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WORLD'S FAIRS AND CALIFORNIA'S HORTICULTURAL HISTORY

PART II

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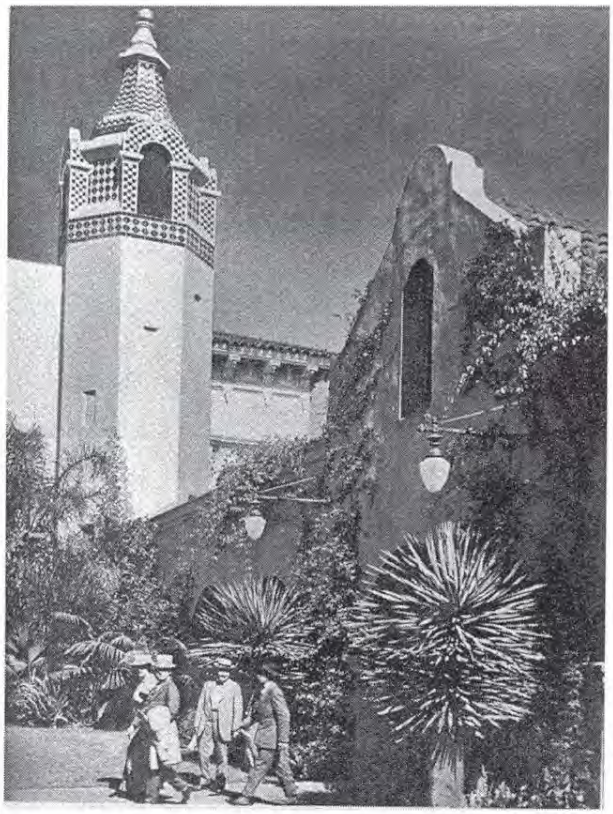
World's fairs were destiny for regional landscapes in California, because they brought sharp focus to the garden ideals of their eras and created forums of expression for many horticulturists and park designers. Exposition landscape influences are sometimes obvious, sometimes obscure, but expos gave charter to many of the planting assumptions that guide gardeners today. They broadened the modern palette of commonly accepted plants and gave rise to commercial "instant" landscaping techniques, among other things.

In Part I of this article, I recommended Alfred Heller's new book, ***World's Fairs and the End of Progress***, as a fine introduction to the fundamentals of expositions and their organization. In these pages of Part II, I will summarize some research sources available to landscape historians...but with this necessary caveat: this is simply a starting list of possibilities, drawn from archives that I have used or learned about in my own scratch-the-surface explorations. In-depth researchers will certainly learn of other sources, and therein lies the value of pursuing serious landscape history studies: to bring useful but forgotten information to light again.



My own awakening to the lively world of international expositions —and their importance to local landscapes—came from a happenstance discovery: I found a sample copy of a quarterly publication called ***World's Fair*** in the lobby of the San Diego Historical Society museum. This periodical was in print from 1981 to 1995 and edited by Alfred Heller himself. Formatted as an oversize news journal, *World's Fair* proved to be a gold mine of exposition history leads, ranging from articles about the anthropology exhibits at expos to current entertainment trends to Sally Rand's career at world's fairs to ads for collector's expo ephemera.

World's Fair quarterly is now available in limited quantities, and only as a full-run set of back issues. For price and shipping information, contact: World's Fair, Inc., P.O. Box 339, Corte Madera, CA 94976-0339. E-mail: <fairworld@aol.com>. It might be found in libraries or archives in world's fair towns. Or, you may be able to persuade your local historical society or library to purchase a set for its invaluable use as a research aid that has broad applications in *many* areas of interest.

Heller's quarterly added many useful links to my growing chain of landscape history interests.

Among these links, the most helpful was John Findling's *dictionary of* ***World's Fairs and Expositions—1851-1988***. Published by Westport in 1990 for $75, it was too pricey for my pocketbook, but I found it right away in the San Diego Historical Society archives. This concise volume summarizes the character, theme and organizational details of each exposition, in chronological order, and concludes each description with a bibliographic essay, complete with resources for further study.

Thus, when my Seattle daughter sent me a postcard of her University of Washington campus, with a penned note that the fountain pictured was part of an Olmsted Brothers' layout for the 1909 fair, I was able to consult Findling for more exact data. I learned that the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition occupied a 250-acre portion of the campus, and that the records of the grounds-layout are held at the university's Suzallo Library, in the Manuscripts Division, along with official guidebooks, local newspaper articles, magazine features and fair souvenirs. Other resources are listed, including Congressional records and a Smithsonian exhibit guide.

For a time, *World's Fair* offered its subscribers a catalog of current books, anniversary posters, videos and souvenir pins. This service was eventually discontinued, but its listings proved invaluable to me as starting points for my own inquiries and self-education. For example, Dover Publications' inexpensive picture books—***The New York World's Fair—1939-1940*** (1977) and ***The Chicago World's Fair of 1893—A Photographic Record*** (1980)—are most instructive. Landscapes get scant mention in the background texts by Stanley Applebaum, but the photos and maps reveal a great deal to curious historians about then-contemporary ideals.

Other books listed in the *World's Fair* quarterly have given me a deeper understanding of the temper of the times surrounding the fairs that became emblematic of their eras. Some of the most poignant expositions seem to have been the ones held just before major wars or just after disorienting events, (earthquakes, stock market crashes, the fall of the Berlin Wall). Other expos have been full-blown jubilees of prosperity and good times. Almost all have left landscape "residuals" of local significance: city parks (public estate gardens), campuses, street-tree plantings, state fairgrounds, prettier neighborhoods, enhanced botanical gardens, and newly introduced exotic plants in the nurseries.

Major fairs also yield memorable and useful community infrastructure residuals—in the form of plazas, river walks, bridges, esplanades and embarcaderos. Sadly though, some few expo sites are quickly demolished or retrofitted for very different uses. This was the fate of the Long Beach harbor-side exposition of 1928, with its xeric North African theme, now scarcely a wisp of anyone's recollection.

Alfred Heller has tracked the fates of many old expo sites, here and abroad, and from his extensive experience (he's been to fifteen fairs!), he states: "A fair's best residual is the memory that people have of it, and the lore that emerges from that memory. These are difficult to tear down and reduce to rubble." He may well be right. I can't validate his statement through personal experience, because I've never been to any world's fair. But lacking the wonderful memories, I am nonetheless captivated by the enduring expo landscape residuals that remain intact for me to enjoy, in California and in Spain. So I'm grateful not only to the fairs that gave birth to my favorite residuals, but also to all the lifetimes of maintenance and enhancement that have kept expo gardens lovely and inviting for us to use today.

For intensive information about California's fair landscape residuals, one must consult the holdings of nearby libraries and research archives. But more generalized sources are useful too. Ordinary tourist guidebooks gave me my first glimpse of expo landscapes, in San Francisco, Seville, Barcelona and San Diego, and I still refer to these handbooks for maps and basic data. Walk-touring guides seem to be the best. Margot Patterson Doss' ***San Francisco at Your Feet*** (1964) and ***Golden Gate Park at Your Feet*** (1990) continue to give me armchair-orientation to places I haven't visited often enough to know well.

In fact, I owe Doss great thanks for her offhand mention of the now-vanished "Arizona garden"—a relic of the 1894 Midwinter Fair. To turn-of-the-century out-of-towners, this outdoor cactus-and-succulent collection must have emphatically underscored the mild climate of coastal California, and probably proved a sure lure for sharp-eyed future nurserymen. Today's best examples of the "Arizona garden" are among the estate collections of the Huntington Library (San Marino), Lotusland (Montecito), and Ruth Bancroft Estate (Walnut Creek). Yet, at the turn of the century, many home gardeners prized their own smaller collections of desert specimens as emblems of their state's benign climate. I wonder if young

Kate Sessions saw or heard about that 1894 "Arizona garden"? (Perhaps her San Diego friend, John Spreckles, discussed it with her? His San Francisco brother, Adolph Spreckles, was active in Golden Gate Park affairs.) In combination with her friendship with William Hertrich, at the Huntington, the 1894 expo's "Arizona garden" might have been Kate's inspiration to develop a pair of cactus/succulent gardens herself, for the 1935 San Diego fair. The story of the "Arizona garden" (now a dahlia display area) in Golden Gate Park—as an influential model for other specialty gardens—deserves a place in today's xeriscape narrative, and some lucky (or diligent!) landscape history sleuth may one day happen across useful answers to the above questions.

For San Diego research, a good initiation to the expo landscape shared by the 1915 and 1935 fairs lies in the well-illustrated *second* edition of ***The Romance of Balboa Park***, by Florence Christman. (The first edition contained a number of errors, most of which were corrected in the revision. Many archival photos of the expo gardens were added by the second editor, Tom Scharf, a historian with strong interests in horticulture.)

The updated *Romance of Balboa Park* was published in 1985 by the San Diego Historical Society, which also publishes the quarterly ***Journal of San Diego History***—a repository of many thoroughly documented essays about the development of Balboa Park for its fairs. [See Books Reviews in this issue for details.] My favorite among these is an article by urban planner Greg Montes, entitled "Balboa Park, 1909-1911—The Rise and Fall of the Olmsted Plan." (Winter, 1982, Vol. XXVIII, No. 1.) His straightforward narrative has all the ingredients of a John Grisham novel: power, intrigue and ambition. Unlike a novel, however, its most startling revelation is tucked, half-hidden, into its next-to-last footnote, which describes the opening of a sealed letter...buried for almost 70 years among the Olmsted papers in the Library of Congress Manuscripts Division. The envelope was marked: "per order of Mr. John C. Olmsted not to be read by ANYONE." That long-hidden letter from San Diego's best-loved benefactor, George Marston, expressed deep regret about the planning complications (internal politics and professional rivalries) that led to Olmsted's abrupt resignation from the expo project. Every expo has its own behind-the-scenes soap opera, it seems, so I imagine that serious landscape historians can expect to uncover some musty surprise stories of their own.

The **San Diego Historical Society archives** contain excellent expo-related resources, which have been outlined in earlier *EDEN*s. (See: March, '97, Vol. 1, No. 3 and Sept., '97, Vol. 1, No. 3[4].) Location: Casa de Balboa, 1649 El Prado, Balboa Park. Mailing address: P.O. Box 81825, San Diego, CA 92138. Phone: 619-232-6203. Web Site: <edweb.sdsu.edu/edweb_folder/SDHS/HistSoc.html>. Other resources that have been useful to me are housed in San Francisco, Sacramento, Fresno and Long Beach.

Although I have never had the good fortune to visit the **California State Library in Sacramento**, I have had pleasant dealings, by phone and by mail, with the Special Collections and photo archives of the California Room, (P.O. Box 942837, Sacramento, CA 94237-00001. Phone: 916-654-0176. Web Site: <lib.state.ca.us>). The brochure states: "Regardless of where you live in California, you can borrow materials on California subjects from the State Library for reading at your home or office...The [California Section] now has the most important collection relating

to the State that is available for the use of all its citizens." This availability is not free, but it is much less costly to use than similar holdings at membership-supported institutions.

Foremost among the latter is the **California Historical Society**, at 678 Mission Street, San Francisco, CA 94105. Phone: 415-357-1848. Web Site: <calhist.org>. Based in a city that has hosted three international expositions, this quality resource has become a good bit more expensive to use than in my student days, twenty years ago.

Yet funds are tight for *all* keepers of history in these times, so I, for one, am grateful for *every* repository of world's fair records, including the intriguing **Larson Collection of International Expositions at Cal State, Fresno**, of all unexpected places! Housed in the Sanoian Special Collections Library of a university that specializes in agriculture, viticulture and oenology, this formerly private assemblage of world's fair memorabilia extends far beyond California's boundaries. It includes items of broad interest concerning expos from 1851 through 1940. Its ever-increasing use—even by European scholars—has enhanced its stature as an international studies resource. The collection's guidebooks, souvenir pamphlets, photographs, postcards, maps and ephemera have been catalogued, fair by fair, through 1903. Its web site links to a searchable database for every catalogued item in the collection–including lists of ALL the thousands of photos and postcards. To explore this resource further, contact the head of Special Collections, Tammy Lau, at the Henry Madden Library, CSU Fresno, 520 North Barton Avenue, M/S 34, Fresno, CA 93740-8014. Phone: 559-278-2595.
E–mail: <tammy_lau@csufresno.edu>.
Web Site: <lib.csufresno.edu/SpecialCollections/WorldFairs>.

Tammy Lau recently discovered another promising new inter-connective web site for aficionados of world's fairs: <sff.net/people/DavidJP/wfmain.html>, with links to private collections, expo buffs, an e-zine (***World's Fair Digest***) and 150 fair sites...including fairs that haven't even been held yet! (Seto, Japan, 2005.) This site has a Bulletin Board for user's questions, so it could generate some interesting future dialogues about expo landscapes.

As mentioned above, one fleeting California expo left no residuals whatever. Luckily, the host cities of world's fairs also become hosts to the special archival materials that document their expos. Thus, the **Long Beach Public Library** is the official repository of data about the Pacific Southwest Exposition of 1928. This buoyantly optimistic fair lasted only five weeks, and although it boasted a healthy cadre of international exhibitors, it is technically classified as a *regional* expo. The North African coastal trading cultures of Tunisia and Algeria provided the thematic inspiration for the harbor-side fair, held on loaned land that was soon to be developed as an extension of the Long Beach port facilities. For this summertime-only fair, the solid, massive architecture of casbah, mosque and medina was cleverly translated—Hollywood-style—as simple, temporary, wood-frame exhibit halls, stucco-covered, painted white, and roofed with taut canvas.

In our xeri-conscious era it is revealing to learn how Mediterranean North Africa was represented in the landscapes of the stage-set fairgrounds. Large palms, easily transplanted, set the garden tone of the short-lived scene. The palms were supplemented by groupings of dracaenas and small shrubs, to convincingly depict the skimpy plantings one might expect to find in the dry coastal climate of an ancient land. Arcade-covered paseos, reflecting pools and state-of-the-art night lighting dramatically enhanced the modest gardens of the expo that left no residuals. Its boosterism blunted by the 1929 stock market crash, the Long Beach expo can now be visited only through its archives. To learn more, you can contact Vivian Reed, Librarian, Literature and History, Long Beach Public Library and Information Center, 101 Pacific Avenue, Long Beach, CA 90822. Phone: 562-570-7500. Web Site: <lbpl.org/webpac-j/>.

Back in San Diego, another library worth knowing about, for its scattered assortment of books and master's theses concerning the local fairs and other international expos is the **Copley Library of the University of San Diego**. The motley Copley collections include a superb set of art-quality books about the 1925 Art Deco Expo in Paris. These volumes illustrate moderne-trending gardens as well as fabrics, furniture and architecture of that milestone fair...which left no infrastructure residuals. Deco fashions are important because they created the patterns that were echoed consistently throughout the 'thirties, including the stylistic gardens, architecture, sculpture and lighting effects of the sleekly romantic 1939 Treasure Island fair, officially, the Golden Gate International Exposition, or GGIE, as it is affectionately known. To learn more about its holdings, contact the

Copley Library, University of San Diego, Alcalá Park, San Diego, CA 92010. Phone: 619-260-4765. Web Site: <Marian.acusd.edu>.

The Copley Library is where I found Eugen Neuhaus' elegantly descriptive 1939 book, ***The Art of Treasure Island***, complete with a chapter on "Landscaping, Horticulture." This book includes detailed plant lists for each of the many expo pavilions and their courtyards. Parenthetically, Kate Sessions, Alice Eastwood and John McLaren shared ground breaking honors for the GGIE's Hall of Flowers pavilion. At age 81, Kate Sessions also helped oversee the planting of the brilliant outdoor Persian carpet, composed of gaudy varieties of mesymbryanthemums, in a prominently placed parterre.

[Neuhaus, then an assistant professor of "Decorative Design" at the University of California, was, in addition, the author of ***The San Diego Garden Fair*** (Paul Elder and Co., 1916). It also contains photographs and names of the plants used in landscaping.]

My own backward trek into expo garden history has surprised and delighted me with its ever-unfolding insights into the collective imaginings and aspirations about who we Californians think we are and how we think we would like to live. In Part III of this article, I will mention some of the specific themes of yesterday's expo ideals for art and culture and style that are now firmly laced into our everyday lives, along with further related readings of possible interest.

MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY

By now, you all should have received your copies of our first edition of the long-awaited Membership Directory. After much hard work and general travail, Bill Grant has given us the finished product, using information given to him by our Membership Secretary, Barbara Barton, and we thank them both profusely.

However, as always occurs with a first effort of this sort, some errors have crept in, and some omissions have been noted. Changes in area codes have been a particular annoyance. **We need your help to make this useful tool even better for next year.** Please send any corrections, additions or deletions desired to the Editor ASAP.

Also please note that the Editor's name, address, phone number, and (as of this issue) e-mail address are all listed in the masthead box at the end of the newsletter—in very small type, but there. Make the appropriate changes and additions to your directory.

SAVING THE CIRCLE IN THE SQUARE: ORANGE, CALIFORNIA

Rhett Beavers, ASLA, Melissa Kean, and Diane Kane

[Ed. note: This article appeared in the spring 1999 issue of the ASLA Professional Interest Group on Historic Preservation Newsletter and is reprinted courtesy of the American Society of Landscape Architects. Thanks to Editor Susan Dolan for obtaining permission, and to Margaret Mori, who kindly sent us her copy of the newsletter.]

When the City of Orange, California, recently decided to "modernize" its historic Plaza Square (Plaza) by changing the historic design and plant materials of the park, narrowing the road, and widening the sidewalks, the citizens revolted. Opponents rallied to save their beloved park by publicizing their objections to the city's plan and by supporting their position with outside professional opinion. A combination of posters, petitions, and expert advice worked to change the city's proposal to a new plan more focused on preserving the historic authenticity of the Plaza. The Orange Plaza Square is composed of a park (Plaza Park) within a traffic circle. The roads around the traffic circle, and the four, surrounding quadrants or blocks comprising building facades and sidewalks.

Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the Plaza has served citizens as the heart and hub of the community of Orange for more than 100 years. At the time the Plaza was first listed on the National Register in 1978, the historic preservation community spent little time considering historic and cultural landscapes, as most of their activities focused on saving important buildings. Today, our understanding of historic and cultural landscapes expands the concept of historical properties beyond building walls. In the case of the Plaza Square, the historic landscape includes the Plaza Park, its layout and plant materials, and the surrounding roads. As the National Register nomination mentioned little specifically about the park, its layout and plantings, or the surrounding roads and sidewalks, the city interpreted the nomination to indicate that there was no specific historical value in the park or the roads and, consequently, no adverse impact if they were modified or torn out.

Founders of Orange's Old Towne Preservation Association, Rob and Gloria Boice, retained the authors—a professional team composed of a landscape architect, a historian of western roads, and an architectural historian—to mount a defense against the city's Negative Declaration of Environmental Impacts. The team worked together under a tight schedule to produce a document challenging the assumptions of the Negative Declaration. In the meantime, the citizens notified the city of their intent to sue and were prepared to use the team's findings to trigger a full Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) under State of California law. It was fortuitous that the citizen uproar happened during the final days of the city's municipal election. The "modernization" of the Plaza became an election issue and forced the city council and mayor to publicly address the issues.

Brief History of the Plaza

Town squares have enlivened American cities since their introduction in Savannah [Georgia] in 1733. James Oglethorpe, the settlement's founder, envisioned two dozen town squares as meeting places for citizens, and today they are often referred to as the "living rooms" of Savannah. The founders of Orange may have envisioned a similar function for the town square they included in the original 1871 plat, located at the crossing of Chapman and Glassell streets.

The railroad and land boom of the 1880s in southern California brought new settlers and new brick commercial buildings to Orange. Civic pride initiated improvement of the town square, and in 1886, a surveyor marked off an oval within the square and created the familiar shape of the Plaza Park enclosed by city streets. The local community, spearheaded by fund-raising efforts of the members of the local Women's Christian Temperance Union, installed a bronze fountain in the center of the Plaza Park in 1887 (that fountain remained in the park until 1937 and now is installed in front of City Hall). The cruciform plan of the Plaza Park, as established in 1886-1887, remains unchanged today. The formality and proportion of the park reflects the art of city planning in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

In 1937, Orange citizens celebrated the 50th anniversary of the Plaza by installing a new concrete and tile fountain in the Plaza Park. More than 5,000 residents attended the dedication of the new Westinghouse Electric fountain sheathed in tile fired on nearby Catalina Island. Today, this "new" fountain has anchored the center of the Plaza for more than 60 years, 10 years longer than the 1887 fountain. The Italian cypress trees that surround the fountain today were planted before the installation of the new fountain in 1937. This refurbishing left the 1887 plant material and garden layout of the park unchanged. Also as a part of the Plaza's 50th anniversary celebration, rose bushes were planted in May, 1938, and today still line the walkways of the Plaza Park.

In 1970, to coincide with the centennial of the city's founding, the city undertook a renovation of the streetscape in the Plaza quadrants. These changes, which included Canary Island pines, brick pavers, and raised planters along the perimeter sidewalks, again left the Plaza Park intact.

The Plaza Park has evolved over the years as new plants have been added and the existing plants have matured, but the 1886-1887 cruciform plan and the green park-like setting have remained unchanged. The Plaza is, and always has been, a passive pedestrian park. It has accommodated large gatherings only on a few special occasions, including a rally to sell war bonds during World War I. Residents of the nearby historic neighborhoods walk from their homes through the Plaza to downtown, to conduct business at their bank and post office, grab a cup of coffee, eat lunch, pick up prescriptions, and attend churches and schools. Today, women with young children, shoppers, and thinkers may be found enjoying the peacefulness of the Plaza.

Significance and Integrity of the Plaza

In order to be eligible for the National Register, a property must be significant for its connection to our nation's history. Additionally, the property must retain sufficient integrity to convey that historical significance. The Plaza has been included in three National Register listings over the past 20 years, a testament to its historic significance to the City of Orange. Included in a 1967-1968 survey of Historical Landmarks of Orange County, the Plaza itself was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1978. Four years later, the Plaza Historic District National Register nomination form included the Plaza as the district's focal point, and in 1997, the Old Towne Orange National Register nomination form again included the Plaza.

Because the Plaza Park and the surrounding roads have been changed so little from their first construction in 1887, the period of historic significance for the Plaza may be set as 1887-1948 (using the 50-year rule). However, for the purpose of planning the preservation of the Plaza for future generations, such an extensive span of years is not useful. We suggested that the period of significance for the Plaza, for the purposes of preservation efforts, be defined as 1887-1937, from the initial layout of the park to the 50th anniversary of the Plaza and the inauguration of the new concrete and tile fountain.

Today, as in 1937, the size, shape, and location of the parallel, cruciform pathways and curbing remain unchanged in the Plaza Park. The fountain, new in 1937 and more than 60 years old today, continues to provide a central focus for the pathways. Three of the four fan palms (*Washingtonia filifera*) planted in 1887 still stand, as do the Phoenix palms (*P. canariensis*) and the Sago palm (*Cycas circinalis*) which were in place by the mid-1890s. Planted in 1903, the Star pine (*Araucaria excelsa*) served for many years as the City's Christmas tree, brightly laden with thousands of lights. The Bauhinia (*B. forficata*), planted in the early years of this century still stands tall. Photos of the park taken in the late 1800s show ornamental plants lining the walks.

The National Register defines integrity in terms of location, association, setting, design, materials, workmanship, and feeling. In National Register language, the Plaza Park retains integrity because its location remains unchanged since 1937, as does its association with the streetscape of downtown Orange, and its setting among commercial buildings. The cruciform design and the green park-like feeling also remain unchanged since the early days of the Plaza Park. The historic plant materials contribute significantly to the integrity of the Plaza Park, as do the historic workmanship of the fountain, curbs, and sidewalk layout. Benches have been a part of the Plaza Park since its inception, although they have been replaced a number of times over the years. Overall, Plaza Park retains historic integrity.

Historic Streetscape

The Plaza Square is located at the confluence of two major county wide, arterial streets. Both are named after founders of the city who were important figures in the development of Southern California in the late 1800s.

The Plaza was originally laid in four quadrants (1871) at the intersection of Chapman and Glassell streets. In 1886, the citizens appealed to the county supervisors for a park and a traffic circle. That wish was granted and the Plaza Park, as it is known today, was conceived.

The traffic circle, enclosing the Plaza Park, is an important component of the whole Plaza Square. Although the roads were not mentioned in the 1978 National Register nomination, they are an important contribution to its integrity. If the nomination were being written today, these roads would surely be mentioned as contributing to the setting and feeling of the Plaza.

Examining historic photographs, the team determined that the width of the roads today remains unchanged from the first paving of the streets in 1912 by the Los Angeles Paving Company. During the paving of the streets with asphalt, a concrete gutter was installed, which is still functioning today. The concrete gutter defined the width of the streets and the area available for parking along the perimeter of the street. From 1912 to 1970, parking followed the rectilinear line of the city's grid. In the 1970 modernization, the addition of planters and brick pavers curved the line of parking to follow the 1912 concrete gutter, changing the parking configuration and sidewalks but not the streets. The streets supported two-way traffic until 1923, when the city mandated one-way traffic around the Plaza.

The road configuration surrounding the Plaza Park has been in place for at least 86 years, is historically significant because it was a part of the original plan, and retains integrity of location, association, setting, design, workmanship, and materials.

Status of the Plaza Square

In summary, the Plaza Park exists today nearly as it did in both 1937 and, with the exception of a new fountain, in 1887. The intact, character-defining elements of the park are the mature fan palms, the mature Phoenix palms, the Sago palm, the magnolias, and the Italian cypress, the plan of the sidewalks (size, location, alignment and openings to the street on all four sides), the planting beds along the sidewalks, the flagpole, the posts and chains around the perimeter and fountain, and the 1937 concrete and tile fountain. The configuration of the road is virtually unchanged since 1887 and the 1912 concrete gutter still directs rain runoff today. The third element of the Plaza Square, the four quadrants, were modernized in 1970 to include brick sidewalks, raised planters, a new parking configuration, and new plantings. This modernization effectively destroyed all historic fabric in the four quadrants.

The team recommended that given the National Register and California Register status of the Plaza, any improvements or alterations of the Plaza and its component parts should respect its essential historic features. Any plans by the city should follow the Secretary of the Interior's Standards in order not to jeopardize the Plaza's historic integrity, or listing on the National Register.

As the Secretary's Standards allow a range of actions associated with different treatments, including rehabilitation, restoration, or preservation, the team felt that by pointing out the range of options, there was room for negotiation with the city. The team recommended preservation-maintenance, not renovation for the Plaza Park, which would include the removal of noncontributing features—such as the green-painted, above-ground, telephone equipment vaults—to restore the park's original character. With good, regular maintenance (including thinning, pruning, and perhaps the selective replacement of trees such as the overgrown Italian Cypress), the park could be opened up visually while retaining its historic integrity and charm, as well as its National Register status.

The story has a happy ending. At the time this article was written, the city had submitted a new plan which left the Plaza park substantially intact, preserving all of the historic trees, removing the intrusive above-ground telephone vaults, and essentially preserving the existing circulation pattern. The fate of the proposed road narrowing is still an issue but the city has agreed to preserve the existing curbs on the inside of the traffic circle and will negotiate on the number of lanes. The bulk, if not all, of the proposed "modernization" will take place along the sidewalks lining the perimeter of the Plaza Square, where earlier modernization had removed historic fabric. We believe the interdisciplinary approach used to evaluate the essential historic features of the plaza assisted in developing viable economical alternatives to its planned destruction. We hope the charm of the Orange Plaza, which is strongly associated with its historic authenticity, will be preserved for the enjoyment of future generations.

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CALIFORNIA GARDEN RESTORATION PROJECTS: WHAT NEEDS SAVING NOW?

Val Verde Preservation Plan Defeated

Susan Chamberlin

On July 7th the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors voted 3-2 against issuing a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) to Dr. Warren Austin's *Val Verde* Foundation, which sought to open his 17-acre gardens in Montecito, California on a by-reservation-only basis to a maximum of 3,340 visitors per year.

First known as *Dias Felices*, the estate was originally designed at the turn of the century by the distinguished American architect, Bertram Goodhue. *Val Verde* was acquired by Wright Ludington in the 1920s, and the gardens were remodeled by California landscape architect Lockwood de Forest in the 1920s-1940s. Considered to be his masterpiece, they are the only major gardens by de Forest that have not been substantially altered. Recognizing the value of this treasure, Dr. Austin and his late wife, Bunny, maintained both the house (featuring interiors by opera set designers) and gardens essentially as they had been in Ludington's day. They also continued Ludington's tradition of opening the estate to students, garden lovers, and charity events.

Led by Chair Naomi Schwartz, the Board of Supervisors overturned the Santa Barbara County Planning Commission recommendation to issue a CUP. Citing traffic and neighborhood compatibility concerns, the three Democratic supervisors voted against the plan. They thus rejected the Environmental Impact Report, which found that the plan posed no Class I negative impacts and that all Class II impacts could be mitigated. They also ignored the conclusion reached by both the EIR and Caltrans that traffic conditions under the plan would be safe.

Santa Barbara's two Republican supervisors voted in favor of the CUP. This partisan pattern is typical of Santa Barbara land-use politics, and it often benefits environmental causes. However, in this case, the Republicans took the liberal position that preservation of the estate was good for the people of the entire county, and that rejecting an EIR could set a dangerous precedent. It was not a complete surprise that the Democratic vote went against *Val Verde*. Montecito is a wealthy residential enclave similar to Beverly Hills. One week before the hearing, Montecito resident Schwartz was the recipient of a $75-a-plate campaign fund-raiser held at the home of a past president of the Montecito Association, a group that opposed the CUP. Judging from comments that Schwartz made to the local papers after the vote, it was clear that she had adopted the position of zero-tolerance for new Montecito CUPs. Although many Montecito residents support *Val Verde*, many others believe that two public gardens in Montecito are enough. (Lotusland and Casa Herrero have CUPs, but both were hotly contested before they were eventually allowed to open to the public on a by-reservation-only basis.)

Val Verde is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The American Society of Landscape Architects recently bestowed its prestigious Medallion Award on *Val Verde*. This award was created to honor significant landscapes across America during the 100-year Anniversary celebration of the ASLA. *Val Verde* was one of just a few gardens and landscapes in California to receive the award. In accepting the award, Austin paid tribute to the gardeners who have cared for the estate for so many years. In his quest to give *Val Verde* to future generations, Austin spent six years and hundreds of thousands of dollars. He also pledged an endowment of more than one million dollars that would have maintained the estate tax-free and agreed to numerous restrictions on visitors and uses requested by the Planning Commission.

Every preservation and horticultural organization in Santa Barbara supported the CUP, as did the Stonewall Democratic Club, the American Institute of Architects, the California Garden & Landscape History Society, the American Society of Landscape Architects, the Garden Conservancy, the Library of American Landscape History, and other organizations too numerous to mention. Although the house has landmark status, there is no protection for the interiors or for the gardens if the property is sold and subdivided. This is a likely scenario: Austin is 88 years old, and his only daughter is a resident of another state. As Edward B. Cella, a member of the Santa Barbara Historic Landmarks Commission wrote in the local newspaper after the vote, even the house is threatened because the Landmarks Commission does not have sufficient resources or legal authority to protect it.

BOOK REVIEWS & NEWS

FOUNTAINS: Splash and Spectacle: Water and Design from the Renaissance to the Present. Marilyn Symmes, editor (New York: Rizzoli International Publications, 1998), 208 pp., list price $60.

Fountains play a dramatic role in park and garden design and are equally important to urban design. ***Fountains: Splash and Spectacle*** explores aspects of fountain design in Western Europe and America since the Renaissance. This lavish book is the companion to last summer's exhibition at the Cooper-Hewitt Museum in New York. Like the exhibition, the book is organized thematically: Fountains as Metaphor, Fountains as Propaganda, Fountains as Entertainment and Pleasure, Fountains as Urban Oa

ses, and so forth. It is heavily illustrated with drawings, prints, and photographs. Many of the European drawings and prints are from the collections of the Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum and are rarely reproduced.

This is by no means a straightforward history. The ahistorical approach can be confusing, especially to readers unfamiliar with the overall context of the gardens or cities featured. Much of the writing is needlessly wordy, labored, and pedantic. However, the numerous illustrations, notes, and bibliographies, allow the reader to pursue specific places and ideas.

Naomi Miller's "Fountains as Metaphor" and Marc Treib's "Fountains as Urban Oases" are perhaps the best sections. Miller, an art historian whose specialty has been Renaissance fountain design, focuses on Europe, while Treib, an architect, emphasizes work in the United States since the 1960s. Kenneth Breisch's essay on international expositions includes material on the 1915 Panama-Pacific International Exposition in San Francisco.

California readers will find many references to the work of San Francisco landscape architect, Lawrence Halprin. More important, however, the European sections illustrate antecedents of many of California's early twentieth-century gardens and fountains. Although not the definitive history, ***Fountains: Splash and Spectacle*** offers a provocative look at the subject and is well worth perusing.

—Margaretta J. Darnall

Pacific Horticulture Index: 1976-1995

It has recently come to our attention that not everyone knows about this excellent research tool and we feel they should, as the magazine routinely carries articles of interest to students of California garden history. Compiled by Joan Citron and CG&LHS Founding Member, Joan DeFato, this alphabetized index lists every magazine article by Author (with appended article titles for each, also in alpha order) and by Subject. To purchase your own copy, send a check for $7 to Pacific Horticulture, c/o Olive Rice Waters, Circulation Director, P.O. Box 485, Berkeley, CA 94701-0485. Back issues of the magazine are also available for $7 each, postpaid.

San Diego Historical Society Publications

Carol Greentree provided us with a booklet of San Diego Historical Society Publications, highlighting some she thought might be of special interest to our members. To order any of these publications, write or call the San Diego Historical Society, Box 81825, San Diego, CA 92138. Phone: 619-232-6203. Fax: 619-232-6297. Web Site: <edweb.sdsu.edu/edweb_folder/SDHS/HistSoc.html>.

The Romance of Balboa Park, Florence Christman, 134 pages, 102 illustrations, softcover, ISBN 0-918740-03-7, $9.95.

A colorful history of the creation of San Diego's landmark park. Covers the influences and effects of the Panama-California Exposition in 1915-1916, the California Pacific International Exposition in 1935-1936, and World War II on the architecture and gardens of the park. Generously illustrated with photographs including pictures and details of the buildings and their ornamentation. This publication is the superior, second edition referred to in Carol Greentree's article on world's fairs.

Daring to Dream: The Life of Hazel Wood Waterman, Sally Bullard Thornton, 118 pages, hardcover, ISBN 0-918740-06-1, $8.00. Softcover, ISBN 0-018740-07-X, $6.00.

The story of Hazel Wood Waterman is that of a woman who broke the confines of the traditional roles of her era... Though also a wife and mother, she is best known for her work as an architect of several important San Diego buildings. Carol points out Waterman designed gardens too, most notably for her restoration of "Ramona's Marriage Place," the Casa de Estudillo in Old Town, San Diego.

Kate Sessions–Pioneer Horticulturist, Elizabeth C. MacPhail, 153 pages, softcover, ISBN 0–918740–10–X, $5.50.

A scholarly and in–depth biography of one of America's great horticulturists. Often described as "the Mother of Balboa Park," Kate Sessions turned the barren mesas of San Diego into the lush fields of trees, bushes and flowers of today. She was a pioneer who imported seeds and cuttings from all over the world and grew them successfully in their new environment.

The George White & Anna Gunn Marston House, Editors, 184 pages, color plates, softcover, ISBN 0-022-4383, $6.95.

A special issue of the *Journal of San Diego History* on the historic Craftsman style house designed by architects William Hebbard and Irving Gill. The issue includes articles on the Marston House gardens.

Index to *Journal of San Diego History* Volumes 1 to 20. 1955–1974, compiled by Thomas Lance Scharf and Iris Wilson Engstrand, 73 pages, softcover, $4.00.

A chronological list of articles that have appeared in the San Diego Historical Society quarterly from its inception in 1955 through 1974. Also an alpha index of all topics. Proper names appearing in these articles are identified by volume number, quarterly number and page. Researchers will find this index indispensable in locating general, specific and obscure references to local history.

SOURCES FOR ANTIQUE PLANTS

Old House Gardens: We just received notice from Scott Kunst that his newest catalog is now available, offering a unique selection of antique bulbs and other related items. Send $2 to Old House Gardens, 536 Third Street, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48103-4957. Phone: 734-995-1486. Fax: 734-995-1687.
E-mail: <OHGBulbs@aol.com>.
Website: <oldhousegardens.com>.

COMING EVENTS

August 21 & 22: CG&LHS 1999 Annual Conference and General Meeting, "Artistic Legacy: Unlocking the Treasures Behind the Garden Gates", a weekend of lectures and garden tours, hosted by Rancho Los Alamitos Historic Ranch & Gardens and Rancho Los Cerritos Historic Site in Long Beach. You all should soon receive your information packets about the conference. We will include a brief summary of events here.

Saturday will begin with our Annual Business Meeting. We will then hear three speakers on the theme, "The Art and History of the Garden": David Streatfield, head of the Dept. of Landscape Architecture at the University of Washington, a Founding Member of CG&LHS and the author of *California Gardens: Creating A New Eden*; Russell Beatty, teacher of landscape architecture at UC Berkeley for twenty-eight years, also a member of CG&LHS and co–author of *Gardens of Alcatraz*. Maureen Murphy, a professional photographer specializing in garden subjects, will advise how to improve our own skills in this area.

We then get a choice of two tours from a menu of four, centering on the work being done at Rancho Los Alamitos: Garden History, Restoration, Photography, and House/Archives. The tours will be followed by an interlude for networking and socializing, then dinner at the Museum of Latin American Art.

On Sunday, we tour the Ralph Cornell-designed garden at Ranchos Los Cerritos, and some private gardens, one of which is also a Cornell garden. The Clock/Stanton property design—dating from 1935—still shows clear indications of Cornell's style.

The registration fee is $40. For more information, call Rancho Los Alamitos at 562-431-3541. Please don't hesitate too long. Attendance is limited by the physical size of the conference facility, and advertisements have already brought in many attendees.

September 12: Rancho Los Cerritos (Long Beach) is hosting a Chautauqua in the form of a **Living History Segment,** this year's featuring **a Chinese herbalist living in the time of California's Gold Rush era.** The program begins with a first-person interpretation by the herbalist, followed by a question-and-answer period between the herbalist and the audience, and a final presentation from the researcher, giving a further interpretation of the segment. Marie Barnidge-McIntyre advises that a great deal of research work goes into putting these segments together, and they are great entertainment, as well as very educational. The event is scheduled from 5:30 pm to 7:00 pm, and light refreshments will be served. A small fee will be charged, the amount undetermined at this time. Contact the Rancho for further details at 562-570-1755.

October 21-24: 10th Anniversary Conference of the Garden Conservancy, "The Exceptional American Garden: Past, Present, and Future". This Charleston, SC-based conference will feature talks by Conservancy leaders and project directors working in the field. California is well represented, with CG&LHS members Russell Beatty and Dick Turner, as well as designers Ron Lutsko and Marcia Donahue, all participating in various panel discussions. Many fine private gardens in Charleston will be open for viewing during the conference, and bus tours to public and private plantation gardens in the region are also offered, as well as visits to local specialty nurseries. There will be an Exhibition of the Garden Conservancy Preservation

Projects and a book sale, with many authors on hand for book signing. Conference fees start from $325 and up. A deposit of $50 per person must accompany your pre-registration request. Send name, address and phone number with your check to The Garden Conservancy, Box 219, Cold Spring, NY 10516. For more information, call 843-819-5947.

PLACES OF INTEREST TO VISIT: OPEN GARDENS

Fall listings from the *Open Days Directory*:

October 16: 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Harland Hand Garden, Shevlin Drive (1.5 blocks from Moeser Lane), El Cerrito. Proceeds shared with the Harland Hand Garden Trust.

Below is an excerpt from The Conservancy newsletter write-up on one of their newest preservation projects, the Garden of Harland Hand:

Harland Hand, a longtime artist, former Oakland high school teacher, and passionate gardener, died this past September. Mr. Hand left behind a significant California garden that demonstrates an artistic approach to garden design utilizing innovative techniques and a broad palette of rare and interesting plants evoking a powerful response on the part of the garden visitor.

With a Master's in Fine Art from the University of California, Mr. Hand taught biology, physiology and art at McClymonds High School in the Oakland School District for twenty-two years. Upon his retirement in 1982, he devoted all his time to designing gardens—nearly twenty in the San Francisco Bay Area. The city of El Cerrito awarded Mr. Hand a special commendation for his public plantings and park designs. Mr. Hand was also president of the California Horticultural Society.

Hand [transformed] a difficult, steeply sloped half-acre lot into a series of terraced landings and richly planted gardens. [He] generously opened his garden to visitors from all over the world and became the subject of many articles and books.

It was Mr. Hand's long-time intention that the garden be preserved beyond his lifetime so that it might provide joy, inspiration, and instruction for horticulturists, designers, and others who have an interest in gardens as art. The Garden Conservancy has supported this belief for many years and is pleased to be assisting a local group led by Mr. Hand's sister, Lou Hand Schley, in its efforts to preserve the Harland Hand Garden.

October 16: #1 Maybeck Twin Drive, Berkeley, 2:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. Maybeck Cottage is the garden of Roger Raiche and David McCrory, also featured in many magazine articles, and consisting of a collection of nearly 3,000 types of plants from around the world. The garden style is termed "Planet Horticulture" and is marketed under the owners' firm of the same name.

To join the Conservancy and/or order your own copy of the Open Days Directory, write or call The Garden Conservancy, Box 219, Cold Spring, NY 10516. Phone: 914-265-2029.

WEB SITES TO VISIT

Laurie Hannah

[Ed. note: Please observe that in this, and other sections of this newsletter, we have adopted the practice of omitting the designation <http://www.> from listed web site addresses as we are told it is uniformly used and therefore, understood to be included and not needed by most search engines these days. If this causes problems, please let us know.]

Archives of American Gardens
<si.edu/resource/tours/gardens/aag.htm>

This is the Smithsonian Institute's site, and contains several large photographic collections of gardens from the early 1920s to the present. Perhaps most notable is the Garden Club of America glass slide collection, which you may have seen examples of in *The Golden Age of American Gardens*. Many, but certainly not all, of these slides are now digitized and available for viewing on the web site. You can search by place, garden name, and creator (which includes landscape architects, architects, owners, and even glass slide colorists. It takes awhile, jumping between the Brief and

DUES DUE???

Please check the date on your *Eden* newsletter label. Renewal dates are quarterly, relative to when you joined up. **If there is a big red star on your label and it shows 6/99 next to your name and it says "RENEWAL FORM ENCLOSED" near the label and there is a colorful renewal form enclosed with your newsletter, your dues are due now.** We want you to continue as a member of CG&LHS so please send your check for $20.00 (individual) or $30.00 (household) to Barbara Barton, Membership Secretary, Box 1338, Sebastopol, CA 95473. Thanks.

Long Record displays, to determine whether an image has been digitized or not, and you have to search in chronological order. This can be a slow process when a search key retrieves 100 or more records. I found that the text record itself gave a wealth of information, such as other people affiliated with a garden (later designers, for example), and sometimes, photographs of the garden plans were available too.

American Landscape and Architectural Design, 1850–1920

<memory.loc.gov/ammem/aladquery.html>

This site contains images from the Frances Loeb Library at Harvard and is a part of the larger "American Memory" digitization project of the Library of Congress. You can choose to search by state or person, and choosing "California" results in a list of cities, each of which has one or more images to view. Searching under Santa Barbara, I found quite a few photographs and views I had not seen before.

Garden Calendar

<gardencalendar.com>

A useful site for upcoming garden-related events happening all around the country. We hope our own activities will be listed here soon!

ODDS & ENDS

* Librarians and archivists please note: we now have our officially assigned ISSN listed in the masthead box from this issue on. ISSN: 1524-8062.

* Apologies for the pixilated state of the photo of the Palace of Horticulture (S.F., 1915) in our last issue of *EDEN*. The Editor failed to notice until way too late!

* And, with regard to the address cover photograph of our Board Members meeting at Santa Barbara, the usual suspects are, from left to right, back row: Bill Grant, Mitzi VanSant, John Blocker, Marlea Graham; front row, Roberta Burke, Laurie Hannah, Thea Gurns, Lucy Warren, and Margaret Mori.

Illustrations By Order Of Appearance:

Patio @ Sci. & Ed. Bldg, Balboa Park - The San Diego Garden Fair (Elder, 1915)
"Arizona garden"@ Havens residence, Piedmont (1890s) - A. Norman Collection
Orange Plaza Park - Brady McDonald Collection
Statue of Girl - Val Verde brochure
Young Kate Sessions - San Diego Historical Society
"Ghost Garden" @ Balboa Park (1997) - C. Greentree
Italian Pavilion @ S.F Expo (1915)

EDEN

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Deadline for copy for the next *Eden* is: Sept. 15, 1999

California Garden and Landscape History Society

Aims and Purposes

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

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To aid and promote interest in, study of, and education about California garden and landscape history.

*

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

*

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

*

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

*

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

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