Annual Conference

"Santa Cruz-Land of 1001 Wonders"

October 15-17, 2010

Join us as we celebrate our 15th anniversary at the site of our first conference: Santa Cruz. On Friday afternoon we'll tour historic gardens and nurseries, and that evening we'll hold a reception at the historic Sesnon House on the Cabrillo College campus.

On Saturday morning we will meet at the UC Santa Cruz Arboretum to hear lectures by Judith Taylor ("Historic Florists and Nurseries of Santa Cruz County"), Brett Hall ("History of the UCSC Arboretum"), and Pam-Anela Messenger ("Thomas Church, Early and Late: Pasatiempo and the UCSC Campus"). Following lunch, docents will lead tours of the Arboretum; we will also have self-guided tours of other significant campus



landscapes designed by Lawrence Halprin, Robert Royston, and Roy Rydell, as well as the Alan Chadwick Garden.

On Saturday evening we'll hold the William A. Grant Founder's Award Dinner, at a location to be announced.

Then on Sunday morning we will tour the Pasatiempo Country Club and Estates, designed by the Olmsted Brothers in 1929 and executed by Thomas Church. This outing will include a visit to the former Church summer residence and studio, designed by architect William Wurster and landscaped by Church.

Visit our Website often to get current information and a recommended reading list: www.cglhs.org.



The Pasatiempo Country Club and Estates development in Santa Cruz was the brainchild of society sportswoman Marion Hollins. She had previous experience in building successful country clubs in the East; and at Pebble Beach in California she was employed as sports director—and soon began helping to sell real estate as well. She was also actively involved with the design of the Cypress Point golf course there.

Dorothee Imbert ("Of Gardens and Houses as Places to Live: Thomas Church and William Wurster," in *An Everyday Modernism: The Houses of William Wurster*, ed. Marc Treib, 1995) wrote that Hollins conceived the Pasatiempo project as a weekend retreat for wealthy San Franciscans. It was initiated in 1926, and Hollins asked Oakland real estate magnate Duncan McDuffie to evaluate the proposed site for her. He recommended that she hire the Olmsted Brothers, "who laid out St. Francis Wood and who have charge of the Palos Verdes Estates near Redondo Beach, California, to plan the subdivision of the property." McDuffie further advised that "Every effort should be made to retain a parklike character." Hollins did commission the Olmsted Brothers to create the master plan, and hired William Wurster and Clarence Tantau as project architects. She brought in British expert Alister MacKenzie to design the golf course, as he had done at Cypress Point following the death of Seth Raynor.

The site covered some 600 acres and included an 18-hole golf course, nine miles of roads, a clubhouse, tennis courts, open spaces, six miles of bridle paths, and house lots of various sizes. In 1930, Hollins hired landscape architect Thomas Church to implement the Olmsted plan.

Unfortunately, the economic effects of the Great Depression lingered much longer than Hollins anticipated. She invested her personal fortune in an attempt to keep the project afloat as long as possible. Imbert noted that "In a 1933 letter to the Olmsted Brothers, Marion Hollins lamented the dire economy that kept people from buying property at Pasatiempo to justify her failure to pay the landscape architects. She also described the Olmsted site plan as 'not satisfactory, in fact very impractical, and if followed out would have cost a great deal of money, also destroyed the natural beauty of the place."

In spite of all Hollins' efforts, the property eventually fell into the hands of businessman Philip Lansdale. As for Church, Hollins' offer of a job at Pasatiempo had given him an opportunity that was a landmark in his career, enabling him to open his own office.

CGLHS's Southland Day Tours

Here's an enticing new membership activity already launched in Greater Los Angeles that members in other regions may wish to emulate in their own way—and attend. Local leaders (and CGLHS board members) Judy Horton and Kelly Comras have put together a program of five docent-led walking tours to local sites with fascinating garden and landscaping histories. Programs start at 10am and last until mid-afternoon. People provide their own transportation (carpooling's a good idea) and picnic lunches. Members can invite friends and family to join them. CGLHS members and other people from beyond the L.A. area are of course quite welcome to come along too.

The first trip, to Scripps College in Claremont ("a repository of 1930s architectural and landscape elegance"), took place in mid-April. The second will be on May 22. Details for it and the three other remaining trips in 2010 are below.

Members pay \$20 per trip; non-members, \$25. Attendees who decide to become CGLHS members get one free tour day.

If you'd like to go on any or all of the tours, mail a check to Judy Horton at 136 ½ N. Larchmont Blvd. Suite B, Los Angeles, CA 90004. Or register at www.cglhs.org. For additional information, call Judy at 323-462-1413, or send an e-mail to *membership@cglhs*.

ON THE RAZOR'S EDGE: Saturday, May 22, 10 am-3 pm

The King Gillette Ranch, Calabasas (in the Santa Monica Mountains)

Our grandfathers knew one of the wealthiest men in American rather intimately—for every time they opened a packet of disposable razor blades, there he was, on the wrapper. (And his name really was King!) In 1926, he bought the 360-acre Stokes Ranch in the heart of the Malibu Creek Watershed. Gillette built several homes here, most notably the lavish Spanish Colonial Revival house that Wallace Neff designed in 1928–1929: it's his pre-Depression and pre-WWII era masterpiece.

But Gillette was only one of various owners who have made their marks on the landscape here. Please join us as a cultural anthropologist from the National Park Service gives us a behind-the-scenes tour of the recently acquired King Gillette Ranch in the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area.

NEVER SAW A VIEW I DIDN'T LIKE: Sunday, July 11, 10 am-2 pm

Will Rogers State Historic Park in Pacific Palisades

In the 1930s he was America's favorite humorist as columnist, radio commentator, and rope-twirling, cattle-lassoing performer—and also Hollywood's most popular, best-paid actor. Will Rogers loved the Santa Monica Mountains and shrewdly bought 186 acres overlooking the Pacific Ocean in a location that's now part of Pacific Palisades. Over the years he built a handsome ranch house with 31 rooms, a stable, riding ring, roping arena, polo field, golf course, and a network of horseback-riding and hiking trails.

Join us as we tour this magnificent property and learn about recent preservation efforts.

NATURE OF THE PLACE: Saturday, September 25, 10 am-3 pm

Rancho Los Alamitos Historic Ranch and Gardens, Long Beach

The remarkable historic landscape of Rancho Los Alamitos will unfold before your eyes as we tour its four acres of gardens, designed by some of the most significant landscape designers of the early-to-mid 20th century, as well as its early 19th-century adobe ranch house and barns dating back to the Hispanic era.

RLA Director Pamela Seager will illuminate for us this property's successful road to preservation.

KEEPING UP WITH THE JONESES: Beatrix Farrand's Southern California Gardens

Two days: the tour—Saturday, November 13, 10 am-4 pm; the talk—Sunday, November 14 (time TBA)

Beatrix Jones Farrand was born into one of the wealthiest families of old New York—and the "keeping up with the" reportedly refers to her family! This niece of Edith Wharton took up landscape design in her early 20s, confounding what was expected of such a young society woman and heiress in the 1890s.

In 1927, her husband, historian Max Farrand, was appointed director of the Huntington Library – and Southern California would be blessed with Beatrix Farrand gardens: the director's house at the Huntington, the Caltech campus, Occidental College, and the Santa Barbara Botanical Garden among them. On Saturday's tour we will explore the remnants of a few of her gardens.

On Sunday, November 14, at a time to be announced, garden historian Judith Tankard will discuss her latest book, Beatrix Farrand: Private Gardens, Public Landscapes, at the Huntington Library, Art Collections, and Botanical Gardens.



Preservation Issues

Monterey: Hotel del Monte's Arizona Garden

The Arizona garden at Hotel del Monte, Monterey (now the headquarters of the Naval Postgraduate School, NPS) is being evaluated for a new round of restoration and stabilization. The garden, first created by landscape gardener Rudolph Ulrich in 1881, was a unique design for that period, a formal and symmetrical arrangement of raised beds planted with desert, succulent and subtropical plants.

When the Navy took over the hotel during WWII, the garden began to decline through neglect. Adding insult to injury, a road was cut through the middle of the garden, destroying its symmetry. In the 1990s, two NPS residents decided to undertake a partial restoration of the garden. While the Navy was not willing to go so far as to reroute the road, the raised beds and plantings could be reconstructed to some extent. Unfortunately, at that time, no historic records, maps or photographs of the garden were known to exist. The job was done to the best of their abilities given what they had available at the time.

A few years later, Julie Cain and Marlea Graham began their research on Rudolph Ulrich; they contacted the NPS and expressed an interest in any historic photos and maps that might still

exist. After much searching, an 1888 survey map of the hotel grounds was found by NPS employees Allyn McGuire and John Sanders. It showed the exact number, size and shape of the beds in the Arizona garden. In the meantime, many photographs were also unearthed from various archives, libraries and private collections, including the NPS vault. The most important of these in terms of revealing the true design of the garden was an "aerial" photograph taken by I.W. Taber, from the roof of the adjacent pheasant house. A total of 17 people were posed

among the 58 raised beds, including a horse and buggy; it vividly demonstrates the scale of the garden.

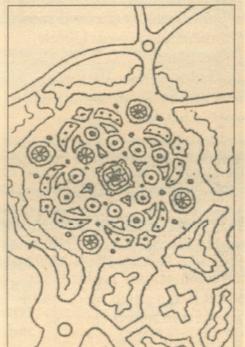
Twenty years later, the garden is again showing signs of neglect and abuse. The Naval Postgraduate School Foundation (NPSF), which among other things supports historic preservation, wishes to undertake a second restoration that more nearly approaches the National Park Service's Standards for the Treatment of Historic

Properties with Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes.

The Navy is still not willing to go so far as to remove the road through the garden, but in all other respects, they wish to make the garden as historically accurate as possible. Their goals include: stabilizing the present garden; developing an effective and achievable garden management plan; establishing a community volunteer program; and restoring the garden (to the extent possible) to Rudolph Ulrich's original plan. As a first step towards that goal, the Foundation invited the local cactus and succulent society to the school with a view to forming a "Friends of the Arizona Garden" group that would assist with the restoration and maintenance; Julie Cain was invited to give the group

an overview of the garden's history. Some financial support has already been received from the Doud Fund—the Community Foundation for Monterey County, and a preliminary survey of existing conditions has begun.

Anyone wishing to assist in this project should contact Cathy Bachl, Director of the NPSF Membership Program, at P.O. Box 8626, Monterey, CA 93943. Tel: 831-656-7781. E-mail: chbachl@nps.edu. To learn more about the NPSF, you may visit their website at www.npsfoundation.org.



1888 survey map showing garden area (NPS)



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, and interesting archives or Websites you have discovered. In short, send us anything pertaining to California's landscape history that may be of interest to CGLHS members. Also, more regional correspondents reporting on local preservation concerns and efforts and other issues will be welcomed.

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

All other submissions should be sent to *Eden* editor Barbara Marinacci at: 501 Palisades Drive #315, Pacific Palisades, CA 90272-2848. Telephone: 310-459-0190 / E-mail: eden.editor@gmail.com.

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 e-mail Editor Barbara Marinacci (contact information above & below).

You may also obtain access to back issues at the following libraries that have full sets of *Eden*: Environmental Design Library, UC Berkeley; Helen Crocker-Russell Library, SF Botanical Garden; Science Library, UC Riverside; Blaksley Library, Santa Barbara Botanic Garden; LA County Arboretum & Botanic Garden; Copley Library, University of San Diego; Homestead Museum, San Diego; Brooklyn Botanic Garden, New York.

EDEN

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1995 - Santa Cruz (founding)

1996 - Santa Barbara / San Diego

1997 - UC Berkeley / San Marino

1998 - Sacramento

1999 - Long Beach

2000 - Monterey

2001 - Sonoma

2002 - San Juan Capistrano

2003 - Stanford University

2004 - Riverside

2005 - Napa Valley

2006 - Saratoga

2007 - Los Angeles

2008 - Lone Pine and Owens Valley

2009 - UC Berkeley

2010 - Santa Cruz (15th anniversary)



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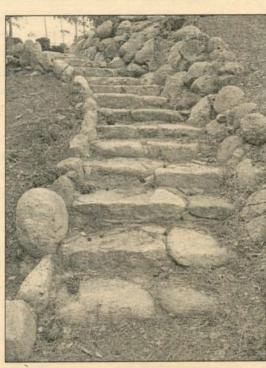


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Contents in this issue of EDEN: pages The Evolution and Restoration of Pasadena's Washington Park ..1-7, 17-20 The Payne-Cornell Partnership8 Forgotten Rose, Forgotten Creator: Francis E. Lester9-11 Marlea Graham: Ave Atque Vale11 Roses of Yesterday & Today, 1945-2010: Book Review: Another World Lies Beyond: Creating Liu Fan Yuan, the Huntington's Chinese Garden21 Save the Date: The CGLHS Annual Conference in Santa Cruz23 CGLHS's Southland Day Tours24 Preservation Issues:



The rugged arroyo stone steps are part of the original infrastructure of the Payne-Cornell design for Pasadena's Washington Park. They connect an upper path with the ravine. (Photo by B. Sword.)