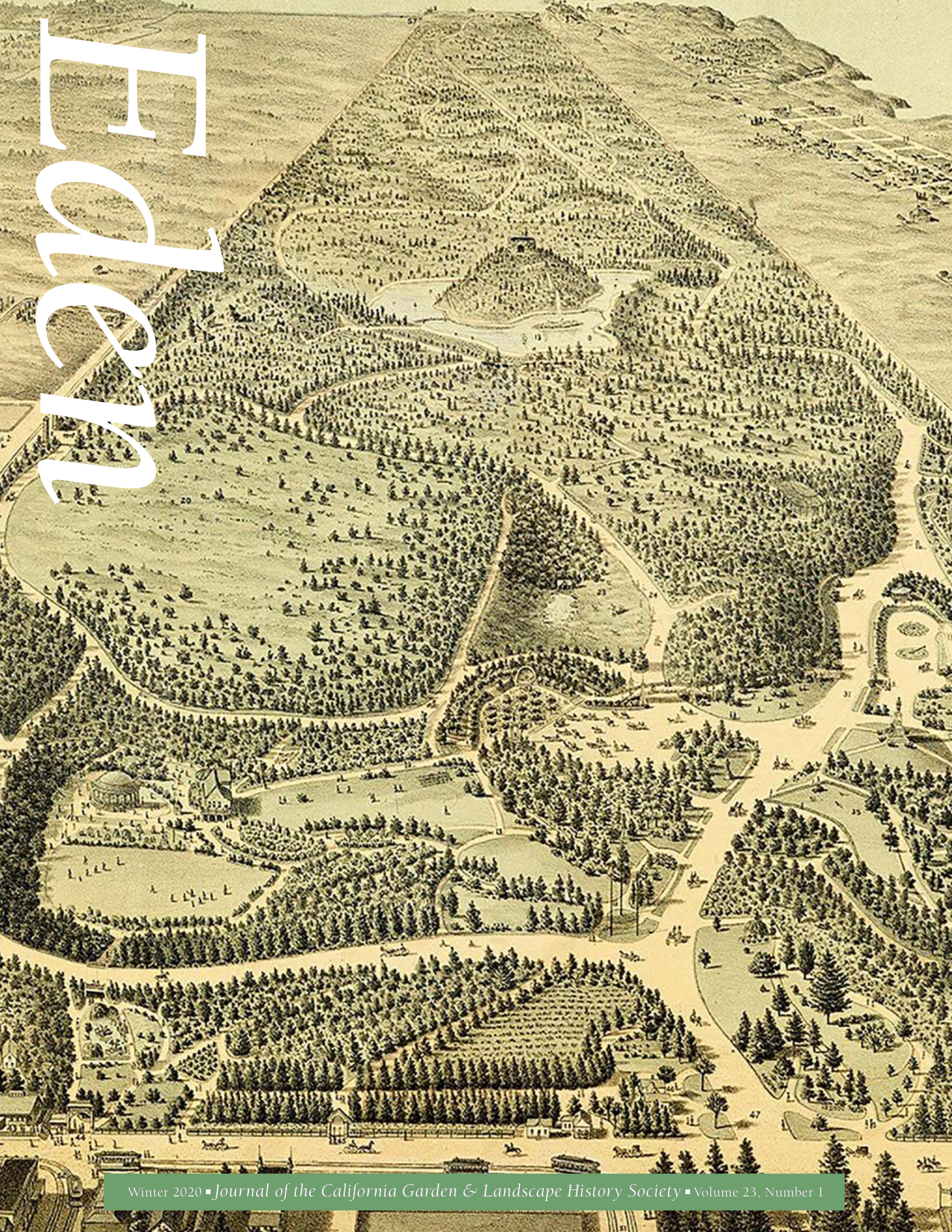


Eden





Above: Pamela Seager, South Garden, 2016.
Photo by Cristina Klenz.

Eden

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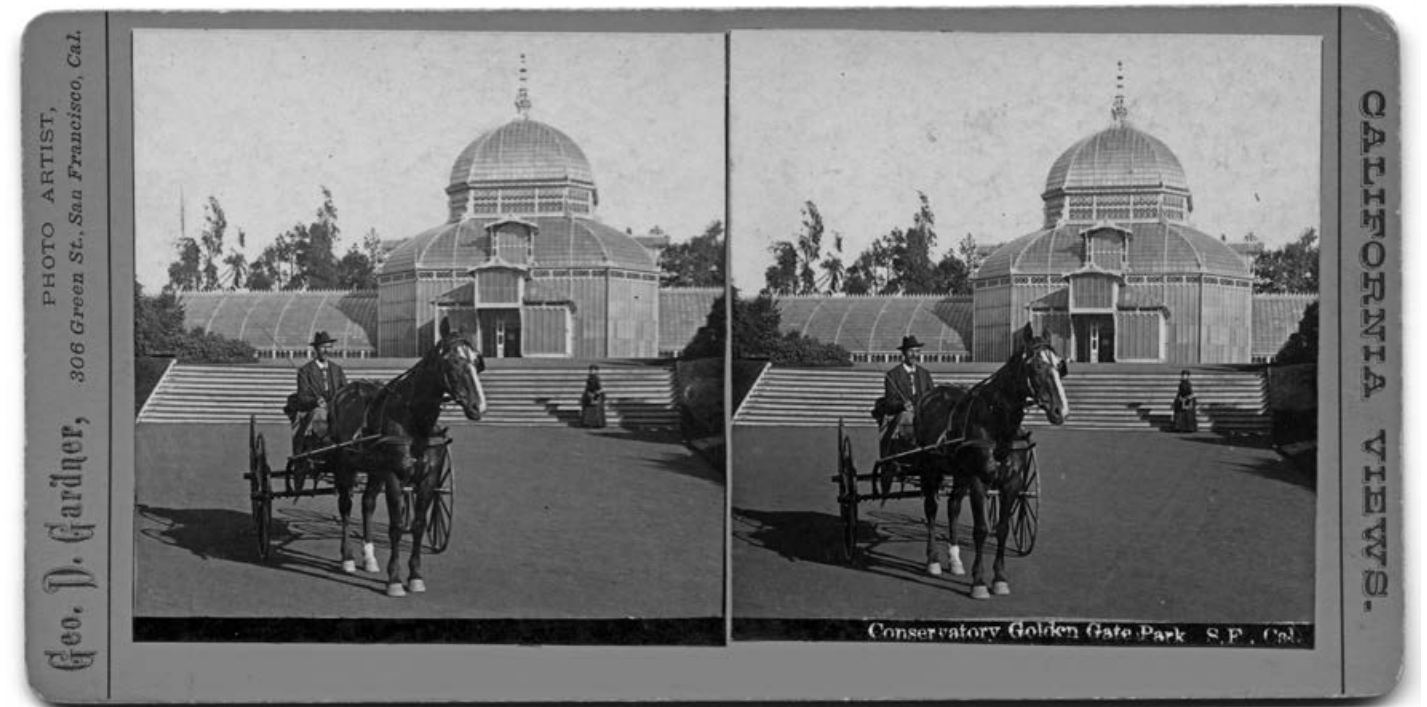
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The California Garden & Landscape History Society (CGLHS) is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) membership organization devoted to celebrating the beauty and diversity of California's historic gardens and landscapes; promoting wider knowledge, preservation, and restoration of California's historic gardens and landscapes; organizing study visits to historic gardens and landscapes as well as to relevant archives and libraries; and offering opportunities for a lively interchange among members at meetings, garden visits, and other events. *Eden: Journal of the California Garden & Landscape History Society* (ISBN 1524-8062) is published quarterly. Subscription is a benefit of CGLHS membership.

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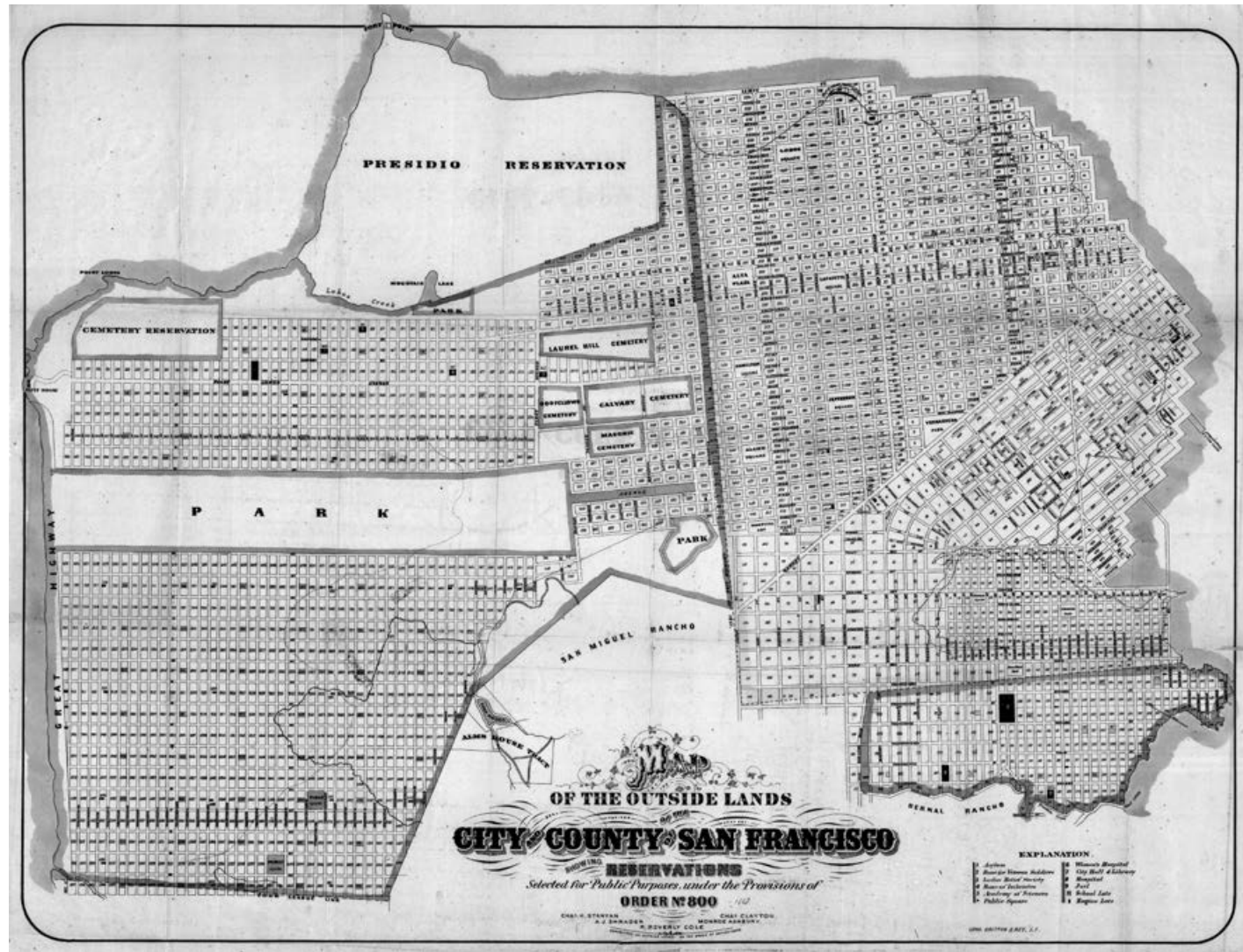
A stereoscopic slide of the newly-built Conservatory of Flowers at Golden Gate Park, ca. 1880.
Photo by George D. Gardner, Courtesy California State Library, California History Section Picture Catalog.

Sand into Gold

One Hundred and Fifty Years of Golden Gate Park

CHRISTOPHER POLLOCK

A tinted photograph representing the state of the Outside Lands District as it looked before reclamation began in 1870. Source: Twenty-Eighth Annual Report of the Board of Park Commissioners of San Francisco for the year ending June 30, 1899. San Francisco: Brunt Press: 1899.



On April 4, 2020, the City and County of San Francisco’s Recreation and Park Department will launch a year-long celebration commemorating the sesquicentennial of the city’s premier playground: Golden Gate Park.

This is the first installment of a two-part essay, which will discuss the park’s creation and early days. It will explore how an unknown surveyor, William Hammond Hall, thoughtfully shepherded what was thought an impossible task: the creation of one of America’s best urban parks from sand dunes. The essay’s second part, which will appear in the subsequent issue of *Eden*, will focus on Hall, who is responsible for the park’s initial topographical survey, its design, and was its first superintendent.

Early city chronicler Frank Soule recounted in his 1855 book, *The Annals of San Francisco*, that “over all these square miles of contemplated thoroughfares, there seems no provision made by the projectors for a public park—the true ‘lungs’ of a large city.” This would become a clarion call to a rapidly growing town for breathing space. By the 1860s, the new port city of San Francisco yearned to be the West Coast’s cosmopolitan star. (San Francisco ballooned from a population of 34,776 in 1852 to 149,473 residents in 1870.) One of the elements necessary to fulfill that aspiration was a large public park like some other cities had created. In 1865, San Francisco Mayor Henry Perrin Coon contacted Frederick Law Olmsted, New York Central Park’s co-designer, about preparing a similar plan for his city, but Olmsted did not believe that such an oasis could be created on the arid Outside Lands, as this undeveloped portion of the city was known. Instead, he proposed a greenbelt (an Olmsted trademark used in several other U.S. cities) that would stretch through the city



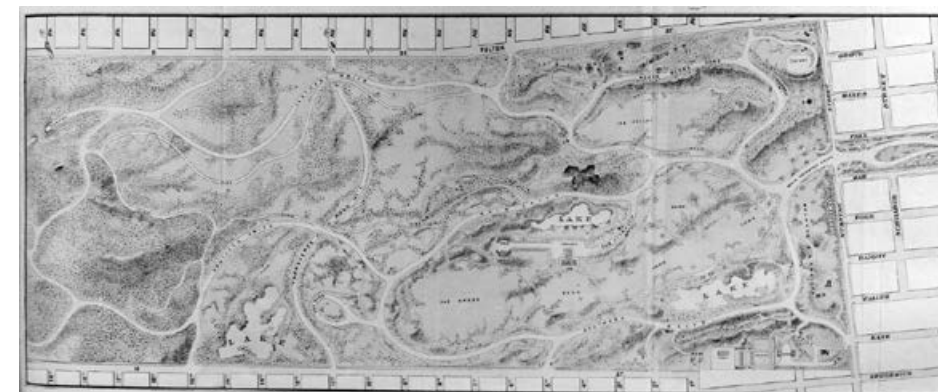
from Aquatic Park to the vicinity of Duboce Park. He chose sites—especially along Van Ness Avenue—that were sheltered, which he felt was intrinsic to the success of landscaping with native drought-tolerant materials, a visionary idea at that time. The long-range concept could be extended into a series of small parks over time. But the city rejected his proposal, despite it being intelligently tuned to California’s unique arid landscape. While appropriate to the region, the concept did not fit with the city’s vision of a green pastoral landscape like Olmsted and Vaux had created in New York City.

In the meantime, the city was still trying to sort out land claims within the San Francisco Peninsula and got assistance from the federal government who administrated the land. This land acquisition process made available a roughly 1000-acre tract for use as a city park. It was sited in what was ominously called the Outside Lands, a vast landscape of mostly sand dunes on the west side of the peninsula’s northern tip—a long way from downtown proper.

A major step occurred on April 4, 1870, when California Governor Henry H. Haight

signed into being Order 800, “an act to provide for the improvement of Public Parks in the City of San Francisco,” marking the commencement of the park’s creation. With this instrument signed, the boundaries of the 1,013-acre park were circumscribed, and a state-administered commission was created to oversee the park’s construction. The governor appointed a Park Commission board of three local men to oversee the park’s creation: Samuel F. Butterworth, David W. Connelly, and Charles F. MacDermott, with Andrew J. Moulder as secretary, the only compensated position. This board not to be confused with those who ran the city department known as the Department of Public Streets, Highways, and Squares, managed locally by the Board of Supervisors, whose Park Commission and superintendent oversaw the rest of the city’s few existing parks.

The Park Commission’s first task was to finance the venture by selling bonds. While many residents were on board with the concept of the park, there were detractors, too. The following statement, published by the *Sonoma Democrat* in 1873—often misquoted and elaborated upon—sums up some of the



Top: Bird’s eye view looking southwest over San Francisco in 1868 just before construction commenced on Golden Gate Park. The park would be built in the unoccupied area just beyond the hill surmounted by a cross, known as Lone Mountain. Source: Snow and Roos/Britton and Rey, Publisher; David Rumsey Historical Map Collection, #13234000, David Rumsey Map Center, Stanford University Library.

Left: Map of east end of park showing early proposed elements. Source: Second Biennial Report of the San Francisco Park Commissioners, 1872-73. San Francisco: B. F. Sterett, 1874.



Above: Looking northwest from H Street (now Lincoln Way) at the second nursery that was located in the park's southeast corner in a sheltered basin. Source: Western Neighborhoods Project, #wnp15.851.

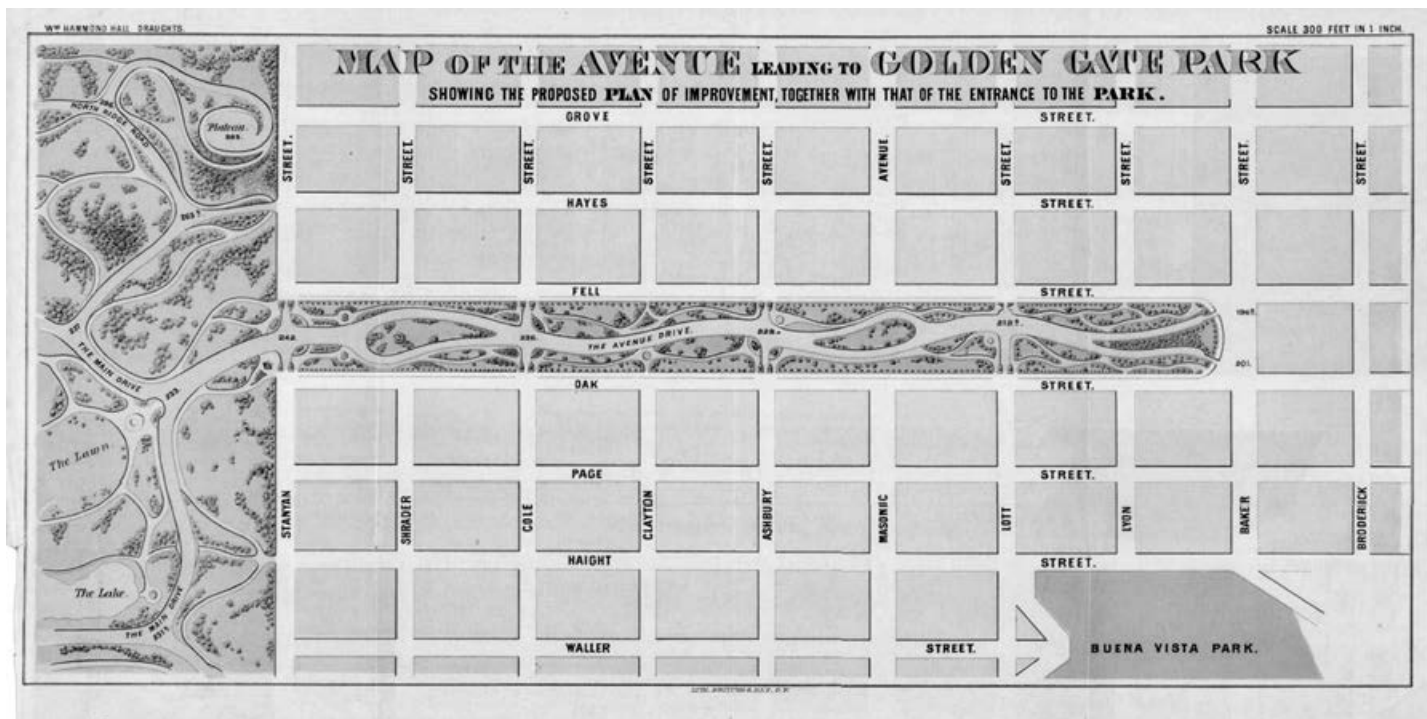
Below: Initial plan of the Panhandle by William Hammond Hall showing The Avenue Drive with its three islands. Source: First Biennial Report of the San Francisco Park Commissioners 1870-71. San Francisco: Francis and Valentine, 1872.

was awarded the project. The 24-year-old Hall completed the task, including a preliminary plan, in six months. Hall had prior knowledge of the terrain, which was an enormous help. Having proven his abilities, he was appointed superintendent on August 14, 1871, at a salary of \$250 a month.

Within the established framework, Hall provided a suggested plan. The tract's eastern third, nearer to downtown, was to be the most cultivated portion of the park's design, while the western portion that ended at the Pacific Ocean would be a wilder forested area. Hall's ideas were akin to those of his mentor, Olmsted: to work with the land's natural attributes and honor the "genius of the place." Hall stated in the *First Biennial Report of the San Francisco Park Commissioners*, published in 1871 that the work should be tailored "to fit a graceful curvature to the natural topography, in such manner, that the rules of tasteful landscape gardening be combined with the requisites of good engineering principles, that much of it might be sheltered from the prevailing northwest winds of summer, while yet taking advantage of the more prominent features from which to produce striking effects in the landscape." Some of the amenities would include lakes and informal undulating roadways following the diverse topography. (This is in contrast to much of hilly San Francisco, which was overlaid with a series of orthogonal street grids, regardless of the topography.) Hall's plan for the east end called for a lawn, flower garden with conservatory, baseball or cricket ground, botanical garden, croquet (and other such games), children's playgrounds,

detractors' sentiments: "Of all the elephants the city of San Francisco ever owned, they now have the heaviest in the shape of 'Golden Gate Park.' A dreary waste of shifting sand hills, where a blade of grass cannot be raised without four posts to support and keep it from blowing away."

The bad press did not deter the city from moving forward, and in August of 1870 bids for a minute survey of the future park were opened. William Hammond Hall, who was the lowest bidder in the amount of \$4,860,



Above: Two girls admire the exotic plants in the artificially warmed Conservatory of Flowers interior in this 1897 hand-colored stereoview. Source: Keystone View Company, collection of the author.

wooded ramble paths, and a carriage course. The area's focal point was to be an elevated terrace café overlooking a lake, a feature similar to Central Park's Bethesda Terrace.

Hall was keenly aware that such an effort needed infrastructure. His first thoughts were toward creating a nursery, an elemental part of the park's creation. Without it, the shifting sands could not be clothed in greenery at a reasonable cost. The park commission heeded the advice of surveyor Hall who suggested, even before he was hired, that a suitable supply of trees and shrubs be on hand by the time the grounds were ready to be planted. A greenhouse and hot bed were constructed in November 1870 in the area where today's McLaren Lodge stands.

Transformed or not, the arid, sandy environment of the park couldn't sustain these plants without a constant supply of fresh water. The *First Biennial Report of the San Francisco Park Commissioners*, published in 1871, stated that "an abundance of water is to be had throughout the eastern portion at a depth of 25 to 35 feet in the valleys." The commission report of 1872 noted that a steam pump was lifting water from a 50-foot-deep well and that water was stored in a 30,000-gallon tank at a point 150 feet above the park's east end; from this, an irrigation system branched to 40 hydrants. Despite the in-park availability, three years after the park's inception, 100,000 gallons of water a day was being purchased from the private monopoly of Spring Valley Water Company, supplying the park's lifeblood for its first seven years. The park commission

finally sought a more abundant water supply within the park. Two earnest attempts, the first in 1876 and another in 1885, were carried out to pump groundwater from within the park's boundaries, but each proved problematic due to the lack of sand filtering technology, which was eventually overcome. Later, a seemingly ridiculous solution was to drill wells near the salty Pacific Ocean—the first successful one in 1888 was a test. The Dutch Windmill started operation in 1902, and with its success, the Murphy Windmill followed soon after. (Much later it was discovered that the park sits on an underground formation, known as the Westside Groundwater Basin, which due to its unusual geologic formation, has freshwater storage close to the ocean.)

Using construction materials sourced at the site helped to keep costs down. An on-site quarry was established to provide road building base material in the form of chert, a common rock found on the San Francisco Peninsula. (That quarry was later turned into an ornamental lake now known as the Lily Pond.) Fertilizer was also sourced from within the site: after the park was created, its roads were traversed by horses or horse-powered vehicles, which naturally produced droppings that went to good use. The *San Francisco Chronicle* newspaper euphemistically called these "street sweepings" and plentiful additional supplies were transported from downtown to fertilize the park's growing landscape.

With the nursery established in 1870, thousands of trees were reared in the first year, including eucalyptus, acacia, pine, and



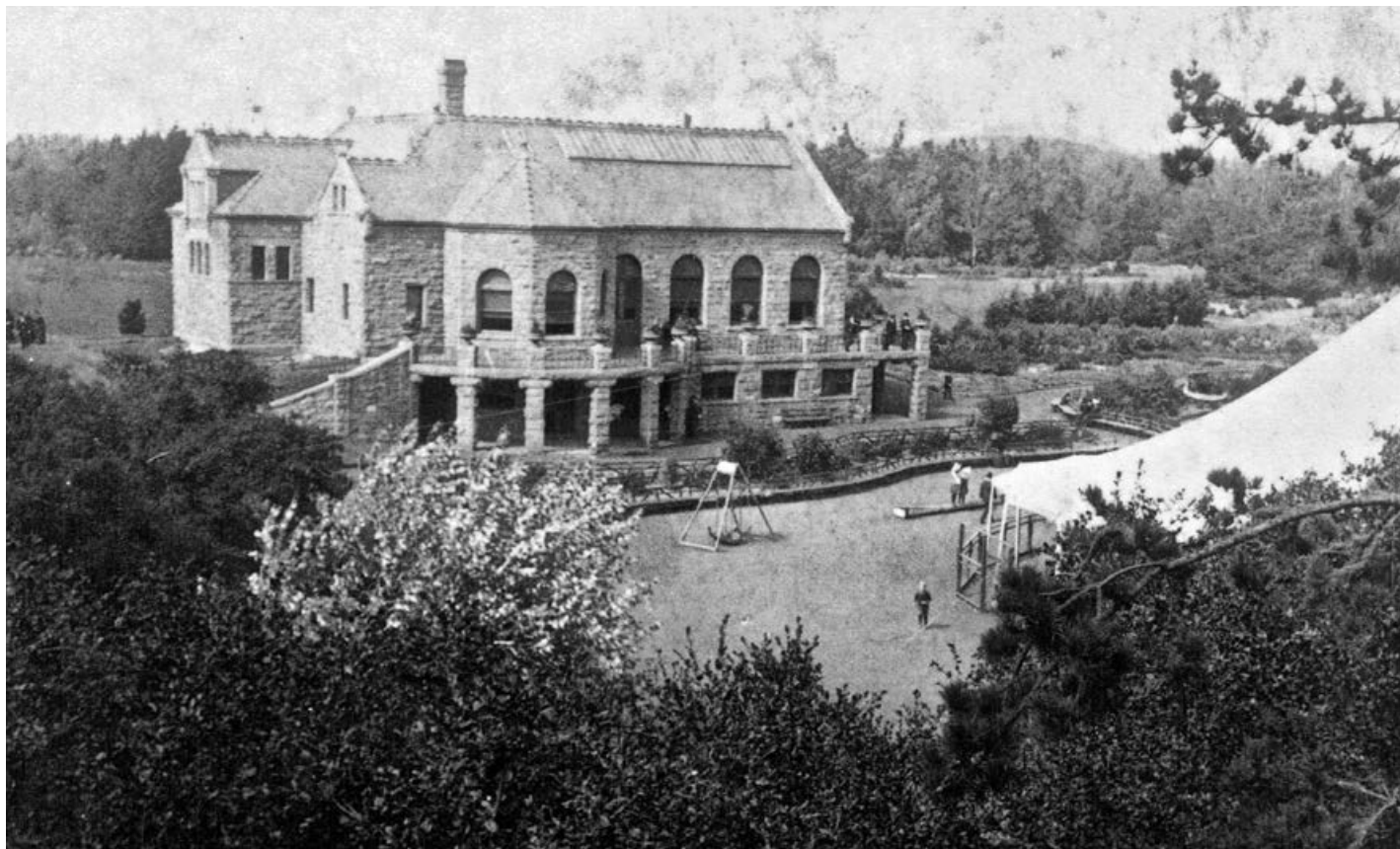
cypress. Others that would take time to mature included sequoia, redwood, Port Orford cedar, and pittosporum. That same month Patrick Owens was appointed as Keeper of the Grounds and Park. Owens oversaw the operation and was authorized another duty: to arrest anyone trespassing on the property. In 1873 the nursery operation was moved to the park's southeast corner, which was a more suitable growing environment, consisting of a recessed basin that was sheltered from incessant winds. (That same topographic characteristic would lead this site to be chosen for Kezar Stadium years later, causing the nursery to be moved to its current location.)

Although generally described as barren, the Outside Lands had a few areas of mostly native vegetation, which would be retained and encouraged. In the east end, some growths of live oak and ceanothus were recorded by Hall. Strawberry Hill sported its namesake groundcover and also had had scrub oak. Other shrubs found were California cherry and a few red-berried elder. At the park's west end was a series of natural seep ponds surrounded by lupin, grasses, iris, and tule.

The development of sand into a growing medium for plants, shrubs, and trees sounds like alchemy. In fact, the known scientific approach of plant succession was used to convert the sand dunes into an arable landscape. Initially, the shifting sands are anchored with fast-growing plants. Over time a sequence

of larger plants with deeper roots is utilized. Yellow broom was Hall's choice for the beginning of the process, but it would not take. He then experimented with using barley as the first layer, as it was fast-growing. Serendipity played a part in this Plan B; while he was surveying the Outside Lands' dunes on horseback with colleagues, some horse's feed spilled onto the sand. Upon finding sprouted seedlings soon after, he determined that barley would be the answer to this problem.

The park's earliest landscaping took place in the flatter Panhandle. Its eight-block length by one-block width was the product of shrewd bargaining by the land's owners. The earliest plans for the park's layout were that of a simple rectangle. However, the land closest to downtown was considered too valuable not to build on. The rectangle was thinned on its east end for several blocks to create the Panhandle, while a nearby peak and another site next to the Presidio became an acreage tradeoff in the form of Buena Vista Park and Mountain Lake, which were developed as part of Order 800. An indelible mark was left by the Outside Lands committee, who selected the location of the park. The committee members are commemorated as adjacent street names: C. H. Stanyan, A. J. Shrader, R. Beverly Cole, Charles Clayton, and Monroe Ashbury. These streets intersect both sides but do not cross the Panhandle as an uninterrupted group west of Masonic Avenue.



The Panhandle became the welcome mat to the park. In 1870, work began on the 270 acres located at the tract's eastern end, including the Panhandle. A \$15,000 contract to fill swales and level the site to street grade was awarded to contractor B. Kenny by the Park Commission in May 1871. Drainage was an immediate infrastructure need as the Panhandle was at the bottom of a slope on its south side; dealing with this unseen element became crucial to the park's success. Running the Panhandle's length was The Avenue Drive, a roadway that undulated within the narrow length, highlighted by three interspersed islands.

In the 1873 annual report to the park commission, Hall deftly noted, "These enterprises are found to pay—to yield to the city a direct moneyed return on her investment." B. E. Lloyd's *Lights and Shades in San Francisco* notes that just four years after opening, the park, "traversed by promenades, bridle paths and drives, invites the pedestrian, equestrian, or driver to follow their mazy windings into the labyrinths of hedges and borders." Some 15,000 people visited the park that year. By 1876, development of the park's landscape reached Conservatory Valley to the west. With the park's success, the surrounding real estate now became a valuable commodity.

Hall resigned as superintendent on April 30, 1876, when his salary was cut in half as part of a larger effort to slash the park's overall budget due to a spurious investigation. But not giving up on the park, Hall continued to consult on behalf of Golden Gate Park pro

bono, and regained an official title when a new governor, George Stoneman, appointed him consulting engineer to Golden Gate Park in 1886, keeping the position until 1889. In the intervening time, three superintendents passed through the poorly funded park's coffers. Hall used his time to search for and find just the right person to carry on as superintendent. He recommended, and the Park Commission hired, gardener John McLaren, who worked on Peninsula estates of important captains of industry. As assistant superintendent, McLaren was initially assigned the job of landscaping the Sharon Children's Quarters, designed by Hall. With some time under his belt, McLaren was then designated as superintendent in 1889—Hall's work directly with the park was completed.

With some grading and landscape improvements complete, attention could be turned to park amenities. The Conservatory of Flowers, the park's first public building, was opened without ceremony in 1878. The prefabricated wood framework (not iron as was usual in the day) and glass greenhouse was originally made for native son James Lick's San Jose estate. With Lick's death, the still-crated greenhouse was purchased by a group of 27 public-spirited and influential men who, in turn, gifted it to the Park Commission.

Due to lack of funding, for ten years the park's development languished, but in 1888 several structures were dedicated near the Conservatory. On July 4th a grand celebration marked the opening of the Second Music Stand, a shell-shaped structure set into a

Opposite, Top: Detail from family portrait of William Hammond Hall in 1870, the year he was hired to survey the Golden Gate Park tract in the Outside Lands. Source: Bancroft Library, University of California at Berkeley, #BANC PIC 1986.009-PIC.

Opposite, Bottom: View looking north at the Sharon Quarters for Children pre-1892 with its earliest rudimentary carousel under a tent structure located at right. In the distance on the extreme left is the Francis Scott Key Monument. Source: A.J. McDonald stereoview, collection of the author.

Above: The park's first aviary had a cross-shape plan and was exclusively for the display of pheasants. With its success, a gigantic freeform plan version for all kinds of birds was constructed nearby just two years later. Source: Nineteenth Annual Report of the Board of Park Commissioners of San Francisco, for the year ending June 30, 1890. Sacramento: State Office, J.D. Young, Supt. State Printing, 1890.



Above: Bird's eye view lithograph looking west from the east end of Golden Gate Park in 1892. This invaluable detailed resource shows all of the elements constructed up to that time. Source: A. M. Freeman & Co., 1892 [with overprint], collection of the Helen Crocker Russell Library, San Francisco Botanical Garden at Strybing Arboretum.

stepped basin with decorative landscaping and stairways. Part of the site included the monumental bronze and white travertine Francis Scott Key Memorial, a gift from the James Lick Estate. Also dedicated at the end of 1888 was the nearby Sharon Quarters for Children, which included a playground and a picturesque Richardson Romanesque building for indoor activities, which was a gift from the estate of tycoon William Sharon. Soon after, a simple tent-covered carousel was added to the playground. The playground is thought to be the earliest public playground in the U.S.

By the late 1880s, several streetcar lines started to make the park accessible to all who could afford the fare, boosting its popularity. Railroad tycoon Leland Stanford began conversion of the Market Street Railroad to cable in 1883, increasing the speed and distance of mass transit. The McAllister and Haight Street

cable-driven lines brought people to the eastern end of the park for recreation, which in turn made the area a fashionable and sought-after residential district. "Cable, electric and steam-cars reach the park from all parts of the city," noted an 1892 writer. Nine streetcar lines terminated at the park by 1900, providing ample transportation.

In 1892 the first animal exhibits were opened. Several American bison, recognized to be going extinct, were brought to the park and an aviary was constructed for pheasants. This would be the beginning of what would be a series of casual zoo exhibits spread throughout the park. (It grew in breadth until the Fleishhacker Zoo was formed elsewhere in 1929.)

The next year a pivotal event happened, whose legacy endures. The owner of the *San Francisco Chronicle*, Michael de Young, led

the charge to bring the California Midwinter International Exposition (and its consequent traffic) to San Francisco. The centerpiece of the exposition's 200-acre site, a grand formal racetrack-shaped recessed basin, forever changed the park's layout. Known today as the Music Concourse, it became home to cultural institutions, including the Memorial Museum (1896), California Academy of Sciences (1916), and the Spreckels Temple of Music (1900). This area would also become ground zero for much bronze and stone statuary, such as the U.S. Grant Memorial (1896), and the monumental Goethe and Schiller statue (1901).

The tranquil west end of the park, farthest away from the city proper, was beginning to take shape by the end of the 19th century. In 1878 the U.S. Government leased the park's northwest corner for a life-saving station in the shipwreck prone area of the Golden Gate. This set the stage for other elements to be constructed, including a racing track known as the Speed Road (1890), and in the same year, the first Beach Chalet building was built right on Ocean Beach to serve beachgoers. The triple Chain of Lakes (1899) was developed into a landscaped paradise that spread almost the width of the park. Soon after, the first of two windmills, the Dutch Windmill, pumped water for the park's irrigation from freshwater wells located next to the ocean.

A significant change occurred when the administration of the park became part of a broader City Charter Reform in 1899. The Park Commission was now a City-administered body, no longer controlled by the state. One of the new commission's projects was to issue their Rules and Regulations Governing Automobiles in Golden Gate Park. It allowed autos to enter the park only on the east at Waller Street and travel west along South Drive to the Great Highway. This unique privilege was only granted to those who had applied for a driving permit (the forerunner to today's driver's license) and had passed a vehicle inspection, which required a minimum of equipment (today's vehicle registration).

According to Superintendent Hall, a park should not be a catch-all for almost anything which misguided people may wish upon it. Hall considered the park to be a place to enjoy nature without the trappings of the city, a place that did not include a lot of structures, particularly ones that did not contribute to the true park experience. Yet in the 1873 annual report to park commission about the state of the park, Hall noted, "Some classes of park scenery are fitting settings for works of art, such as statues, monuments, and architectural decoration."

From the park's earliest days, the public directly influenced what "furnishings" the

park would contain. All of the many statues in the park, maybe unwanted by its designer, were funded by either individuals or groups. Although unwelcome, the public usually got its way; few proposals were turned down. The earliest statue was to slain President James A. Garfield; its cornerstone was laid in 1884. Funding was by general subscription through the efforts of the Garfield Monument Association, whose membership of 22 men were Masons. Well-heeled individuals funded buildings to their own memory while they were living or they might leave a bequest to the park with specific direction as to its use. The largesse of Michael H. De Young, publisher of the *Chronicle*, probably tops all other donations collectively. After bringing the 1894 California Midwinter International Exhibition to the park, De Young made it possible for the fair's Fine Arts Building to be retained as an art museum. He donated collections for the building, including an annex and curator's cottage, to open in 1896 as the Memorial Museum. With that facility outgrown, he then funded a new building, which was opened in 1921 as the M. H. de Young Memorial Museum. Through the years dozens of statues were placed, buildings constructed, and gates built at important park entries.

As the 19th century gave way to the 20th, the Golden Gate Park was well established. Programmed primarily for passive recreation in its earliest stages, as the 20th century progressed, facilities for more active recreation have proliferated, and over time, changing social movements would exert their force. No one of the 19th century could have imagined today's skateboard park or disk golf course nestled within its acreage. Even harder to imagine is, under all the park's thin veneer of greenery, lies only sand.

Christopher Pollock

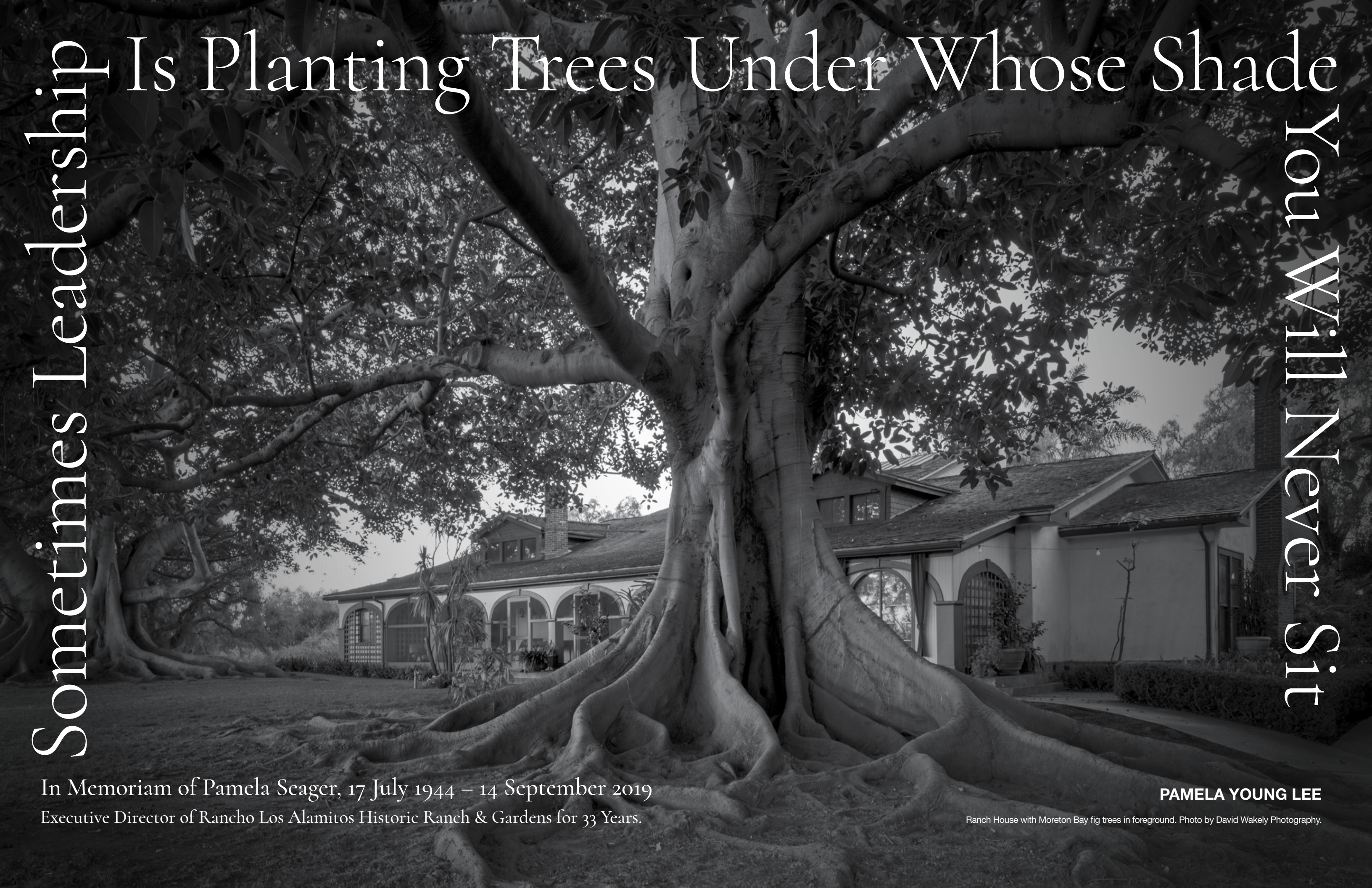
In 2016 Chris was tapped by the San Francisco Recreation and Park Department to be their first Historian-in-Residence for all of the city's parks. With this, Chris brings a layer of history to the department. His initial project was to research and record the history of the department's some 230 holdings.

With the 150th anniversary of Golden Gate Park in 2020, he will launch the latest version of his book, first published in 2001, *San Francisco's Golden Gate Park: A Thousand and Seventeen Acres of Stories*. The publication by Norfolk Press is a hybrid of a history and tour guide of the park's many features. This was preceded by another book, *Reel San Francisco Stories: An Annotated Filmography of the Bay Area*, published in 2013, which is about some 650 movies filmed in the Bay Area since the beginning of talkies.

Chris started his career as a designer specializing in interior architecture. With this experience, he changed gears to focus on historic preservation, specializing in historic research. A native of Connecticut, Chris has resided in San Francisco since 1979.

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Sometimes Leadership
Is Planting Trees Under Whose Shade
You Will Never Sit

In Memoriam of Pamela Seager, 17 July 1944 – 14 September 2019
Executive Director of Rancho Los Alamitos Historic Ranch & Gardens for 33 Years.

PAMELA YOUNG LEE

Ranch House with Moreton Bay fig trees in foreground. Photo by David Wakely Photography.

Many *Eden* readers will have known Pamela Seager personally and professionally. For those who did not have that privilege, perhaps this article will be an introduction to this forward-thinking, inspiring, and yet unassuming leader in the field of cultural landscape preservation. Sadly, we lost our colleague and friend on September 14th, 2019. Pamela's career in the preservation and interpretation of California's built environment spanned more than four decades and touched many lives. Pamela was a nationally respected pioneer in the preservation of landscapes and gardens. When she took on the role of Executive Director at Rancho Los Alamitos Historic Ranch & Gardens in the mid-1980s, there was little practical scholarship on the restoration and preservation of gardens. Undaunted, Pamela thoughtfully and methodically persevered.

At Rancho Los Alamitos, Pamela was responsible for a 7½-acre historic site with eight original buildings and four acres of nationally significant historic gardens. The Rancho's gardens had their beginnings in the mid-1800s when Abel Stearns and his wife Arcadia Bandini occupied the adobe ranch house and began cultivating a modest hand-watered patch on the north side of the house, which included a California pepper tree (*Schinus molle*). In the last decades of the 19th century, subsequent owner Susan Hathaway Bixby expanded these gardens, fencing them off from marauding livestock. She planted even more pepper trees, as well as palms, roses, flowering vines, and a pair of Moreton Bay fig trees (*Ficus macrophylla*). But it was Susan's daughter-in-law, Florence Green Bixby, who created the gardens seen at the Rancho today and who became Pamela Seager's inspiration.

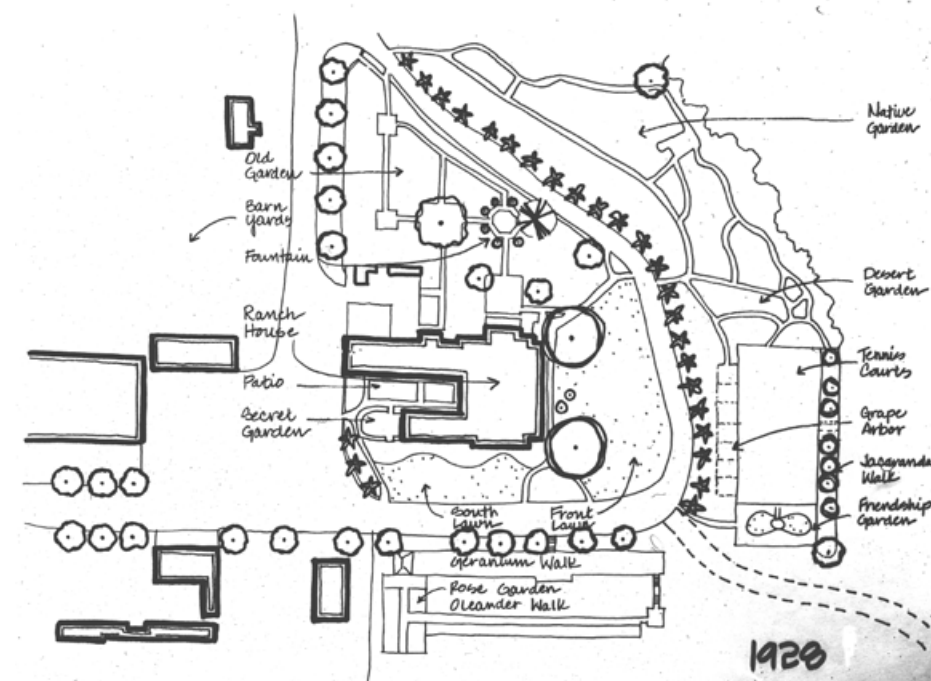
In the early decades of the 20th century, Florence Bixby reworked the Rancho's gardens beginning with those abutting the ranch house and enclosed by a circular drive. As the family became more prosperous, largely due to oil strikes on ranch land, Florence expanded the Rancho's gardens beyond the circular drive with the aid of some of the horticultural world's luminaries, including the Olmsted Brothers, William Hertrich, Florence Yoch & Lucille Council, Paul J. Howard, and Allen Chickering. Bixby and her designers created a series of garden rooms, each distinctive and more beautiful than the last, which drew the

visitor from one entrancing vista to the next. This horticultural legacy was gifted to the City of Long Beach by the Bixbys, along with the rest of the site, in 1968.

When Pamela arrived at Rancho Los Alamitos in the middle of winter 1986, she carefully took stock of what she would oversee. Before touching a thing in the gardens, Pamela spent countless hours combing through the photographs, oral histories, plot plans, and other historical documents in the site's archives. She sought out and interviewed ranch workers, family members, relatives of landscape designers, anyone who could inform her about the gardens and their development. Pamela's approach to garden restoration was careful,

methodical, conservative, patient, and creative. She created an award-winning Master Plan, one of the components being a Garden Plan. (Other volumes detailed an Architectural Plan, the Interpretive Plan, and the overall Master Plan Project.) After an exhaustive selection process, Pamela chose David S. Streatfield of the University of Washington and Russell A. Beatty of UC Berkeley as consultants to collaborate on the Garden Plan and to guide and inform the gardens' restoration.

Russ Beatty credits Pamela with helping him "launch a new professional direction in landscape and garden preservation. Her insistence on detail and accuracy in the discovery of the evolution of the gardens established the



Top Right: Ranch House with Moreton Bay fig trees. Photo by David Wakely Photography.

Bottom Right: Evolution of the gardens, 1928, from the Garden Plan of the 1987 RLA Master Plan.

Opposite page: Pamela Seager, Secret Garden, 2011. Photo by Cristina Klenz.



standards of excellence in garden preservation. At the Rancho, she helped us dispel some early preconceptions as we worked through a few false assumptions about the original design.... The resulting condition of the gardens and site is a testimony to her steadfast leadership."¹

David S. Streatfield, who wrote the definitive history of the Rancho's gardens for the Landscape Plan, recognized Pamela's commitment to authenticity and research. He recently wrote, "Rancho Los Alamitos is one of the most beautifully conserved historic sites in California. In an exemplary fashion, it displays sensitive site interpretation and management based on careful historical research. By any standard, this is a remarkable achievement that is a testament to Pamela Seager's long and passionate commitment to and understanding of this place."²

Restoring and preserving a landscape has challenges beyond those of preserving a historic building. Gardens are living things that by their very nature are ever-changing: plants mature and die, light levels change as trees and shrubs grow, microclimates shift, precipitation levels and water sources rise and fall. Pamela found herself becoming an expert on plant materials available in Southern California in the early decades of the 20th century, as well as familiarizing herself with the historic designers' intent in terms of color, texture, and proportion – even scent and movement. If shade patterns changed over the last 70 years and the original planting material could no

longer be sustained in a given location, what plant material available in 1928 could provide the same color and texture as the no longer viable plant? If a tree succumbed to *Armillaria* or fire blight, what resistant tree giving the same effect could be planted in its place?

Like the gardens she cared for and preserved, one of Pamela's strengths and virtues was patience. She never gave up. She was relentless in finding solutions that aligned with her vision. Pamela was particularly protective of the site's historic trees: the century-old Moreton Bay fig trees, the California peppers, coast live oaks, valley oaks, and a particularly stunning Italian stone pine. She even had the site's heritage trees individually insured. In 2007 she had the Moreton Bay fig trees registered on the Cultural Landscape Foundation's list of historically significant trees. Pamela sought out and surrounded herself with expert arborists, horticulturalists, and botanists. Like a protective and proactive family member, if Pamela received a disappointing prognosis on a tree's viability, she sought out 2nd and 3rd opinions. She never took recommendations on the removal of a tree at face value. She relentlessly pursued options that would sustain the site's trees, testing soil nutrients, moisture levels, and pathogens and vectors. And in most cases, her perseverance paid off.

Pamela's dedication to the site's historic trees was dramatically demonstrated during the restoration of the Rancho's barnyard, which entailed the onsite relocation of six original

outbuildings, including three barns, a working blacksmith shop, and an eighty-foot-long feed shed. Historical California pepper trees were scattered throughout the barnyard. Moving buildings is extremely difficult. Moving historic buildings without damaging plants and trees is almost impossible. As each of the Rancho's barnyard buildings was relocated, Pamela had an arborist and tree trimmers on hand to ensure that no branch or root was damaged. Moreover, as workers excavated the new foundations, Pamela insisted that any digging near a tree be done by hand to avoid damage to the root systems. When roots *were* unearthed, they were carefully wrapped in burlap and kept damp twenty-four hours a day.

The Rancho's horse barn proved extraordinarily challenging. A venerable pepper tree located very close to the structure had roots extending far beneath the building. Pamela was told she needed to remove the tree to complete the renovation. Instead, she worked with the engineers to redesign the building's foundation and basement, and in doing so, was able to keep the tree in place. Pamela was always fiscally responsible, but she never let the bottom line be the determining factor in her preservation strategies for the site. Ultimately, Pamela decided what she believed was right for the site and then strategized how to make it a reality.

Pamela's philosophy for the presentation and interpretation of the Rancho's gardens was that visitors should experience them in

the same way that Florence Bixby's family and guests experienced them in the early decades of the 20th century. Pamela insisted that they were not botanical gardens, but very personal and unpretentious historical gardens providing a quiet refuge for guests and reflecting a Southern California lifestyle and aesthetic. Pamela spent her first years at the Rancho removing hundreds of small plastic signs scattered throughout the gardens identifying each plant and tree by its botanical name. There are no directional signs, tributes, or memorial plaques in the gardens. Signage would not have been used in the gardens when the family lived on the Rancho. Pamela's vision for the interpretation of the Rancho's gardens to the public relied heavily on knowledgeable, engaging docents, as well as informative and richly illustrated brochures, and it still does today.

The interpretation Pamela insisted on required excellent training, and she shared her extensive knowledge with the Rancho's volunteer docents and staff. Pamela also generously shared her knowledge and experience in garden restoration with the broader preservation community. She was a presenter in the area of historic sites and cultural landscapes for the National Trust for Historic Preservation, the National Park Service, and the American Alliance of Museums. Pamela invested in the future as a regular lecturer for the preservation and landscaping classes at the University of Southern California and Cal Poly Pomona. She regularly took on interns anxious to learn more about the emerging field.

Pamela's devotion to landscape preservation and her work at the Rancho broadened our understanding of the possibilities in the field. It launched careers and changed lives. Christine O'Hara, one of the foremost authorities on the Olmsted brothers and professor in the Landscape Architecture Department at California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo, began her career as an intern at the Rancho working under Pamela's direction. Janet Brown Becker, a landscape architectural professional who graduated from UC Berkeley, was one of Pamela's early hires who decided to change her career direction from landscape design to preservation. According to Becker, "Pamela trail-blazed a totally new era of historic landscape architectural work.... Under Pamela's leadership, the restoration team was able to make steady progress towards one of the first, and most authentic, garden restoration projects in California."

Pamela was generous with her experience, knowledge, and abilities. And while the Rancho's gardens were her passion, she worked tirelessly for other organizations as well, including the Governor's California Heritage Task Force, the California Preservation



Top: Pamela Seager with contractors in Barnyard, 2011. Photo by Cristina Klenz.
Middle: At the 2009 opening of the Native Garden, Pamela Seager and Bart O'Brien, director of horticulture at the Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden.
Bottom: Contractors hand-excavating tree roots in barnyard, 2010. Photo by Cristina Klenz.



Top: Oleander Walk with Grape Myrtle tree replacements, 2010. Photo by Christina Klenz.
Middle: Cactus Garden. Photo by Cristina Klenz.
Bottom: School tour in the Native Garden, 2009. Photo by Cristina Klenz.

Foundation, the California Historical Society, and Long Beach Heritage. Although she was quiet and unassuming, her contributions to the broader preservation and cultural communities did not go unrecognized. She received numerous awards and honors, not least of which was the Outstanding Contributor to the Preservation of Historic Landscapes from the American Society of Landscape Architects.

Pamela often characterized Rancho Los Alamitos as an island in a sea of change—a place to actively experience connections with the past, to understand the present, and to imagine the future. She also valued its serenity as a place to reflect and renew. It became Pamela's life's work to ensure that the opportunities and riches offered by the Rancho, and its incomparable gardens, were available to all. Through careful planning, hard work, creative strategies, relationship building, and often sheer stubborn determination, Pamela succeeded beyond her wildest dreams. Pamela was a visionary who understood the value—and accepted the risk—of investing in the future.

The award-winning master plan Pamela and her team created for the Rancho was all but complete at the time of her passing. She oversaw and implemented 166 of the plan's 167 recommendations over her 33-year career at the Rancho. The only recommendation remaining to be carried out is the restoration of the site's first garden, appropriately named the Old Garden. It is one of the oldest continuously tended residential gardens in California, and the Rancho is currently raising funds for its restoration in Pamela's memory.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Pamela Young Lee was one of Pamela Seager's first hires at Rancho Los Alamitos back in early 1986. Lee was hired as the Rancho Los Alamitos Foundation's first curator. Before working at the Rancho, Lee graduated with a Masters in American history and museum studies from UC Riverside and was the curator at the historic Mission Inn. After working with Pamela Seager at Rancho Los Alamitos for nearly a decade, Lee left to work for Walt Disney Imagineering as a director in their Creative Resources division, and later as the Chief Curator of the California Historical Society. After leaving the Historical Society, Lee returned to Southern California and was re-hired by Pamela Seager, who promoted her to the position of the Rancho's associate director. Lee became executive director of the RLA Foundation after Pamela Seager's retirement. Lee had the privilege of working with Pamela Seager on and off for 22 years, and but more significantly, enjoyed Pamela Seager's friendship and thoughtful counsel for 34 years.

2019 CGLHS Conference Recap

La Purisima And Lompoc

THEA GURNS

Conference attendees at the Bell Tower of La Purisima.
Photo by Steven Keylon.



California Garden and Landscape History Society was fortunate in the weather for our 2019 Conference in Lompoc and at the La Purisima Mission.

The golden glint, was that the retreating light of sunny summer? Or perhaps the tawny hue of oncoming autumn? On the approach from the south, oaks swarmed the hills, and I assume the scene was mirrored coming in from the north.

Conference settings varied: old mission, contemporary hotel, vintage town, and classic California surf beach.

Friday saw our first Great Meet-Up in the conference hotel lobby with faces known, faces still to meet, and a sense of reunion. I recognized my favorite National Parks Service lady from Charlotte, charter members, former board members, current movers and shakers, in a healthy mix of genders and ages. I listened to greetings right and left and comments on the beautiful drive into Lompoc. Conference packets were handed out and carpool groups formed for a short trek east to the mission.

La Purisima Mission, restored by the Civilian Conservation Corps in the thirties, is a place simple and pure. Huge oaks and sycamores tower amidst outlines and reminders of the built environment once here. Our visit came at the right time of year to see the location, with a low slant of sun in the sky lending an amber quality which emphasized antiquity. A tour with docents of mission buildings gave a sense of interior use both of larger communal spaces and those smaller and more intimate.

Afterward, we sat at tables under spreading tree canopies, the space centered by a large round basin with plashing fountain as the simple, graceful centerpiece. Land and setting together gave a sense of place and flowing time both of past and current seasons.

Words of welcome delivered by conference convener Judy Horton and President Christy

O'Hara gave us the design of our evening. A volunteer dressed in friar's robes also gave welcome and introduced his companion volunteers dressed as novices.

The docent group, trained in keeping the mission's story alive, prepared and served a light dinner of cheese, crackers, salad, raw fruit and vegetables. Star of the meal was *posole*, a broth of pork pieces and hominy with dry hot salsa, chopped onions, radish bits for crunch, and cilantro to add to taste. All was delicious and traditional to the mission period; local wines, red and white, along with beer and water also were on offer.

Carrying instruments, five students from Cal Poly San Luis Obispo arrived. After setting up, they played three of-the-era musical movements ending in a fandango. The leader read a short description of an actual three-day fandango celebration from Richard Henry Dana's travel account *Three Years Before the Mast*.

Into the early evening dusk, we started back to our hotels with cookies and CDs on the mission's history plucked from baskets offered by volunteers.



The Friday evening reception was held under the historic olive trees.
Photo by Steven Keylon.





Top and bottom left: A festive and delicious dinner at Sallie's Restaurant.
Bottom right: Michael Hardwick talks about the history of La Purisima. Photos by Steven Keylon.

Saturday our venue was Stone Pine Hall. Those who prepped for the day by reviewing the Fall 2019 *Eden* journal gave themselves an excellent head start. Judy Horton gave us a morning welcome and covered conference logistics along with a lesson in the proper pronunciation of "Lompoke." Christie O'Hara led a short CGLHS Member Meeting, followed by Lompoc Museum Director Dr. Lisa Renken's overview of the local community and an invitation to tour the museum.

Brian Tichenor — Part 1, "At the Cusp: The Collision of Pre- and Post-Columbian Landscapes in Southern California." My new intellectual crush, a well-read analyst and synthesizer. Turns out Southern California was not untouched pristine native land before Franciscans appeared. Soil core samples taken at San Diego showed thirteen non-native materials already present before missionary sandals trod Alta California. For me, this was

the revelation of the conference. We're not so pure as I previously thought.

Nancy Carol Carter — "Inventing Regional Romance: Two California Myth-Makers." Helen Hunt Jackson wrote a novel exposing the unjust treatment of California Native Americans and ended up with a best-selling romance, luring tourists eager to visit various adobes all claiming to be the true "Ramona's Marriage Place." Maverick and adventurer Charles Lummi walked from Cincinnati to Los Angeles, hand-built his house from local stone, wrote for and edited the *L.A. Times*, collected native artifacts and promoted the preservation of California missions. He fiercely advocated for the rights of Native Americans. Carter, historical researcher and experienced lecturer, wove facts into engaging stories and insightful profiles which reinforced her theme of a shaped narrative exploiting the history of the rancho era.

Kristina W. Foss — "Heritage Plants in the Cultural Landscape." A fun speaker with academic backbone has taken what she has learned in archives of mission-era landscapes and gardens and had applied her research in a hands-on approach. No hydrangea need apply!

We enjoyed an ample box lunch under a sweep of trees in the side yard of Stone Pine Hall. Most of us made time for a pass through the adjacent museum.

Robin Karson, founder and director of the Library of American Landscape History, developer of books about American landscape history since 1992 honored us by journeying from Massachusetts. She generously made available copies of *View*, the Library's annual journal. Her book on country house landscapes, *Genius for Place*, has a central spot in my home library. Karson came to share the news that in the future the Library intends to shine a bright focus on California landscapes and history.

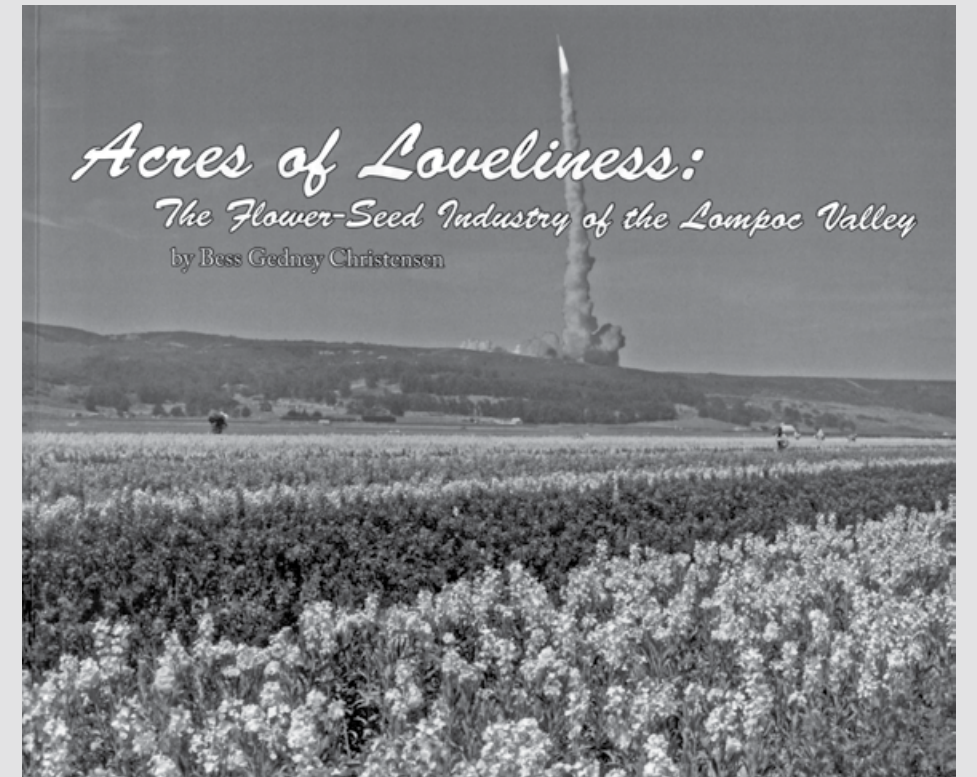
BOOK REVIEW

Acres of Loveliness: The Flower-Seed Industry of the Lompoc Valley, by Bess Gedney Christensen

Book review by Susan Schenk

One of my clearest childhood memories is of sitting on the front lawn under our jacaranda tree, absolutely riveted by the latest Burpee catalog—not usual for an eight-year-old, I admit, but it partly explains my excitement about the October CGLHS conference in Lompoc, a major home of seed-producing flower fields. Alas, my hopes of seeing huge swathes of rainbow-colored blossoms were dashed as the seed industry has left. We did have an interesting talk about it tho, and I've consoled myself in part by reading Bess Christensen's short but fascinating book about its history.

It all started around 1907 with sweet peas, which revel in the local soil and weather conditions, and expanded to include hundreds of flower and vegetable varieties. Burpee, Ferry-Morse, Bodger, Denholm, and other major seed companies all had operations in the valley, but the industry began to decline by the 1980s. This book uses oral histories, written records, and lots



of period photos to follow the changes that occurred and, along the way, it entertains with items such as the attempt to get marigolds named as the national flower, and a description of the 12 acre patriotic "floral flag" created in 1942.

The seed fields are now mostly gone but plant breeding and research still take place in greenhouses, and some land is planted for cut flowers. This book is an easy and entertaining read, so if you are in Lompoc, I recommend you stop by the museum and pick up a copy.

Brian Tichenor completed his presentation with "At the Cusp ..." in the same high caliber as his earlier talk.

David Lemon, retired veteran researcher and floral industry leader, served as our on-the-ground expert in the goings-on in greenhouse and field when it counted. He shared memories of Lompoc's once innovative, now vanished flower seed commerce. Accompanying photos told the story, their faded timeworn quality lending a nostalgic air of an era passed.

Before we were released to stroll the town, Lompoc Mayor Janelle Osborne bounced in to deliver a high energy, up-to-the-minute city report.

Our gala dinner was at Sallie's, a resto boasting affable hosts and staff, local wines, and scrumptious food. My walnut-crust chicken was delectable.

Sunday our band collected around La Purisima's central fountain for a final time,

then trooped off to fill *La Sala*, the living room of the residence building. Here Michael Hardwick shared a retro view of a topic I remembered from fourth grade—"Mission Horticulture: Orchard, Garden, Vineyard, Plant Introduction and Water Systems then moved on to an account of "Building a Mission Archive at La Purisima."

Before our grand dispersal, now filled with new awareness and insight, those interested toured the gardens described by Susan Chamberlin in her *Eden* article. Docents handled questions of our specialist group well. Our outing ended in heaps of farewell hugs.

But hold! A caravan hit curving roads through oak-strewn hills and dales, and, with a final (careful) downward swoop, arrived at Jamala Beach. Here on a sublime sunny day we learned a final lesson before feasting: a veteran surfer armed with cleaning spray able to rid the cement table of gull residue brings worth to the banquet.

At our now-hygienic table during what should become a traditional after-conference jaunt—somewhere for a cheeseburger—talk fell naturally into conference evaluation. Opinions emerged.

My view is that conference organization was superior—no doubt there are backstories—and the program excellent. As has become the CGLHS norm, speakers were great in varied ways. The weekend gave attendees, I feel, a sampling of life at a remote mission property and of Lompoc in flourishing years. The smart attendee will pay attention to the admirable bibliography attached to the schedule. Finally, I applaud the choice of hotel with spiffy breakfasts and helpful staff.

Word is CGLHS has slated our next conference for Los Angeles and its changeable, changing river. See you in 2020 for a Great Meet-Up down by the riverside!



Conference attendees saying goodbye under the old Mission olive trees. Photo by Steven Keyton.

Cape Cod National Seashore and Point Reyes National Seashore: Two seashores, two coasts, two books new and old, to explore this winter.

The Cape Cod National Seashore on the Atlantic coast, and the Point Reyes National Seashore on the Pacific, share distant and recent histories including both coastlines recently preserved.

Both the Cape Cod and the Point Reyes National Seashores were created by Congress and signed into law by President John F. Kennedy in the early 1960s, at a time when seashores were emerging as larger landscape “units” within the U.S. National Park Service. Only 10 National Seashores exist today – just the one in Massachusetts and just one in California – amid the greater network of more than 400 National Parks, Monuments and Lakeshores, throughout the United States and on its coastlines. The two seashore books included in this review cover both the Massachusetts and California iconic landscapes. While each is valuable on its own, together the two books give a broader view of the early national seashore preservation movement in America.

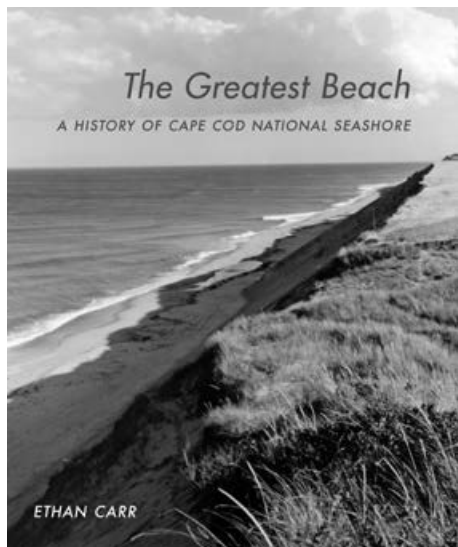
Book Review

JOAN HOCKADAY

The Greatest Beach: A History of Cape Cod National Seashore

by Ethan Carr

(Library of American Landscape History, University of Georgia Press 2019)



Ethan Carr’s *The Greatest Beach: A History of Cape Cod National Seashore* (Library of American Landscape History, 2019) describes the landscape, cultural, and political preservation efforts that led to the creation of the Cape Cod National Seashore on August 7, 1961. Professor Carr is on the Landscape Architecture faculty at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. He is a well-known scholar on the history of the National Park Service. His latest book is handsome, hefty, and an essential read for American park, landscape and seashore historians. As author or editor of *Wilderness by Design: Landscape Architecture and the National Park Service*; and of *Mission 66: Modernism and the National Park Dilemma*—and as co-editor of *The Early Boston Years, 1882-1890*, Volume 8 of *The Papers of Frederick Law Olmsted*—Carr brings his broad background in both parks and landscape architecture history into focus for this national seashore story.

As the 400th anniversary of the Pilgrim’s 1620 landing on Cape Cod is set for celebration this coming year in 2020, Carr’s timely book

reminds us of the earliest sailors, ships, campers, hikers and writers who came to call (or stay).

In his introduction, Professor Carr gives the reader a full view of the evolving history of the Cape, with nostalgic postcard images presented alongside contemporary photographs. The author weaves the Cape Cod story deftly into that of the broader national parks movement. Early “visitors” are given full due in Carr’s book, from the Pilgrims landing at Provincetown (not yet Plymouth) harbor in November 1620 to Concord writer Henry David Thoreau two centuries later, with his influential observations on mid-19th century Cape Cod landscapes and local characters. Thoreau’s essays, gathered together in his Cape Cod book published posthumously in 1865 (and frequently since), provide additional perspective.

As Carr recounts, the brief heyday of Cape Cod’s seashore industries—whaling, shipbuilding, and salt making—along with its depleted soil and agricultural decline gave way, belatedly, to “quaintness” perceived. Other revered resident Cape writers (though

less well known than Thoreau) of the 20th century such as Henry Beston (*The Outermost House*) and Wyman Richardson (*The House on Nauset Marsh*) add to the picture of a Cape in transition during the mid-1900s. The Cape Cod sand dunes, lighthouses, marshes and cranberry bogs awaited consensus on protecting the Cape shore treasured by Cape locals. These landscapes set the Cape apart from crowded seashore resorts springing up elsewhere along the Atlantic coast.

Carr shares with readers how and when the term “seashore” emerged during the Cape Hatteras Seashore debate of the 1930s to 1950s. He reminds us of the many dedicated men and women in the Park Service who advised, listened and worked out details along the way, providing a rare and readable inside look into the National Park Service contribution from start to finish.

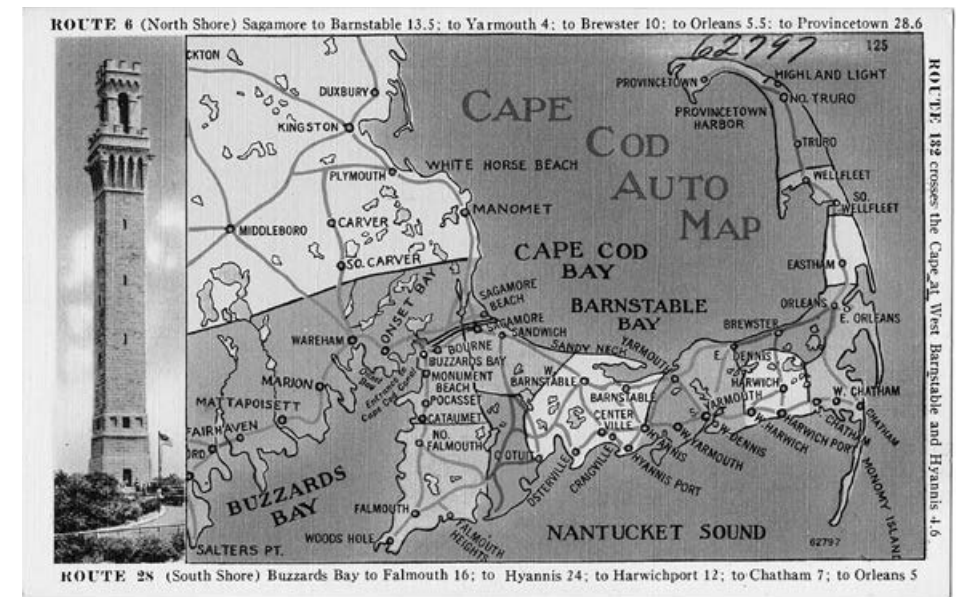
Setting the stage for the conflicts and conclusions to come, and the part played by the National Park Service, Carr begins his book with a chapter on the long and storied history of the National Park Service—and the creation of National Seashores. This gives a broader context to the Cape story, with the National Park Service and its citizen committees, carefully planning and managing the preserved Outer Cape.

Carr also ties together two pivotal events for conservation that occurred in 1865: Frederick Law Olmsted’s contribution to protecting Yosemite (first as a state park) during his two years living out west, in California, and Massachusetts writer Thoreau’s simultaneous path-finding nature writing on Cape Cod. As Carr reminds us, Olmsted would eventually set up his permanent home, garden and landscape architecture office, now a National Historic Site, in Brookline, Massachusetts near Thoreau’s original Concord, Massachusetts hiking territory.

In the 1930s, two new bridges—the Bourne and the Sagamore—easily linked the mainland with the Cape, changing the nature of the landscape once again. The bridges brought tourists and automobiles, belatedly but quickly, to crowd the Cape. With the nearer western Cape Cod towns by Buzzard’s Bay, Cape Cod Bay and Nantucket Sound taking in and absorbing the first wave of tourists, the six Outer Cape towns were left to decide the fate of one of the most dramatic stretches of shoreline on the Atlantic.

Carr’s story details the reactions of residents in each of the six Outer Cape coastal towns as tourists and old-timers squeezed together with no solution in sight. He brings us inside town meetings, and to contemporary newspaper reports, as the Park Service played its part during and after each open session.

Funding for the new national seashores proved a roadblock to additional nominations. After the 20-year struggle to find preservation



funding before, during and soon after World War II, the Mellon family foundations finally provided financial rescue in the 1950s for the first National Seashore, Cape Hatteras, off the North Carolina coast. However, the next two seashores proposed for assistance in the 1960s—Cape Cod and Point Reyes—needed a different, more public, preservation model. Carr relays the public and private struggles and eventual success in setting up the Cape Cod “model” for the remaining seashores (including Point Reyes) to follow.

A later chapter on the design of the park brings together architects and landscape architects—a “Who’s Who” of park and invited Cape Cod designers and summer colony residents—mixed into the planning and advice process. Carr tells us about Harvard Graduate School of Design architect Walter Gropius who brought his “Summer Bauhaus” philosophy and friends to a “memorable” summer cottage colony on the Outer Cape. Professor Carr suggests his readers find the book by architectural historians Peter McMahon and Christine Cipriani which brings the old Bauhaus Colony culture back to life to admire today.

Carr, in fact, brings in so many local and national characters (and obscure committee initials) into old and newer pictures of the Cape, the reader might wish for a handy extended initials index to better understand the story as it unfolds. In all, however, this book provides a rare look into the cultural, landscape and design history of the Cape from 1620 to 2019, written with the advantage of a long view almost 60 years after the creation of the Cape Cod National Seashore. A fine read, Carr’s book serves as a primer for preservationists patient enough to study and admire a vision realized.

Above: Early automobile routes (and bridges) encroaching on the Cape during the 1930s and 1940s brought a wave of tourists from the mainland to enjoy the recently discovered seashore. Provincetown harbor, where the Pilgrims first landed in November 1620, is pictured at the top of the outer Cape peninsula. Outer Cape towns, from Chatham on the south shore, up to Provincetown on the far north shore, are now mostly included in the Cape Cod National Seashore today, with exceptions debated and decided in town hall meetings during deliberations on seashore status. Plymouth, seen here across Cape Cod Bay on the mainland to the west, shows the more sheltered Pilgrim permanent site settled weeks after landing in Provincetown harbor from England. Photo credit: *The Greatest Beach*, Boston Public Library, Tichnor Brothers Collection.

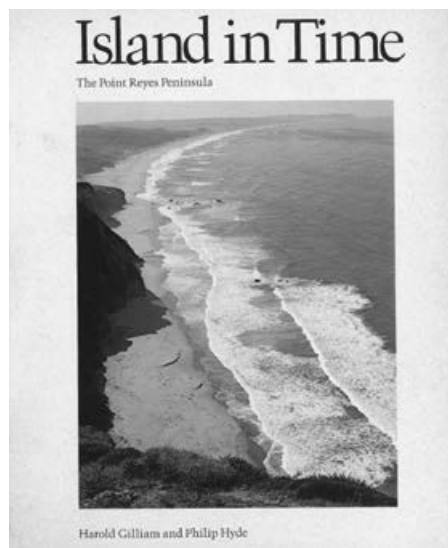
Island in Time: The Point Reyes Peninsula

by Harold Gilliam

(Sierra Club 1962, revised with aftermath 1973)

“As no two mountains are the same, no two rivers identical, each precious public shoreline has its unique, identifying qualities...In an era when man’s role in altering the face of the earth is conspicuous, we need reminders of nature’s own forces, events, and ultimate powers.”

—Secretary of the Interior Stewart Udall, from his Forward to Harold Gilliam’s 1962 *Island In Time*, Sierra Club book



Far away from Cape Cod, on the isolated Point Reyes peninsula along the California coast just north of San Francisco, the 1950s rolled on peacefully. The thick summer fog rolled in, as usual, to cool off the ranches and cows along the northern coast. Soon, however, developers and highway builders hovered, alarming nearby conservationists and alerting Washington, D.C. legislators.

By coincidence in the early 1960s, a natural history book—*Island in Time*—written just before the seashore’s eventual preservation, greatly influenced the Congressional creation of the Point Reyes National Seashore on September 13, 1962.

Written by *San Francisco Chronicle* environmental columnist Harold Gilliam, and first published by the Sierra Club in early 1962 with a foreword by Secretary of the Interior Stewart Udall, Gilliam sleek and slim *Island in Time* book emphasized the natural environment of the isolated peninsula more than the political or personal events of the era. Although not intended as such, Gilliam’s book was a prelude to peninsula preservation. *San Francisco Chronicle* reporter Carl Nolte wrote soon after Gilliam’s death in 2016, “Gilliam’s work had widespread influence. His 1962 book, *Island in Time*, for example, was presented to every member of Congress and had an important role in the creation of the Point Reyes National Seashore,” Nolte wrote on SF Gate December 19, 2016.

In his foreword, Secretary of the Interior Udall wrote in his Forward to Gilliam’s first edition:

“As I write at the dawn of 1962, only 240 miles out of 3700 miles of shoreline from Mount Desert Island to Corpus Christi are dedicated to public purposes. The National Park Service administers a mere 55 shore miles along the 1700 miles of Pacific Ocean coast. In face of a clamoring national need. Point Reyes Peninsula emerges like lost Atlantis from the deeps. It is verily, an island in the nick of time.”

Gilliam’s brief chapter on wind, fog and sun unravels the mystery of the Point Reyes Peninsula’s blanket of cool summer fog coming

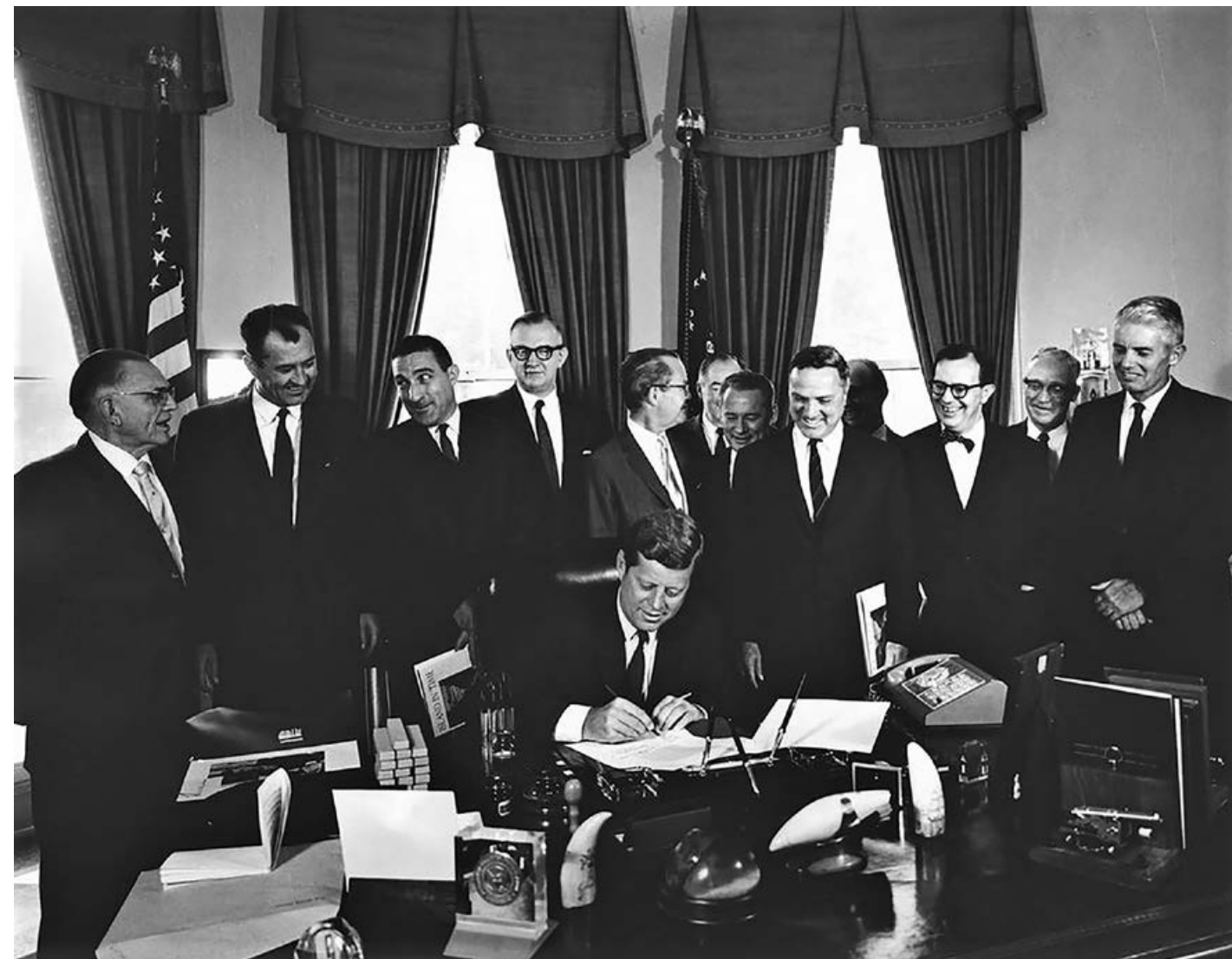
in from the colder Pacific waters followed by surprising winter warmth.

“The promontory of Point Reyes itself, thrusting boldly into the ocean beyond the general shoreline, is the scene of some of the most spectacular weather in the nation,” Gilliam begins. *“Jutting out into this coastal fog bank Point Reyes is often enshrouded in rolling white mists and the resonant bass roar of the foghorn sends a warning out to passing ships miles at sea... At other times, particularly in late afternoon, the fog drifts inland...in masses and wraiths of mist that envelop the upland pines and firs, tree by tree and grove by grove.”*

“Oddly,” Gilliam continues, “although the point itself is one of the coolest places in the U.S. (outside Alaska) in summer, it is unusually warm in winter,” with only a four-degree difference in average summer and winter temperature. Gilliam points to year-round evidence of summer fog: “Inland from the point the wind diminishes sharply... On the slopes near the ocean the pines and cypresses are often bent into permanently contorted shapes by the wind. Inland, away from the ocean winds, the bishop pines on the shores of Tomales Bay and the Douglas firs on the uplands of Inverness Ridge grow to magnificent proportions.”

Unfortunately, the first English visitors, who arrived by ship in June 1579, immediately complained in diaries about the weather, as Gilliam reminds us in his early chapter on Sir Francis Drake’s six-week stay: “Nipping cold...thicke mists and most stynkinge foggess. Neither could we at any time in fourteene days together, find the aire so cleare as to be able to take the height of the sunne or starre,” Gilliam quotes from the 16th century diary of the ship’s chaplain, Francis Fletcher:

“How unhandsome and deformed appeared the face of the earth it selfe, showing trees without leaves, and the ground without greens in those monthes of June and July,” the ship’s chaplain writes, before finding better landscapes close by, immediately inland from their harbor: “The inland we found to be farre different from the shoare, a goodly country, and



President John F. Kennedy signs the Point Reyes National Seashore Act on September 13, 1962, at the White House ceremony with legislators and advisors looking over the president’s shoulders. Third from the left in the photo, Secretary of the Interior Stewart Udall, holding a copy of Harold Gilliam’s book, *Island in Time*, along with Northern California Representative Clem Miller, standing just behind the president’s left shoulder, also holding a copy of Gilliam’s *Island in Time* book. On the far right of the photo, Sierra Club executive director David Brower represents the publisher of Gilliam’s Point Reyes book. This image from the White House photo files, now in the JFK Presidential Library, was an historic moment in time, to match Gilliam’s *Island in Time* book. In the next year, President Kennedy was killed in Dallas, and within a month, California Congressman Clem Miller died in a private plane crash visiting his Northern California constituency, Gilliam reminds us in his revised 1973 Point Reyes book.

fruitful soyle, stored with many blessings for the use of man” the chaplain wrote.

However, the white cliffs stretching along the Point Reyes outer shoreline reminded the English of their own White Cliffs of Dover which the Golden Hind passed on its way to America, Gilliam writes, citing once again the diary of Drake’s chaplain, reminiscing and comparing the two visually similar coastlines.

The friendly California Coast Miwoks, unlike the wary Cape Cod Nauset Indians, warmly welcomed the visiting Englishmen, as Gilliam reminds us, citing the bounty on the Point Reyes peninsula at the time. “During the six-week stay of the Golden Hind, Indians arrived from miles around with baskets of food...” With many anthropologists today concluding that the tribe of Indians encountered were the Coast Miwok native to Marin and southern Sonoma counties, the Drake Navigation Guild military scholars have confirmed the California finding. With the bay, the estuary, and the beach all named now after the English

sea captain Sir Francis Drake, the 16th century diary of his chaplain provided vital information for Gilliam's book about the landscape and inhabitants well before its seashore status.

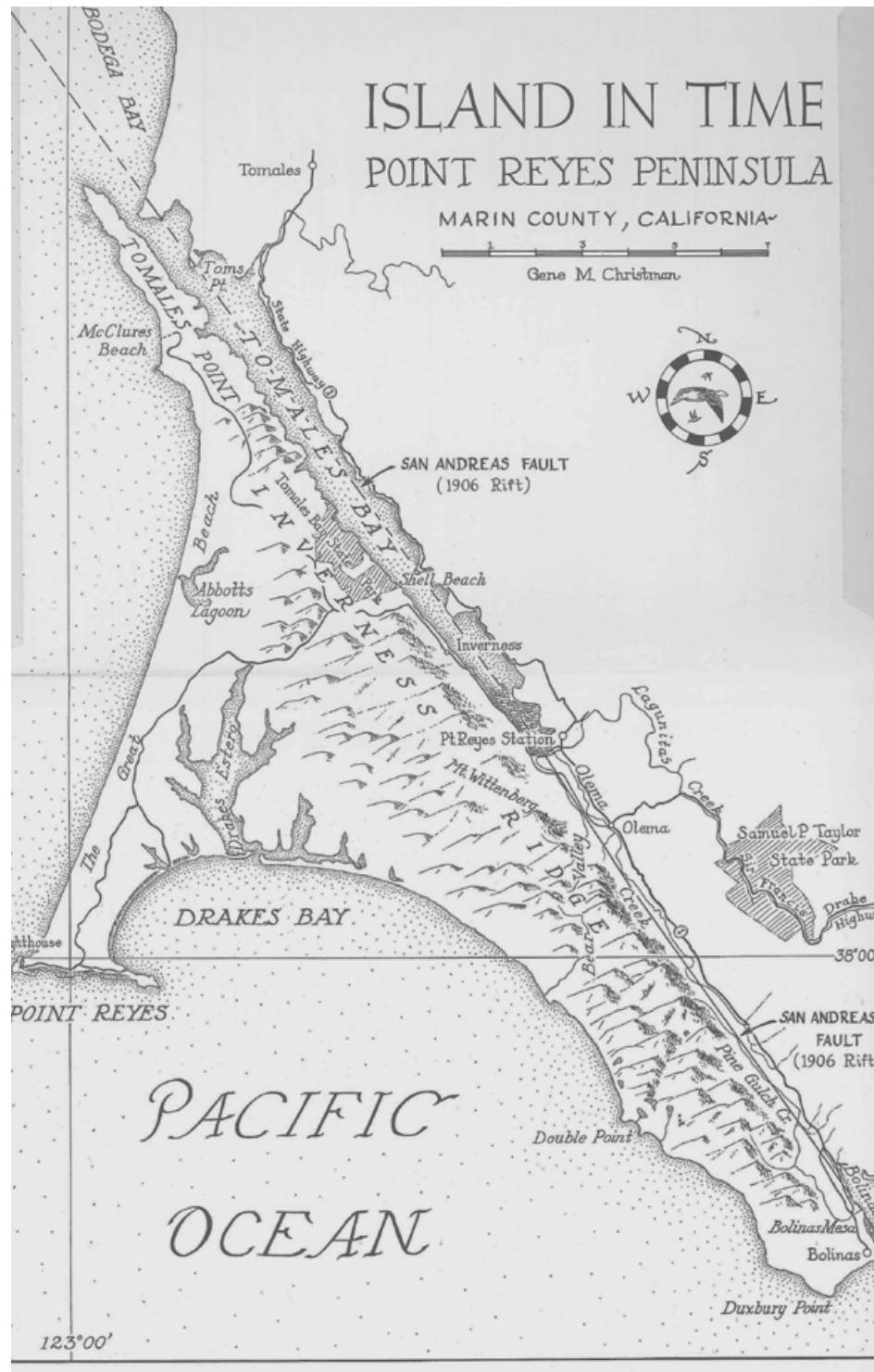
In Gilliam's later 1973 lightly-revised *Island in Time* book, written 11 years after the seashore was established, only then did he hint at the political aftermath in his brief preface: "When the first edition of *Island in Time* was published by the Sierra Club in 1962, one of the purposes was to call attention to the existence of this nearly pristine peninsula near San Francisco. Another was to demonstrate a need to preserve the peninsula... I would like to think that the book played a role in the passage of the legislation creating the Point Reyes National Seashore." His revised book carries a photograph of President John F. Kennedy at the White House signing ceremony, with California Congressman Clem Miller casually holding a copy of Gilliam's *Island in Time* book inches away from the president's signing pen.

Gilliam also reminds us in his 1973 preface, that an even newer National Park created next door protected the boundary of Point Reyes. "As a result of the grass-roots campaign similar to that which created and protected Point Reyes Seashore... Congress and the Nixon Administration established the Golden Gate National Recreation Area {GGNRA} adjoining Point Reyes on the south and east—34,000 acres of superlative shoreline, on both sides of the Golden Gate."

The irony, of course, is that, unlike the early English Pilgrims landing in 1620 on Cape Cod, the English visitors to the California coast 21 years earlier, in 1579, never intended to stay among the friendlier Indians with more bountiful food and a hospitable climate of warmer winters mostly free of frost or snow. Instead, Sir Francis Drake left us a six-week snapshot in time of the cool California Pacific coast, before sailing back home to tell the Queen.

Harold Gilliam, four centuries later, has left us his *Island In Time* as an ode to nature and to the California landscape then and now, while Cape Cod writer Ethan Carr has left us a testament to the efforts of the National Park Service in protecting seashores east and west. Both books are worth savoring for the bounty in this century of landscapes preserved.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Joan Hockaday is the author of *The Gardens of San Francisco* (Timber Press 1988) and *Greenscapes: Olmsted's Pacific Northwest* (WSU Press, 2009)



The Point Reyes Peninsula, leaning out into the Pacific, with Drake's Bay, Drake's Estero and surrounding landscapes sketched for the first edition of Harold Gilliam's *Island in Time* 1962 book.



A dairy herd resting peacefully on Point Reyes Peninsula, with Drake's Estero, Drake's Bay and the Pacific Ocean beyond. Photo from *Island in Time*, 1973 revised edition.

Further reading during the 400th anniversary of the English landing on Cape Cod, first, then on to Plymouth weeks later:

EAST:

William Bradford, with notes by historian Samuel Eliot Morison: *Of Plymouth Plantation 1620-1647*, (Alfred A. Knopf, 2000)

Henry David Thoreau: *Cape Cod* (Princeton University Classic Edition, 2004)

Alden T. Vaughan: *New England Frontier: Puritans and Indians 1620-1675*, (Little, Brown, 1965)

Boston Globe supplement, September 29, 2019: *Climate Change on Cape Cod: At the Edge of a Warming World* (bostonglobe.com)

Cape Cod Times, October 4, 2019: *Army Corps: Replace the Cape Cod Canal bridges* (www.capecodtimes.com)

WEST:

John Hart: *Farming on the Edge: Saving Family Farms in Marin County, California*, (University of California Press, 1991)

John Hart with Phyllis Faber et al: *An Island in Time: 50 Years as Point Reyes National Seashore* (Pickleweed Press, 2012)

Amy Meyer: *New Guardians for the Golden Gate: How America Got a Great National Park*, (University of California Press, 2006). Amy's personal account of the park's success story.

Peter Fimrite: "Point Reyes plan seeks to aid ranchers, limit elk" (*San Francisco Chronicle*, Friday, August 9, 2019, page 1).

Drake Navigators Guild, Raymond Aker and Edward Von der Porten: *Discovering Francis Drake's California Harbor*, (www.drakenavigatorsguild.org) (2000, reprinted 2010)

Melissa Darby: *Thunder Go North: The Hunt for Sir Francis Drake's Fair and Good Bay* (University of Utah Press, October 2019). The most recent book exploring Drake's 1579 Pacific harbors entered. This book, by anthropologist Darby, makes the case for a more northern, Oregon, landing during Drake's Pacific hunt for the fabled non-existent Northwest Passage.

Virginia Post Ranney et al: *The Papers of Frederick Law Olmsted, Volume 5, The California Frontier 1863-1865* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 1990)

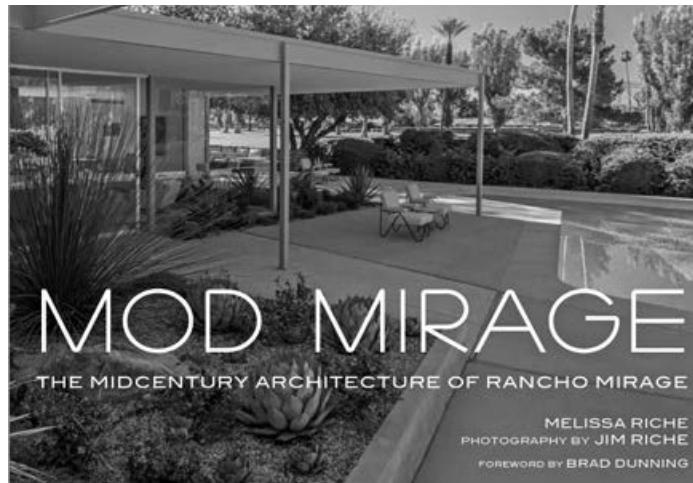
The Cultural Landscape Foundation Excursion to Rancho Mirage

MELISSA RICHE

AUTHOR OF *MOD MIRAGE: THE MIDCENTURY
ARCHITECTURE OF RANCHO MIRAGE*
PUBLISHED BY GIBBS SMITH, 2018



TCLF Excursion attendees gather to tour Sunnylands. Photo by Steven Keylon.



Top left: The cover of Melissa Riche's *Mod Mirage* shows the Charney Residence. Photo by Jim Riche.
 Top right: The landscape plans by Eckbo, Royston & Williams were on display.
 Bottom left and right: Viewing the Charney Residence from the Tamarisk Country Club. Photos by Steven Keylon.

On November 14, 2019, The Cultural Landscape Foundation (TLCF) held its annual excursion, this time focusing on the gardens and homes of Rancho Mirage, a few miles from Palm Springs. Incorporated in 1973, Rancho Mirage's fame dates to the early 1950s when two country clubs opened, Thunderbird and Tamarisk, which offered innovations in site planning and featured luxurious homes by leading designers lining the fairways. This new lifestyle attracted the rich and famous, and the membership soon read like a "Who's Who." Entertainers like Lucille Ball and Desi Arnaz, Frank Sinatra, the Marx Brothers, Hoagy Carmichael, and Bing Crosby partied at the clubhouses with industrialists such as Leonard Firestone, Robert McCulloch, Earle Jorgensen, and Peter Kiewit. Thunderbird, where President Eisenhower played golf in 1954, was the site of the 1955 Ryder Cup and was where President Ford would later retire.

Such was the success of these country clubs that publisher Walter Annenberg lamented the lack of available tee times. To solve this, he built a private 9-hole golf course, with a modest

20,000 square foot estate attached. 'Sunnylands,' designed by architect A. Quincy Jones, gave Walter and Leonore Annenberg a 200-acre oasis of influence where they entertained close friends, such as the Reagans and other heads of state. After Walter Annenberg became US Ambassador to Great Britain, they welcomed members of the British Royal Family, including Queen Elizabeth.

Sunnylands was the first stop on our tour that crisp autumn day in November. The group had the unusual honor of accessing the estate via its private entrance and traveling up the tree-lined driveway and across the golf course before arriving at the main house for the tour. Open to the public since 2012, Sunnylands welcomes nearly 300,000 visitors a year, including those attending private retreats that focus on national and global issues. Against a backdrop of astonishing panoramic views from the terrace, Michaelen Gallagher, Director of Education and Environmental Programs gave an insightful talk on the landscape, addressing water issues, the maintenance of the eleven lakes, and the education programs that track

birds and butterflies. The morning concluded at the Sunnylands Center and Gardens, with its contemporary landscape designed by the Office of James Burnett, with horticultural consultant Mary Irish. Pathways around the lawn – used for yoga, tai chi, and entertainment – are bordered by numerous palo verde trees. Beds of sustainable plants surround seating areas, creating inviting outdoor rooms.

A sumptuous three-course lunch was held at the legendary Thunderbird Country Club. Usually open only to members and their guests, it was a rare honor to enjoy the club's excellent hospitality. TLCF President and CEO Charles Birnbaum reported on the latest news, then introduced Stewardship Council member Steven Keylon who, with local historian and author Melissa Riche, helped to organize the day's program. Riche talked briefly about the historic clubs and homes the group would be touring. Before leaving, members visited the twelve remaining rental cottages that date back to 1951 when Thunderbird first opened. These were master-planned and designed by famed desert modernist architect William F. Cody.

The club is considering demolishing them for redevelopment, and this has become a local preservation issue.

The next stop was Tamarisk Country Club and the immaculately restored 1957 Charney Residence, designed by Wexler & Harrison and featured on the cover of Riche's book *Mod Mirage*. The house was purchased in 2016 by New York architect Steven Harris and interior designer Lucien Rees-Roberts. Its poor condition threatened its survival. Fortunately, the new owners understood its quality: They located original blueprints, vintage photographs, and the landscape plans by Eckbo, Royston & Williams, all of which informed their award-winning restoration. David Kelly, the landscape architect and partner at Rees-Roberts Design, was on hand to answer questions, while architect Steven Harris described the challenges of bringing the house back from the brink. It was a memorable visit to a shining example of mid-century modern design adjacent to the verdant Tamarisk Country Club fairways.

As the buses drove through the private gates of Thunderbird Heights for the last stop, Riche explained that President Obama often stayed there at the home of the Obama's interior designer, Michael S. Smith. The final destination was 'White Shadows,' designed in 1957 by Henry Eggers for the heir to the Weyerhaeuser fortune, Thomas B. Davis. The home was known as the 'Persian Palace' both for its Modern Moroccan architecture and for Dottie Davis's collection of ancient Persian artifacts. From the street, the house presents a deceptively simple facade, but the magic of this house soon unfolds as you see a marble-lined arcaded courtyard that resembles something from the Alhambra. The hillside house looks out across the Coachella Valley from an arcaded terrace around the swimming pool. The surrounding landscape, designed by C. Jacques Hahn, features marble pools, runnels, and fountains next to an elaborate copper-roofed pergola. Before the current owners bought the house, the previous owner had stripped the home of every fitting, including screens by designer T. H. Robsjohn-Gibbings. During their restoration, they retrieved everything – at a cost – and brought the house back to its glory.

Many thanks to those who made this enjoyable day such a great success!



Top: The patio of the Charney Residence from inside the house.
 Middle and bottom: At the Moroccan Modern Davis Residence. Photos by Steven Keylon.



2019 Annual Report

Dear CGLHS Members,

Because of your support, the California Garden & Landscape History Society achieved significant progress and accomplishments on a number of projects in 2019. Here are some of the year's highlights.

Our flagship journal *Eden* continues to thrive with original scholarship, colored imagery that showcases projects, a dedicated editor, Steven Keylon, and an equally dedicated *Eden* Editorial Board. Archived copies of this robust publication are located on our website, and I've been told directly from scholars, practitioners, and students that they use this information to inform their work. Because of the value of *Eden*, we also began working on a new book *Essential Eden: The First 20 Years*, a compilation of the top essays from the past 20 years of publication. This book will be updated with high-quality digital images and newly-commissioned photographs. We are about halfway through this project and have begun seeking a publisher.

This year we had numerous special events. Our annual conference was held October 4th – 6th in Lompoc and La Purisima Concepcion Mission, titled “Early California Landscapes and Gardens: Romance and Reality.” This conference was convened by board member Judy Horton with help from Nancy Carol Carter and Steven Keylon. The focus was on the myth of the romanticized mission landscape, largely imagined by writer Helen Hunt Jackson in her 1884 book *Ramona*. Keynote speaker Brian Tichenor lectured about the pre and post-Columbian landscapes in Southern California, examining the cultural

landscape prior to the period of Spanish colonization and the permanent changes it brought to Native American cultural practices as well as introduction of non-native grasses. With 60 attendees at the conference, it was a rich blend of talks, Fandango music, and time spent with new and old friends.

Other events this year included the California Garden & Landscape History Lecture Series, in our on-going partnership with the Huntington Library. In June, architectural historian Barbara Lamprecht lectured on “Richard Neutra, Landscape Architect.” Our August lecture by architect Marc Appleton, “California Ranches: Lands in Transition,” was followed by Garden Conservancy president James Brayton Hall speaking on “Outstanding American Gardens: What Are They, Where Are They, and How Can They Be Saved?” Thank you to Judy Horton for organizing this series. Board members Libby Simon and Ann Scheid organized two Tours & Talks in Pasadena on Busch Gardens, splitting the event into the upper and lower arroyo, as remnants of this expansive historic garden are located in private gardens today. Thank you to Matthew Berkley, of deasy penner podley, who sponsored the design of maps for these tours. Lastly, Ann Scheid and I presented a talk at the Glendale Historical Society Restoration Expo, “Discovering History in your Garden,” offering methods to conduct historical research on a landscape, unusual as most talks at this event focused on architecture. We are very excited that new board member Janet Gracyk will be organizing a robust program of events in Northern California in 2020.



Opposite and above left: Busch Gardens tour of Pasadena. Photos by Kristen Kennedy. Above right: CGLHS board members Libby Simon and Jennifer Trotoux at the Huntington Library. Photo by Kristen Kennedy. Bottom: Garden Conservancy president James Brayton Hall at the Huntington Library.

The new California Garden & Landscape History logo was unveiled in April, created by Bill Smith of designSimple. Bill explained that the cropping and spacing of the letters were inspired by garden design plans, a common way to examine landscapes. Colors were taken in large part from native California plants and flowers, the most identifiable being the warm yellow/orange of the California poppy, greens from sagebrush, and though not native, abundant lavender that grows so easily here. With a range of colors as part of the core identity, on occasion we will vary logo colors, like the way colors change in a garden over the seasons. The general spirit of the identity and brand also derived from garden design—creative, but orderly, favoring gentle visual relationships. Typography used fonts that would be at home in the pages of a Victorian book, borrowing too from the font used for *Eden*, thus tying together our journal and organizational identity.

We were also committed to outreach this year to better promote CGLHS and keep members aware of events and activities in our organization. Additional content, including past conference information, was added to our website and board member David Laws has been adding new blogs and content to our Facebook page. Libby Simon

designed tabling items from runners to handouts for our Northern and Southern California events. Robin Karson, Executive Director for the Library of American Landscape History, generously shared *View* with all members, as their organization's annually published magazine was focused on historic California landscapes. Because of this outreach, 46 new members joined CGLHS.

For the first time in 10 years we increased our membership dues to keep our small nonprofit organization financially sound, especially with increased production and postage costs for *Eden*. We are grateful for the members who renewed and many who increased their membership to a sustaining one.

Thank you to the numerous volunteers who help with writing and editing *Eden*; host, speak, and organize events; and serve on the Board of Directors and *Eden* Editorial Board. On behalf of the Board, we are truly grateful for your support.

Best regards,
Christine O'Hara
CGLHS President

Donors, new members, Eden contributors, event organizers and volunteers:

Honorary Life Members

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Michael Behen	Linda Hahn	Kitty Mahon	Robert Phillips	Heather Toole
Claudia Boulton	Elizabeth Hamilton	Kathie Matsuyama	Thomas Priestley	Robin Towse
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Karen Dreyfus	Joan Hockaday	Mary Nelson	Katherine Rinehart	
Brad Dunning	Chris Jacobs	Krista Nicholds	Susan Seidel	
Barbara Ealy	Holly Kane	Fleur Nooyen	Abby Sher	
Suzanne Edwards	Sylvia Keating	Jeff Oberhaus	Kathleen Shevitz	

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Los Angeles Conservancy	Huntington Botanic Garden	Elisabeth C. Miller Library	UC Riverside Science Library
Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy	Library	Filoli Historic House and Garden	UC Berkeley Environmental Design Library
	San Francisco Botanical Garden Society	San Francisco Public Library	

Eden 2019 Contributors

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Nancy Carol Carter	David A. Laws	Christine O'Hara	Libby Simon
Susan Chamberlin	Douglas Nelson	Christopher Pollack	

Sustaining Members

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Paul Althouse	Patricia Cullinan	Nancy Mead	Nancy Mead	Mary Swanton
Sylvia Bender	Ann Dwelley	JC Miller	JC Miller	Judith Tankard
Carolyn Bennett	Norma Frey	Elizabeth Motika	Elizabeth Motika	Karen Tarter
John Blocker	Dorothy and John Gardner	Christine O'Hara	Christine O'Hara	Judith Taylor
John Carpenter	Lisa Gimmy	Leslie Prussia	Leslie Prussia	Brian Tichenor
Nancy Carol Carter	Liz Goodfellow	Michael Reandean	Michael Reandean	Marc Treib
Susan Chamberlin	Marlea Graham	Ann Scheid	Ann Scheid	Noel Vernon
Betsy Clebsch		Les Sechler	Les Sechler	Jacqueline Williams
Kelly Comras		Kathleen Slater	Kathleen Slater	Alexis Woods

Host, Speakers and Volunteers Conference "Early California Landscapes and Gardens: Romance and Reality"

Speakers Nancy Carol Carter Kristina W. Foss Michael Hardwick Robin Karson David Lemon Janelle Osborne Lisa Renken Brian Tichenor	Volunteers Don Adams Nancy Carol Carter Susan Chamberlin Prelado de los Tesoros de la Purisima docents Lompoc Museum docents Lompoc Valley Historical Society docents	Busch Gardens Hosts Oliver and Elwia Beaudette Katherine Hurley and Kent Brandmeyer Jackie Coulette Brenda Dieck Barbara Ealy Charles Fairchild Sally Mann and Steve Hunter Richard Kirtland Geraldine Kreger Joel Lynn Murphy Sylvia Paz Carol Cobabe and Richard Van Daele	Sponsor of Busch Gardens Tours Matthew Berkley of deasy penner podley
Musicians Cal Poly Symphony string quartet	CGLHS Conveners Nancy Carol Carter Judy Horton Steven Keylon	Glendale Historic Society Kristin Kennedy Christine O'Hara Ann Scheid Libby Simon	Talks Series and Conference Hosts Huntington Botanic Garden Library Mission La Purisima Lompoc Museum
Hosts Mission La Purisima: Ann Boggess, State Park Interpreter, and Rob Glasgow, Prelado de los Tesoros Lompoc Museum Karen Paaske, Lompoc Valley Historical Society & Fabing-McKay-Spanne Property	Huntington Speaker Series - Speakers Marc Appleton Barbara Lamprecht James Brayton Hall	Busch Gardens Tours - Volunteers Brophy Dale Laura D'Aniello Osvaldo Garcia Dave Gore Kristen Kennedy Sean Kennedy Patricia Lombard Candy Mead Christine O'Hara Ann Scheid June Scott Sheryl Scott Libby Simon	Vendors designSimple Julie Arshonsky Craig Weida Render Event Design

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Front Cover: Detail of an 1892 lithograph looking west from the east end of Golden Gate Park. Courtesy Helen Crocker Russell Library, San Francisco Botanical Garden at Strybing Arboretum.

Back Cover: A wide variety of trees, shrubs and other plants surround a water feature in Golden Gate Park's historic Japanese Tea Garden. The garden, created for the 1894 California Midwinter Exposition, showcased the exotic culture. The Japonisque craze began in 1853 when trade relations were opened with the West. This was followed by a stunning display of Japanese art and architecture shown at the 1876 Centennial International Exhibition in Philadelphia. Photo by Christopher Pollock.

