



Taming the Car—A Vision for Los Angeles: Fred Barlow, Jr.'s Innovative Landscape for Baldwin Hills Village

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The right style for the twentieth century is no style at all, but a new conception of planning the human environment. – Landscape architect Christopher Tunnard, 1942¹

Of all the projects Los Angeles-based landscape architect Fred Barlow, Jr. worked on in his lifetime (1902–1953), the largest design project and the one of which he was most proud was Baldwin Hills Village. Barlow so strongly believed in the new concepts of well-planned housing that when the Village opened, he and his family moved into one of its units. He received more awards and recognition for this groundbreaking middle-class community than any other project during his entire 27-year career as a landscape architect. Among the awards was a “distinguished honor” certificate given by Southern California Chapter of the AIA in 1946.

A revolutionary 68-acre, multi-family housing development in southwestern Los Angeles, Baldwin Hills Village was conceived during the height of the Great Depression. It was created by some of the most talented and visionary reformers of the day, using a collaborative design process in which buildings and landscape were designed to interact in innovative ways, elevating site plan and landscape design to starring roles. The primary goal of its designers was that the careful and deliberate planning of both buildings and landscape as an organic unit would foster a new kind of urban-based community and lifestyle.

As the project's landscape architect, Fred Barlow, Jr. joined noted architect Reginald D. Johnson, in association with the firm of Wilson, Merrill and Alexander, on the team that worked for more than five years to perfect the concept for the Village. Known as “Thousand Gardens” during development, the complex ultimately con-

tained a total of 627 units in 94 residential buildings, creating a living environment of relatively low density.² The design team was led by legendary urban planner Clarence Stein, who had taken Ebenezer Howard's “Garden City” philosophies (originating in the UK) and adapted them for use in the United States. (See sidebar on “The Radburn Plan,” p.2.) At Baldwin Hills Village, Stein's tenets came together in their most fully realized form. Stein later wrote:

[T]he purpose of Baldwin Hills Village was to demonstrate the practical possibilities of spacious homes and surroundings in an orderly community at low rentals, using the basic features of the Radburn Idea: superblock, homes facing central greens—twenty acres of green parks—pedestrian and auto completely separated. They were freshly developed in a comprehensive, straightforward manner without compromise or indecision. Here, these basic elements have been clearly expressed and crystallized into a more functional unity.³



Aerial photograph, 1949, showing Baldwin Hills Village site in comparison to typical suburban developments growing around it. (See Notes on Photo Credits, p. 6.)

Even more so than at Stein's communities on the East Coast, in Southern California the region's “necessary evil”—the automobile, and the car-centric culture that had grown up around it—would need to be accommodated. The design team behind Baldwin Hills Village finalized their radically inspired plans to “tame the car”⁴ in 1940—the same year in which Southern California's first freeway, the Arroyo Seco Parkway, opened between downtown Los Angeles and Pasadena.

Professional Background

Frederick Walter Barlow, Jr. decided to become a landscape architect in the 1920s, when this choice was still a pioneering one. Perhaps he was influenced by his maternal family line,

The Radburn Plan

Clarence Stein and his partner Henry Wright in 1929 had created in Radburn, New Jersey, a large “Garden City” type of community based on Ebenezer Howard’s Garden City principles. It was said that with Radburn, Stein and Wright “rethought the basic social and environmental needs, as well as the financing and physical layout, of the American urban residential community; in so doing, they created new urban forms.”

At Radburn, Stein and Wright created a revolution in planning, as it would truly deal for the first time with the problem and dangers posed by the automobile. Stein had written that what he hoped his communities would offer was “a beautiful environment, a home for children, an opportunity to enjoy the day’s leisure and the ability to ride on the Juggernaut of industry, instead of being prostrated under its wheels.” At Radburn, “a community within a community,” automobile traffic was separated from pedestrian traffic, and for the first time a largely residential superblock concept of planning was used. Radburn was followed in the 1930s by more “towns for the motor age”: Chatham Village (Pittsburgh), Phipps Garden Apartments (Queens), Hillside Homes (the Bronx), and the Greenbelt towns of the Resettlement Administration.

In addition to their beauty and their promotion of social life for their inhabitants, the basic Garden City principles developed by Stein and Wright, and perfected at Radburn (and known as the “Radburn Plan”), were:

- **Superblock:** large parcel with few or no through streets, which consolidated open green spaces for use by the residents;
- **Specialized roads:** all auto circulation on the perimeter, with Garage Courts for storage of cars;
- **Complete separation of pedestrian and automobile:** “taming the automobile,” promoting an environment safer for children;
- **Houses turned toward gardens and parks:** creation of an arrangement that turned the buildings from outside in, placing the living room windows towards the green spaces rather than the street; and
- **The park as the backbone:** allowing large green spaces to dominate, rather than streets.

which had a long tradition that began with ancestral Pilgrims at Plymouth Rock. He was born December 20, 1902 in Colorado Springs; his sister Ruth followed two years later. The family moved to towns in New Mexico and Arizona before settling down in Hollywood in 1914. Fred graduated from Hollywood High School in 1921 and went on to Stanford, where after two years he decided to become a landscape architect. He then enrolled at the University of California at Berkeley, the only West Coast university that at the time offered coursework to prepare students for that profession.



Portrait of Fred Barlow, Jr. ca. 1946. Courtesy Barlow family archives.

Barlow graduated in 1926, at the height of California’s Golden Age of estate building. His first four years were spent with landscape architect Paul G. Thiene, mostly as the supervising construction engineer at Greystone, the great Doheny estate in Beverly Hills, with its mansion and grounds second only in size and grandeur to Hearst Castle.⁵ The Stock Market Crash of 1929 forced Thiene to downsize, so in 1930 Barlow began working for landscape architect Katherine Bashford—first

as assistant landscape architect and office manager, but soon after as principal designer, and then partner in the firm Bashford and Barlow.

Highly regarded for their work on some of the grand estates still being built in the midst of the Great Depression, Bashford and Barlow were honored with multiple awards by the Southern California Chapter of the AIA in the 1930s. During these same years, often in collaboration with archi-

tect H. Roy Kelley, Barlow began exploring the easy informality and indoor/outdoor relationship of the California ranch house. Barlow and Kelley worked together from the earliest phase of design, and as the 1930s progressed, Kelley’s ranch houses would become increasingly simplified, open and modern, while Barlow’s functional landscapes became more abstract, dynamic, and experimental in form.⁶

From 1934 to early 1936, the worst years of the Depression, Barlow temporarily left the firm to work for the National Park Service, supervising several Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) camps in Yosemite. Shortly after returning to private practice in 1936, he became interested in the burgeoning housing movement, recognizing the potential to transform communities with entirely new and collaborative concepts in site planning, architecture, and landscape design. Many of these housing projects were geared to better house low-income groups, taking advantage of new government-backed programs in funding.

Though Katherine Bashford wasn’t at first interested and would remain hesitant, Barlow’s passion was contagious, and soon she became involved as well.⁷ Barlow, often collaborating with Bashford, would create more landscape designs for public housing projects than any other landscape architect practicing in California. Due to budget constraints, which challenged and inspired their creativity, landscapes for these communities were simple, yet effective, with an emphasis on recreation and functional open spaces.⁸

Planning the Landscape for Baldwin Hills Village

Fred Barlow, Jr. had good reason to be especially proud of his landscaping work for Baldwin Hills Village. In contrast to the federally funded housing projects that he was planning at the same time, the privately funded Baldwin Hills Village had a significantly larger budget and was designed for the middle- and upper-middle classes. Consulting architect Clarence Stein considered the Village to be his penultimate Garden City community, believing that “in these houses and the surrounding open space it is easy to live the

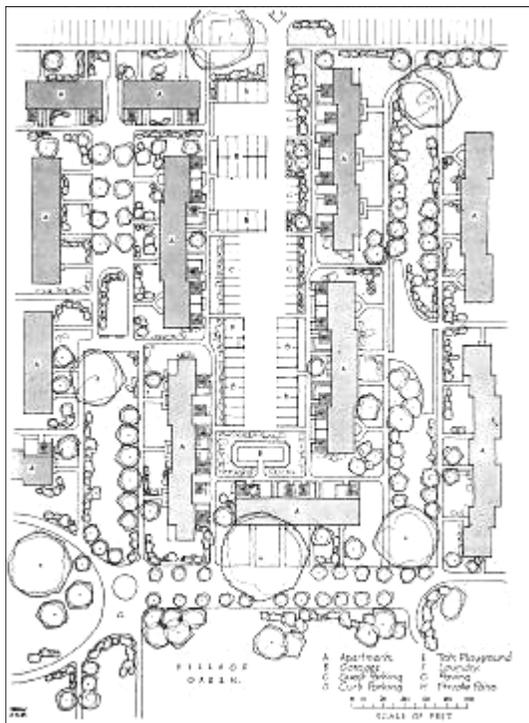
kind of life people in Southern California seek in the present time. This, it seems to me, makes the buildings contemporary architecture far more than could any veneer of stylized 'modern.'"⁹

Rather than a focus on views and axes, Barlow placed emphasis on the horizontal planes of the landscape, echoing the horizontality of the architecture, and used these dimensional volumes to define and articulate functional spaces that were designed for active use. The juxtaposition of these horizontal planes—leafy textures, smooth grass, and dry decomposed granite—helped to create an interesting but uncomplicated composition. The lawns and wide-open spaces contrasted with more introverted spaces, providing a good mix of spatial experiences.

After first analyzing the various functional needs of the community, Barlow came up with a comprehensive design concept and overall plan for the entire property. Because of the project's enormous scale, he then designed and overlaid a series of interconnected and smaller landscape plans for each of the many individual areas of the Village.¹⁰ The design challenge was for each one to be able to stand on its own as a unique and successfully designed space, yet also to harmonize and remain congruous with the character of the whole plan.

The axial site plan exhibited nearly full Beaux-Arts inspired symmetry and formality, which by 1940 was considered somewhat passé, but was helpful in organizing the massive site. Barlow was challenged to develop creative ideas to minimize the established formality of the site plan, avoiding monumentality or an institutional character, while creating solutions that weren't strictly informal in style either. The result was a marriage of what he considered to be the best of both traditions. He was able to retain the clarity, serenity, and order of the formal, while capturing the picturesque richness and the romantic irregularity of the informal.

Like the deliberately restrained architecture, which conjured Monterey Colonial-Revival and California Ranch references



Drawing showing relationship between typical garage court and garden court to center green.

career. Shrubs included white oleander, Natal plum, "White Wings" hibiscus, and *Viburnum suspensum*. To prevent the landscape from becoming monotonous, Barlow then added punctuation marks with a small but unique sub-palette of specimen trees. While a few were simply mature examples of the trees from his standard palette, most were more decorative and exotic species, such as *Koelreuteria* (Chinese flame), *Blighia* (ackee), *Tricuspidaria* (lily-of-the-valley), *Jacaranda*, and *Ficus elastica* (rubber). These stand-alone trees were used for their individual qualities, with their isolation producing dramatic sculptural interest, energizing and animating the landscape.



An olive allée frames the view from the Administration Building to the Clubhouse, with the Baldwin Hills in the background, 1944.

while maintaining a wholly modern appearance, Barlow's contemporary landscape design would create an appropriate regional feeling by utilizing plant materials associated with the invention of "Old California," incorporating a number of native trees and plant species. This was a deliberate and practical consideration, because native California trees and plants would be hard-wearing, with low water and maintenance needs. Slow-growing and durable, natives were mixed with other compatible drought-tolerant Mediterranean, South African, and South American plant materials.¹¹

Barlow's relatively small palette of plant materials, including 28 tree species and 24 shrubs, came from his trusted toolbox of hardy, low-maintenance species. He had already used these trees—such as sycamore, Brazilian pepper, Victorian boxwood, coast live oak, Chinese evergreen elm, California pepper, and carob—extensively in his career. Shrubs included white oleander, Natal plum, "White Wings" hibiscus, and *Viburnum suspensum*. To prevent the landscape from becoming monotonous, Barlow then added punctuation marks with a small but unique sub-palette of specimen trees. While a few were simply mature examples of the trees from his standard palette, most were more decorative and exotic species, such as *Koelreuteria* (Chinese flame), *Blighia* (ackee), *Tricuspidaria* (lily-of-the-valley), *Jacaranda*, and *Ficus elastica* (rubber). These stand-alone trees were used for their individual qualities, with their isolation producing dramatic sculptural interest, energizing and animating the landscape.

Barlow's innovative use of groundcovers was a most interesting product of his modern experimentation. He had been using them increasingly in the years leading up to the Village, favoring them as an alternative to lawn areas, but the extent of his use of them here was without precedent. The amount of groundcovers planted was double that of turf; in the Village there were 10 acres of turf area, including the three large greens, but altogether 20 acres of groundcovers. Planted in the large expanses between residential buildings and pathways, the transitional layer provided by the

groundcovers served a variety of functions. From a practical standpoint, they would require less water or maintenance than turf, an important consideration for a property of this size. Aesthetically, the broad, flat panels of groundcovers, at a minimum 20 feet wide, provided relief from the large smooth panels of turf, and were a pleasant contrast with the decomposed granite pathways and plazas. Five different groundcovers—English ivy, wandering Jew, jasmine, Algerian ivy, and honeysuckle—were used extensively in the garden courts, one species per court, to define spaces and give individual character. Most importantly, from a functional standpoint the architectonic panels of groundcover provided both a psychological and physical barrier between the buildings and shared landscape, offering privacy to the front rooms of each apartment by directing children to use the nearby lawn areas for play, rather than the less inviting swaths of groundcover near apartment windows.

As was his signature, this limited plant palette was for the most part elegantly monochromatic, with varying shades of green predominating. Interest came from different leaf textures and gloss levels. Trees, shrubs, and groundcovers, if flowering, generally flowered in white.¹² His disciplined use of color, while restrained, was particularly expressive and sophisticated, and used in a controlled way that strengthened and enlivened the overall concept. One of the more interesting color combinations consisted of semicircles of purple leaf plum (*Prunus passardi*) against a backdrop of the chartreuse foliage of the camphor tree. Woven through the landscape composition, color was primarily provided by a palette of ten boldly colorful vines, which included orange, scarlet, or lavender trumpet vine, *Copa de oro*, magenta bougainvillea, and native California grape. In collaboration with the architects, the buildings were designed with a variety of trellises and other structures to incorporate vines, while the faces of many of the balconies were designed to be covered in flowering color.

By creating a hierarchy of plant materials, and then repeating and reorganizing them in different combinations, Barlow was able to establish an organized rhythm. This appearance and reappearance of similar forms in successive groups resulted in a pleasing and consistent movement around the property, while still managing to remain restful and serene. The high-concept and innovative landscape represents Barlow's most experimental foray into newly

burgeoning modern landscape concepts. Barlow pushed himself to use trees and plant species he hadn't tried before, perhaps in response to recent conversations and collaborations with maverick landscape architect James C. Rose.¹³ While Barlow was intrigued by Rose's extreme ideas, he didn't reject his own years of experience and strong educational background. He was more focused on the modern considerations of functional landscape design as a means to enhance the lives of the people who would inhabit this new community.

Spaces Designed for Modern Living

In line with Stein's Radburn Plan principles, the site plan was organized around three impressively large greens, collectively known as "the Village Green," which would serve as the community heart and the backbone of the axial arrangement. Breathtaking and dramatic, these wide-open lawns evoked old New England's village greens or Olmsted and Vaux's iconic Great Lawn in Central Park. Barlow planted these greens entirely with turf, encircling them with naturalistic groupings of trees, leaving the central areas open for impromptu ball games, lounging, or play. Reminiscent of the meadows at Yosemite he had worked to clear a few years earlier, the largest central green was given a densely planted and picturesque background of drought-tolerant Aleppo and Monterey pines, which emphasized the vastness of the space. To give the three large individual greens a more human scale, the design team connected them with two narrowed allées of London plane trees. These, like all of the many paths in the Village, were paved with decomposed granite. Long a favorite material of Barlow's, the golden tan gravel was pleasing to the senses in its warm contrast to the many shades of green, and furnished yet another horizontal plane of color and texture.

Barlow skillfully handled the transitions from the larger wide-open green spaces into the smaller garden courts. He provided a sense of enclosure at the entrance of each garden court by creating a semi-transparent screen, consisting of clusters of trees emerging from broad masses of shrubbery or groundcover. Rather than exploiting views and vistas, he used this suggested barrier to create a sense of mystery and anticipation when entering a garden court, as not having everything in full and immediate view allowed for a dynamic sequence of experiences.



Barlow designed several allées, this one planted with 30-year-old specimens, a gift from the estate of Anita Baldwin, 1944. Photo: Margaret Lowe.



The design team gave the three large greens a more human scale by connecting them with a pair of narrower allées of London plane trees, with decomposed granite.

The individual garden courts, around which most residential buildings were arranged, offered space with more intimate proportions than did the three large greens. Barlow designed well-organized, functional, and creative spaces, giving each garden court its own distinctive feeling by developing individualized planting palettes for each one. Residents, especially children, seemed to find them more inviting than the larger central greens and used them more frequently.

In these spaces Barlow was comparatively restrained in his use of grass. In contrast to the dramatically large and grassy “Village Green,” Barlow provided smaller panels of turf—at least one, but usually two or more—where they would be functional. Describing his prescient landscape philosophies, Barlow said he believed that “Lawn areas in general, particularly in the more arid regions, should be confined to a minimum. A good rule is to plan only enough lawn for your actual use.”¹⁴

In each court Barlow used only a few shrub species, which helped contribute an organized simplicity to his scheme. Instead of foundation plantings, shrubs were generally placed away from the buildings in the center of the courts, their three-dimensional quality altering and articulating these spaces.¹⁵ In these shared spaces, Barlow thoughtfully provided for private interaction with the landscape, designing many “rooms for outdoor living,” at least one for each court, with low shrubbery walls, decomposed granite floors, and multiple benches shaded by a ceiling provided by the canopy of trees. In counterpoint to the sweepingly large garden areas of the Village, these intimate, enclosed spaces felt cozy and welcoming, encouraging residents to come outside and gather in small groups for private conversation, or to have a spot to quietly sit and read, relax, or watch their children play.

One of the most unique and important attributes in the overall design of the Village was the provision of private, walled outdoor living areas for most units, located adjacent to dining rooms. These patios offered residents the space to do their own gardening, in a more limited capacity. Located on the garage court sides of the buildings, the patios were enclosed by solid horizontal redwood fencing, six feet high.

Landscape the Recreation Areas

In planning the design of this utopian new community, much thought went into providing the residents of this “Village within the city” some of the qualities and advantages typifying life in more rural settings—a central precept of the Garden City movement. Thus it was thought that pleasurable exercise would ensure proper growth and maintenance of physical and mental health. Also, people had more leisure time than in the past, since the 40-hour work

week became standard in the 1930s. It was important to provide simple, safe, and beautiful places for play, opportunities for sports, or for rest and relaxation in an environment of peace and beauty. To address this, the architects, collaborating with Barlow, included a variety of recreational facilities for the use of the residents. Baldwin Hills Village’s lead architect, Reginald D. Johnson, believed that

[L]eisure and recreation, in their broadest sense, are fundamentally necessary factors of human life, especially in an industrial age. Recreation, work and home life are fundamentally closely interdependent units, rather than entities to be segregated by wastefully attenuated transportation facilities, as they are today. Since most production in the city takes place under roof, indoors, it is obvious that urban recreation must emphasize the out-of-doors, plant life, air and light. In our poorly mechanized, over-centralized, and congested cities the crying need is for organized space: flexible, adaptable outdoor space in which to stretch, breathe, expand, and grow.¹⁶

Positioned at an important location at the main cross-axis of the site, the community’s Clubhouse was connected to the Administration Building by an allée of olive

trees, with a pair of tennis courts on either side. As the setting for dances, church services, art shows, and lectures, this Clubhouse soon became the heart of the Village. Here, next to a sunny patio, Barlow installed a graceful, circular pond, which became an important magnet of attention in a very prominent location. Besides offering children a wading pool in which they could splash and play (depending on the weather), it provided the calm reflection of passing clouds, or sparkling ripples and movement from breezes, to help to animate the

landscape. On very hot days, with the spray turned on, the pool would cool the Clubhouse patio. Adjacent to the Clubhouse building, in a large triangular space, was a fully equipped playground. Other recreational amenities, situated in garage courts and close to residential buildings, were smaller “tot lots,” badminton courts, and horseshoe pits.

Barlow After Baldwin Hills Village

Baldwin Hills Village opened its first phase on Sunday, December 7, 1941.¹⁷ Shortly thereafter, all five Southern California members of the design team moved into the Village; Reginald Johnson stayed for nearly two years, the others for longer periods of time. Fred Barlow, Jr., his new wife Teddy, and stepdaughter Marilyn moved to the Village in early 1942 and would remain there for nearly seven years, during which time Fred and Teddy had three more children: Patty, Lee, and Ricky.

Katherine Bashford, suffering from a heart condition, retired in 1943, leaving Fred their landscape practice. With



Barlow and the design team created many areas for recreation. This large playground was adjacent to the Clubhouse, and overlooked the center green, 1944. Photo: Margaret Lowe.

very little landscape work available then, however, and wanting to contribute to the war effort, Barlow took a job at the Lockheed Aircraft Corporation as a manufacturing engineer, designing the layout of assembly lines.

After World War II Barlow reopened his practice. Using modern landscape principles, he completed the designs for 47 schools (including the Center Street School, Harbor Junior College, and UC Riverside), numerous parks, stores, and office buildings (including the Lever Brothers factory), cemeteries, hotels, and clubs.¹⁸ He was probably most widely known in the post-WWII period for his landscape at Hollywood Park race track, which he redesigned prior to each racing season.

Valuing his association with the American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA), Barlow was active in it from the start of his career, becoming a junior member in 1928 and a full member in 1933. At Fred's urging, Katherine Bashford also joined the ASLA in 1930, becoming a Fellow in 1936. Both Bashford and Barlow were instrumental in the formation of the Southern California Chapter in 1937, and in 1938 Bashford became its first woman president. Fred served the Southern California Chapter continuously, including a term as president, from 1944–45. In addition to being a member and chairman of several committees for the National ASLA, he was elected a trustee in 1947, and vice president from 1951–53—the first West Coast landscape architect to serve in that position.

Unfortunately, Fred Barlow, Jr. died relatively young, at age 50, in 1953. A friend, landscape architect Arthur G. Barton, wrote his obituary for *Landscape Architecture*. One of Fred's outstanding qualities, he said,

was his interest in his profession and its individual practitioners. There was seldom a time when he was not available to interpret landscape architecture to other groups, to discuss a problem with contemporaries or younger members of the profession, or to do a job for the ASLA. Fred's unusual personal charm and the respect he earned for his talented work well done combine to make his death a real loss to society, to his profession, and most of all to his son, his three daughters, and his wife.¹⁹

Barlow was posthumously elected a Fellow of the ASLA in 1953. Katherine Bashford died a few months later.

A Much-Altered Landscape

In the years since Baldwin Hills Village was completed in 1942, changes have taken place to diminish or erase many of the key original elements of Barlow's landscape design. These changes began happening after 1949, when the Village was sold to the New England Mutual Life Insurance Company. The corporation looked at the Village as a sound money-making investment, and their changes reflected that. Tennis courts and tot lots were removed to provide for more garages, which could be rented out; the Clubhouse was turned into two large apartments, effectively eliminating the social center and community heart of the Village.

By the late 1950s, Barlow's decomposed granite pathways had begun to be replaced by concrete sidewalks. His restrained palette of trees and plant materials was added to, and foundation plantings began appearing. Through attrition, the company began eliminating children from this uto-

pian community designed with families in mind.

An unforeseen disaster triggered the greatest change to the landscape. In December 1963 the earthen dam at the Baldwin Hills reservoir above the Village broke, causing flooding and significant damage. While the majority of trees remained, most of the low-level landscaping was washed away. Although the structures at the Village were restored as designed, landscape architect Merrill Winans (1907–1994) was called in to create an entirely new landscape. Barlow's original intent of providing a landscape designed to foster community was replaced by a higher maintenance design meant to be appreciated from windows or sidewalks, with an emphasis placed on views and flowering color. Groundcovers were replaced uniformly with turf, and foundation plantings included a large and complex palette of subtropical flowering shrubs. A wider variety of tree species was introduced, and while the new landscape was attractive, it significantly changed the simplicity and functionality of Barlow's vision.

Renamed "The Village Green" in the 1970s during a conversion from rental apartments to condominiums, the former Baldwin Hills Village became a Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monument in 1977, was included on the National Register of Historic Places in 1993, and became a National Historic Landmark in 2001. Two years later, a small group of homeowners formed a Cultural Landscape Report (CLR) committee, and began working to document the existing condition of the landscape. Because very little was known about Barlow's life or career at the time, the author began exhaustively researching Barlow in order to understand his design intent at Baldwin Hills Village. Nearly 10 years later, the homeowners association's CLR committee, led by chair and author Holly Kane, with guidance from Charles Birnbaum of the Cultural Landscape Foundation (TCLF) and assistance from Architectural Resources Group (ARG) and Mundus Bishop Design, will finally bring the report to completion in 2013.

Conclusion

The revolutionary vision of the progressive design team for Baldwin Hills Village was an unprecedented success. Clarence Stein, writing 10 years after the opening, said:

If Baldwin Hills Village has not answered all of the physical problems of modern community development, it has found a saner and more progressive solution to certain basic difficulties in making city planning realistic and contemporary—of really making it work. We must recognize that to break all the chains that bind us to obsolete forms and procedures of vast city building is a complicated task. We apparently must progress step by step. At Baldwin Hills Village, the problem of co-ordinating full, direct, convenient service by automobile with spacious, peaceful, harmonious living came closer to solution than ever before. In its plan today's problems were frankly faced and answered both logically and beautifully. And so another step has been taken Toward New

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Left: Kodachrome image of the center green, ca. 1950s, as the landscape had begun to mature. Courtesy Cornell University Library. Center and Right: The center green today; Baldwin Hills Village (The Village Green) today. Photos by author.

Steven Keylon, who lives at Baldwin Hills Village (The Village Green), recently coauthored, with Katie Horak of Architectural Resources Group, the Historic Context Statement “Garden Apartments of Los Angeles.” He is working on a biography of landscape architect Fred Barlow, Jr., and has submitted biographical essays about Barlow, Tommy Tomson, and Hammond Sadler for the upcoming third volume of the *Pioneers of American Landscape Design* series. He has been a computer technology consultant with Wells Fargo for many years, and is a CGLHS member.

Endnotes

1. Christopher Tunnard, "Modern Gardens for Modern Houses," *Landscape Architecture* 32, no. 2 (January 1942): 60.
2. Clarence S. Stein, *Towards New Towns for America*, New York, Reinhold Pub. Corp. (1957): 210.
3. *Ibid.*: 189.
4. *Los Angeles Times*, "Village Green, Its Designer, Both Stand Test of Time," (May 29, 1990).
5. Arthur G. Barton, "Visiting Alumni," *California Countryman*. (September, 1927). Thanks to Marlea Graham for bringing this publication to my attention.
6. The ranch house collaborations of Fred Barlow, Jr. and H. Roy Kelley are similar to those in Northern California of Thomas Church and William Wurster. All four men were friends; Wurster even accompanied H. Roy Kelley on his honeymoon in the 1930s. Barlow and Church often met whenever one was in the other's town, or at Church's house at Pasatiempo. H. Roy Kelley unpublished memoirs, UC Santa Barbara. Fred Barlow, Jr. diary, Barlow family archives.
7. Email from Professor Emeritus David Streatfield, December 21, 2010.
8. Bashford and Barlow did the landscape for another Clarence Stein project (also with Reginald D. Johnson and Lewis E. Wilson), Harbor Hills in Lomita (1941). Barlow, in collaboration with Bashford, designed the landscapes for five other public housing projects: Ramona Gardens, Rancho San Pedro, Aliso Village, Avalon Gardens, and Normont Terrace. Besides Baldwin Hills Village, Fred Barlow, Jr. (without Bashford) designed the landscapes for several more garden apartments: Dana Strand Village, Rancho San Pedro extension, and the Estrada Courts Extension. He also designed thirty temporary defense housing projects, including Portsmouth Homes and the Wilmington Hall Dormitories. Besides Barlow, Ralph D. Cornell was the landscape architect most involved in landscapes for modern housing, including Carmelitos, the third Clarence Stein community in Southern California.
9. Clarence S. Stein, *op. cit.*: 202.
10. These smaller garden plan components consisted of the three main greens and their connecting malls, garden courts and garage courts, and the perimeter.
11. At Aliso Village, for example, the landscape created by Fred Barlow, Jr. and Katherine Bashford was described by the *Los Angeles Times* as attempting to "restore much of the former beauty and some of the early California flavor it had when the tract flourished as a vineyard first planted by the Mission fathers. To the few pepper and eucalyptus trees that have withstood the test of time will be added such plants as the white oleander, California olive and walnut, Brazil pepper, live oaks, evergreen grape vines, various types of English ivy and crepe myrtle." References were made to the Spanish land grants as well, describing that because "the Aliso Village site was one of the original centers of the early Spanish colony, all streets in the development will bear Spanish names." Even the names of the projects harked back to early California; in addition to Aliso Village, there were Ramona Gardens, Maravilla, Pico Gardens, Rancho San Pedro, Pueblo del Rio, and Hacienda Village.
12. Fred Barlow, Jr. "as planted" landscape plans, dated 1942. The landscape plans indicate trees, shrubs, groundcovers, and vines using numbers; however, the key to those codes has been lost. The planting palette has for the most part been reconstructed using historic photographs and remaining original plant material, as well as identifying plant materials that Barlow was using on other projects from this period.
13. Barlow and James C. Rose probably first met in 1940, when they were both collaborating on the Southern California chapter of Telesis, planning a show, "and now we plan." It opened at the Los Angeles County Museum in late 1941. Barlow and Rose were both part of the Housing working group, under architect Richard Neutra. ("and now we plan," Telesis exhibition catalog, LACMA archives; Fred Barlow, Jr. 1940-41 diary, Barlow family archives). Barlow also invited Rose to the June 1940 meeting of the Southern California chapter of the ASLA, where Rose gave an illustrated presentation on the "evolution of the contemporary garden with its design based on living." *Landscape Architecture* (September 1940).
14. Henry M. Hesse, *Homes for Moderns*, Murray & Gee, Culver City. (1946): unpaginated.
15. Neither Barlow nor Bashford liked foundation plantings, generally. As early as 1926 Bashford had written "Fortunately the phrase, "the relation of the house to the garden," has taken on a new significance. No longer does it conjure up its sister phrase, "the tying of the house to the ground." The architecture of today grows naturally from the soil, springing up with strong, graceful lines that need no blurring base planting to hold them down." Katherine Bashford, "A Course in the Appreciation of Architecture: The Relation of House to Garden," *California Southland* 76 (April 1926): 28.
16. Reginald D. Johnson, "What is Meant by Housing?" *The Villager* newsletter, Vol 1, No 10 (December 15, 1943).
17. Baldwin Hills Village opened its first phase on December 7, 1941, and as sections were completed, residents were allowed to move in. The Village was completed in 1942. Barlow and his family moved into 5218 Village Green, in Garage Court 3, on April 15, 1942. After Barlow and his wife Teddy had more children, they moved into a larger three-bedroom unit in 1946. In 1948 the Barlows moved to Pasadena, to a large home designed in 1904 by Myron Hunt and Elmer Grey, at 230 North Grand.
18. Arthur G. Barton, "Fred Barlow, Jr. December 20, 1902–March 19, 1953—A Biographical Minute," *Landscape Architecture* (July 1953): 180-181.
19. *Ibid.*
20. Clarence S. Stein, *op. cit.*: 216.

Working with Fred Lang in the Southland's South Coast

Ann Christoph

They say, “Be careful what you ask for; you will probably get it.” In my case, after experiences working in internships for a public agency and then in a corporate setting, I was on a quest for a personalized work experience—one that would incorporate the environmental consciousness fast rising in the early 1970s into landscape architectural practice. I would find this, and more than I ever dreamt of asking for, in the 25 years of working with landscape architect Frederick M. Lang of South Laguna.

In my last year as an art major at Arizona State University I had discovered landscape architecture and urban planning. I took every course I could in the architecture department in my senior year, but graduated still unqualified for those fields. Through a professor's reference I was given a drafting position at Maricopa County's planning office, at \$2.37 per hour. There I learned to use a Leroy lettering machine, to use and clean drafting pens, to draft maps on vellum, and all the mechanics of the drafting and reproduction process. But I hungered to do planning work that would have an effect on how development decisions were made. It was frustrating to be deep in the bureaucracy, so far removed from policy making and design. My boss, Donald Hutton, the planning director, steered me toward pursuing a master's degree in landscape architecture. Off I went to the University of Pennsylvania, where I studied under Ian McHarg, and then on to the University of Michigan.

On the spring break of my last year at Michigan I flew cross-country to Orange County, California looking for work. I had spent the previous summer (1970) working in Long Beach for Linesch & Reynolds, the firm that collaborated with Bill Evans on the design of Disneyworld. There I worked in the back room next to the coffee machine doing small drafting tasks and studies for a regional park at Prado Basin near Riverside. A number of other aspiring landscape architects were at the firm then: Bob Borthwick, who shared the lowly office location with me (in time he became managing principal for Borthwick Guy Bettenhausen; Bill Schulz (who later worked for POD, Sasaki, EDAW, and IMA); Hermina Ehrlich (eventually to practice in Seattle); and Dave Closson (to form his own firm, Closson & Closson).

On most weekends Bob, Bill, Hermina, and I would tour some project in Southern California, learning plant materials and studying project design—examples like Busch Gardens, the Los Angeles County Arboretum, the Huntington Botanical Gardens, and Fashion Island in Newport Beach. We also talked a lot about what was going on in the firm, and how we thought design there could be more environmentally



Fred Lang and Ann Christoph examining lichens on a rock in the South Laguna hills, as part of the botanic research for the General Plan. 1971. Photo: William Aplin.

conscious. I would say we were a bit subversive—the new generation trying to budge the Establishment from what we thought was an orientation too much favoring development. Of course, we knew nothing about the financial aspects of running a firm—certainly not one occupying a beautiful modern-design two-story building that was entered on stepping-stones across a lovely reflecting pool ... one that employed over 20 people, paid its bills on time, and kept a consistent succession of major projects coming across our desks. My white 1964 Ford Fairlane with the coat hanger antenna was a bit out of place in that parking lot.

At the end of summer it was time for me to return to graduate school, but the others continued on with their regular jobs at the firm.

The friendships I made that summer were the reason I came back to Southern California in the following year. About to graduate, I was looking for a permanent position in landscape architecture.

I had two interviews. One was with the Irvine Company, the largest landowner in Orange County. The company was in the beginning phases of turning thousands of acres of agricultural and grazing land into the new communities that would become the City of Irvine. Opportunities were enormous, but even in the interviews the corporate culture overwhelmed me. When the man behind the desk stared at me and interrogated forcefully, “What ... motivates ... you?” I shuddered inside. This wasn't the place for me.

Next came POD, a new firm formed by four graduates of Harvard Graduate School of Design. These young men were fast developing a reputation for innovative and sound design work. The studio was active, even chaotic. Drawings and sketches covered the walls. Rock music throbbed. The atmosphere was intimidating—not in a corporate way, but because I would be expected to be creative in an overwhelming atmosphere that didn't suit my contemplative approach to design. After discussing my qualifications, the interviewer mused, “I wonder what it would be like to have a woman in a responsible position.” I knew then there was even more incompatibility than I had first sensed.

At the end of the day, after these discouraging interviews, I dropped by the office where my friends were working. Perhaps I didn't explain fully all my reservations, but what they heard most strongly was, “I can't work with that rock music.” One of the co-workers from Laguna Beach interjected, “You should try Fred Lang ... Lang and Wood—they play classical music!”

I just wanted to work for a conscientious firm. It didn't have to be big. It didn't have to be famous. I wanted to work for people who were interested in me as a person and my

professional growth as a landscape architect. But I had to go back in Ann Arbor, and there was no time to follow up with the firm that played classical music. So I wrote Fred Lang and soon received a cordial, personally worded reply. He wanted to meet me.

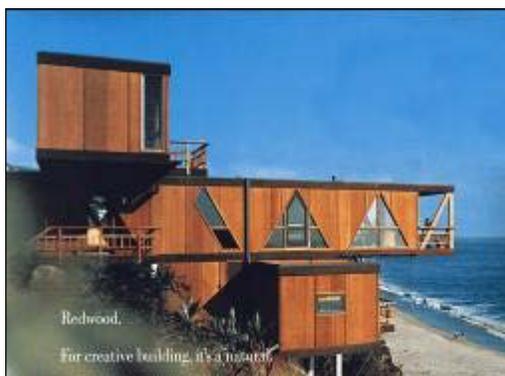
Starting Out at Lang and Wood

After graduating I drove across the country again. Same car, same coat hanger—except this time the whole back seat was loaded with the hi-fi and the rest of my possessions. I pulled into the gravel parking lot of the Lang and Wood office. It was on the ocean front in South Laguna, a modular redwood building with huge cantilevers designed with trusses that left triangular openings for the windows and doors.

I was shown to the front conference room. With the creative architecture and the dramatic crashing surf below, one might expect elegance. But the room was sparsely furnished and in one corner was a somewhat used cat litter box. Fred was late. But soon he breezed in—seersucker jacket, thick wavy blonde graying hair, bushy eyebrows, energetic. He was shorter than I expected. (He would tell me later he was 5' 3½".) He started the interview with a unique question: "I don't know what our chances are that you would come and work with us ...". Then he proceeded to open file drawers in the drafting room, showing me drawings of projects the firm was engaged in. As we were saying goodbye, he said, "I won't call you; you call me."

On the following day he did call, though, and offered me \$4 an hour. Meanwhile I had gotten another offer for \$4.50 from another office. Instead of telling Fred that, and asking for a higher wage, I just said, "Yes." I felt appreciated already and was confident I would learn more in that small personal office than anywhere else.

Fred had a grand proposal in mind: He was going to offer to do a general plan for South Laguna pro bono for the County of Orange ... and I would be the plan's staff person. He wanted the planning team to have excellent credentials so that the County would be more likely to accept both his offer and the resulting plan. Having read and admired Ian McHarg's *Design with Nature*, he was impressed that I had studied with him. He would pay me to work on the plan, but he and all the other team members would be volunteers. The Subcommittee for the South Laguna General Plan, part of the South Laguna Civic Association, included architect Alvin Louis Wiehle, who had studied with Frank Lloyd



The Lang and Wood office building in South Laguna, designed in 1968 by architect Lamont Langworthy. Photo: California Redwood Association.



In 1954, Lang as a Beautification Committee member supervised moving huge Canary Island date palms from a downtown Laguna Beach property slated for redevelopment, to save them from destruction. The worker with the fireman's hat is trying to reduce the weight of the root ball by hosing away the dirt. Photo: Peter Fulmer.

Wright and who had been a planner with William Pereira; Pete Fielding, transportation specialist at UC Irvine; Dick Clark, public relations; geologist Fred Pratley, and Joan Groettrup, secretary.

Our first foray into the realm of County politics and planning was a Planning Commission meeting in Santa Ana in mid-May, 1971. The Commission was hearing a proposal to develop a hillside property above South Laguna with condominiums and a trailer park. Today such a proposal would not even be

considered, but this was in the days before the County applied Environmental Impact Report requirements to private projects—also before the California Coastal Commission. The County had approved formidably bad projects before. Fred's approach was to offer to do a comprehensive plan for the entire area. His envisioned plan would analyze the slopes, geology, vegetation, traffic patterns and capacities, schools, parks ... and then project a development pattern compatible with the natural setting, making a sound future plan for the community.

As we drove to Santa Ana and Fred explained all this to me, I saw what a great opportunity this would be to put into practice all of the environmental planning approaches and principles I had learned with McHarg at Penn, as well as the citizen participation and community preservation processes we had implemented at Michigan.

Fred stood up in the crowded hearing room offering the General Plan as a donation to the County of

Orange, and asking for a continuance on the condo-trailer park development proposal until the plan could be reviewed and approved. Amazingly, the Commission accepted his offer. This was a momentous day in Fred's professional life, but it was years before I understood the significance of that moment, and the courage and foresight it took to conceive of this plan. Also, little did I know at the time that Fred's plan would lead to my own addiction to environmental activism—and that the \$4/hour wage he had promised was a teaser into a life of volunteer community planning work that still continues.

How Fred Lang Became a Landscape Architect

Over the following years I got to know Fred Lang's life story well. Since he had no accent, upon meeting him one would have no way of knowing that he had been born in Germany. He had emigrated to the United States in 1934 when he was only 19. He had just graduated from the Realgymnasium, the German equivalent of high school and

junior college when the Nazis passed laws forbidding non-Aryans from attending university. Fred's parents sent him to Chicago to live with an uncle so that he could further his education. Fred, as he put it, "did not meet Hitler's standard of ethnic mix." (Neither he nor his family was religious, and prior to the Nazi's rise to power his Jewish ancestry seemed to play no role in his life.)

In Chicago Fred attended the Berlitz School and the Chicago Art Institute while working as a translator and correspondent at his uncle's mail-order company. The plan of seeking a formal education seemed to vanish in favor of a more free-spirited lifestyle that followed. Having decided to pursue a career in journalism, Fred wrote stories he hoped would get published. He investigated political figures and in 1935 even went out West to do research at the Huntington Library, where he was much impressed with its botanical gardens. During this foray he traipsed from Bakersfield to Oregon, then to a Wyoming ranch where cowboys put him to work as a cook. In 1937 he made a second trip to California when driving a new car to its delivery destination in downtown Los Angeles. Deciding to stay on, he lived for a while in a "fleabag" hotel. He scraped by on odd jobs while trying to get hired as a reporter, though no editor or publisher accepted his stories.

Still, Fred wouldn't give up. His search for adventure and his unconventional yet enterprising approach to life and work made for stimulating and surprising experiences, both for him and those around him. He had a knack for landing on his feet wherever he found himself, probably because he was friendly, energetic, and willing to pitch in and do whatever needed to be done—and if it led to some new opportunity, whether to earn money just to get by or to learn something new, so much the better.

One of these lucky happenstances changed his life's direction. While hitchhiking to San Diego to look for newspaper work he was left waiting for a ride in Laguna Beach—near the office of building designer and realtor Tom Harper. He chatted with a man from Dresden, one of Harper's salesmen. "Why don't you stay here? This is paradise on earth," his new friend proposed. After Fred groused about job prospects, he was told, "You don't need a job. You could just go fishing!" Then Harper himself offered Fred desk space where he could write, in exchange for running errands and managing the office. "There was an avocado grove up the street and I ate mostly fallen avocados and drank apple brandy. In a way I was trying to lead a very adventurous life," Fred would reminisce.

Then Fred met Bonnie Strayhorn, the teacher he would marry in 1938, after saving wages he'd earned in Ventura while working as an exercise jockey—a job he got thanks to his then-98 lb. physique. While living at first in Bonnie's parents' home in Laguna Beach, Fred worked at delivering newspapers for a stationery store; he also took care of his father-in-law's large garden. Meanwhile, Harper arranged for loans that enabled Fred to buy a lot and then build a house on it. Asked to do the landscaping at his employer's home, he sought advice from several experts. He began to learn whatever he could about particular plant species and their suitability for different growing conditions and pur-

poses. He even started a fledgling nursery business by buying small plants at a cheap price, repotting them, then tending them while they grew larger and more marketable. Whenever a small landscaping job was available, he'd take it. And though he'd had no luck in selling his prose to publications, he put his writing skills to good use in publicizing his business.

A Garden by Lang will always represent an honest attempt to deliver the most in good taste and practicality. Thorough, detailed planning, a serious effort to acquaint you with the nature and requirements of the plants to be yours is a service given with pleasure.

On March 13, 1940, Frederick Mack Lang—the document used his birth name, Friedel Max Lang—became a US citizen. In 1941 he, Bonnie, and their first daughter, Una Marie, moved to the more rural area of South Laguna, where Fred (now weighing 130 lbs.) grew tomatoes and kept pigs and poultry. He was increasingly designing landscapes and installing plants, and was particularly fond of and knowledgeable about eucalyptus trees. Knowing Theodore Payne, he too promoted California native plants.

Soon after the US entered World War II at the end of 1941 Fred joined the Merchant Marines. He served as a purser on ships that delivered gasoline to ports all around the world, which allowed him to get acquainted with a wide variety of plant-growing climates and terrains. He was especially drawn to plants in tropical places.

When the war ended, Fred briefly took a job as a draftsman in the San Francisco office of Thomas D. Church. He wanted to find out how this innovative landscape architect did his work. He admired the simplicity of Church's designs and noticed that he paid more attention to clients' special interests and needs than to promoting the art of landscaping. Church was also outspoken. "He designed creatively to the point of surprise and humor by bringing a sweep into it, not a pick, pick, pick," Fred would say. The experience was inspirational and transformative, renewing Fred's confidence in presenting his own ideas about how landscapes might be created or altered.



This garden by Fred Lang was featured in a 1966 Sunset magazine. The curvilinear layout, gridded pavement dividers, and sculptural boulders reflect the work of Thomas Church, with whom Lang worked in the mid-1940s. Photo: William Aplin.

Lang was ready now to settle down again in the Laguna area. He opened his Garden Shack nursery, where he sold plants, but primarily used the location as a base of operations for his landscaping business. The exposure to Church's design methods guided his expansion of service to include hardscape and constructed elements of landscape design in addition to planting design. He would become known for his Tommy Church-influenced pebbly concrete patios, which had a grid created by regularly spaced redwood headers and a flowing, curvilinear edge. The naturalistic shapes of the paving fit his idea that the outdoors should not be dominated by architectural linearity; that the garden should be allowed to dominate. This is one of the key ideas of Lang's "Gardenesque" approach to landscape design.

By 1949 Lang had done some impressive work, and a client's garden, with his second daughter Katie, born in 1943, posing, were photographed for the cover of *Better Homes and Gardens* magazine. He developed relationships with *Sunset* magazine's editors, who appreciated his work far more than publishers had in past years. Lang contributed to articles and served as a consultant to the *Western Garden Book* and the magazine's garden panel, which met monthly to advise the editors on future articles. These meetings took place at the Jonathan Club in downtown Los Angeles, and Fred loved them because he could talk with professionals engaged in challenging projects, doing new research and introducing new plants.

In Laguna Beach Lang became involved with various citywide landscaping projects with the formation of the Chamber of Commerce's Beautification Committee. After seeing some splendid succulent collections in Italy, he saw their great potential in landscaping, and began to learn a lot about them from experts. Then he started planting them himself. *Aloe arborescens*, the red hot poker, became one of his signature plants. His palette of aloes, agaves, and jade plants—with their sculptural shapes, interesting textures, flowers, and low water needs—are now associated with the coastal images of Laguna Beach.

Fred Lang Prospers

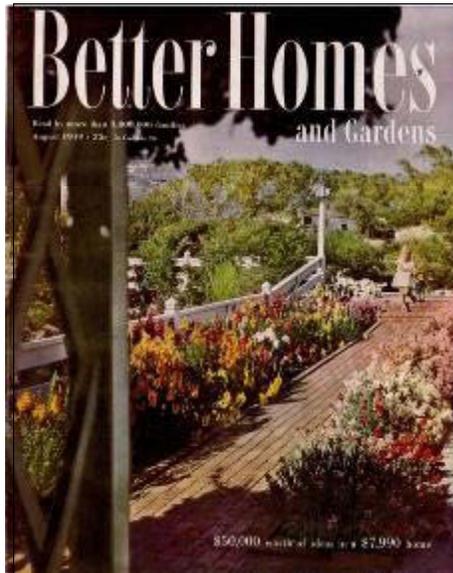
In 1954, Fred Lang was among the first people to be granted the newly established California Landscape Architect's license. Since he had been practicing the profession for a long time, he was not subject to any examinations; he received his license by merely applying for it. Fred took trips abroad to investigate plants in their natural habitats, particularly those growing in Mediterranean climates. Botanical and ecological research eventually took Fred, and often Bonnie too, to Australia, New Zealand, Indonesia, Mauritius, Madagascar, South and East Africa, the Middle East, the Mediterranean coastlines and islands, Mexico, Europe, the Azores, and the Caribbean, Hawaiian, and South Sea islands. His knowledge of plants and their habitats became encyclopedic.

Since landscape contracting was becoming his main focus, Fred gradually phased out of the nursery business and closed the Garden Shack, although he kept an acclimatizing nursery on Treasure Island, where plants from inland could adapt to the ocean's salty winds. He regularly designed and constructed his own work. Initially he did very beautiful and detailed drawings in his own distinctive hand, but later he relied on draftsmen to execute working drawings from his sketches.

Lang had a continuous clientele of homeowners, but he wanted to explore how to could bring his Gardenesque style to public and commercial work. Regarding plants as individual living entities for which he would find appropriate and beautiful locations, he thought carefully about how particular ones would relate to the other plants

around them and to the needs and views of his clients. He looked at outdoor sites as opportunities for gardens—places that would explore the intricate relationships among plants and their flowers. He appreciated unusual qualities in plants from elsewhere in the world—particularly ones he knew would thrive in Southern California's Mediterranean climate.

Lang's planting design approach was very unlike the prevailing ones, which looked at plants as outdoor furniture and architectural elements, where simplicity



Fred Lang's landscaping of the Clarence Brown garden in Three Arch Bay was featured on the cover of this popular magazine in August 1949. Photo: Maynard Parker.



Harper residence in Three Arch Bay is a consummate example of Lang's Gardenesque style. The unassuming patio paving is merely a staging area to experience a beautiful display of plantings, boulders, and stream. Photo: Ann Christoph.

and repetition made strong and bold statements. Gardenesque design has been accused of being “too fussy,” too reliant on sophisticated maintenance, and not expressing a clear design concept, especially when being applied to larger, nonresidential settings. Yet Lang found a way to simplify and introduce broad sweeps of plant material in his larger-scale work, while retaining the benefits of his plant-oriented, signature Gardenesque approach.

In the late 1950s and early '60s, Lang began to work with architect William Blurock in preparing landscape plans for a series of schools throughout Orange County. Then came the biggest assignment of his life: as landscape master planner for the new University of California Irvine (UCI) campus in 1963. Lang teamed with two other landscape architects, Jacques Hahn, of Hahn and Hoffman, and Robert Herrick Carter, to establish Associated Landscape Architects. All were plants people. Lang’s most image-making contributions to that scheme are the rock and succulent garden in Aldrich Park and the *Eucalyptus grandis*, the now-huge trees that encircle the campus.

In 1966 Ken Wood, a talented designer, started working with Lang in the little office below his First Avenue house. This office under the kitchen had a low ceiling and was crowded with books and drawings. Secretary-bookkeeper Tish Shelton typed at the front desk. (For years, books on her desk were topped with a paper plate holding samples of coyote scat, since Lang was fascinated by what the droppings revealed about the animal’s diet. I am sure that Tish found it much less appealing.)

There was a tiny bathroom and a cabinet with rows of empty Scotch bottles from Lang’s pre-Margarita phase. There was a small table and a large light table with more rolls of drawings and slides spread out. Then there was Lang’s L-shaped desk under large windows with lovely views into his shady garden. His desk was amply covered with more notes and papers. Though quaint, it was no place for a corporation to function or for a firm that aspired to take on large projects to bring their clients.

When in 1968 Fred and Ken formed the firm of Lang and Wood, Lang conferred with architect Lamont Langworthy about building a house/office on his lot near the Aliso Beach pedestrian bridge. Langworthy had just designed a modular building system



Above: The Eucalyptus grandis trees that Fred Lang selected for this pathway at UC Irvine provided a quick forest when the University was young. Photo from an early UCI brochure. Below: The UCI landscape about 30 years later, with the Eucalyptus grandis trees on the right. Photo: Ann Christoph.

that allowed the stacking of prefabricated units, and they agreed that this would be a perfect solution for the steeply sloping lot. By 1969, the stacked tri-level, nicknamed “The Train Wreck,” was in place. This landmark building made a beautiful and inspiring setting for Lang and Wood’s operation. Ken Wood, his wife Kristin, and baby daughter Kimberly lived in the apartment below the office. But soon after I began working there in 1971, they moved to a new home in Irvine. At Tish’s suggestion, Fred agreed to let me rent this cozy niche, and I lived there for the next nine years.

Lang never moved from his comfortable home lair. The two offices were interconnected by telephone and frequent ferrying of drawings back and forth. Together, Lang and Wood designed Dana Point Harbor, Tallac Knoll and other projects for the Los Angeles County Arboretum, Main Beach Park, Lion Country Safari (where Verizon Amphitheater is now), the Environmental Nature Center in Newport Beach, the Laguna Beach School of Art, and many other projects. There was a frantic level of activity most of the time, with Lang having various commitments and site work going, and Wood trying to keep up the design and drawing pace to meet project schedules.

Amid all this office busyness, in 1969 Lang became involved in a life-changing experience: he became part of Project 21 at UCI. This organization of business and government leaders was setting out to help Orange County prepare for the future. Its Open Space Study Team looked ahead to preserving open space in an Orange County that was projected to be completely built out in the coming decades. “Now that ... we are into the 21st century,” says fellow team member, planning commissioner and architect Ron Yeo, “we can look back and envision that the existing Laguna Wilderness Park, Casper’s Park, Aliso/Wood Creek & Peters Canyon Corridors would probably never have come into existence and reserved as open space without the efforts of this Study Team.”¹

A new world opened for Lang: he could take political action in the cause of environmental planning, and Project 21 gave him the county-wide contacts that became his activist network. This led to his appointment to the County’s Citizens’ Direction-Finding Commission, a group that made recommendations on incorpo-



Fred Lang strolls along pathway surrounded by the landscape he designed at UC Irvine. Photo: William Aplin.

rating growth policies and environmental evaluation into the County's land planning.

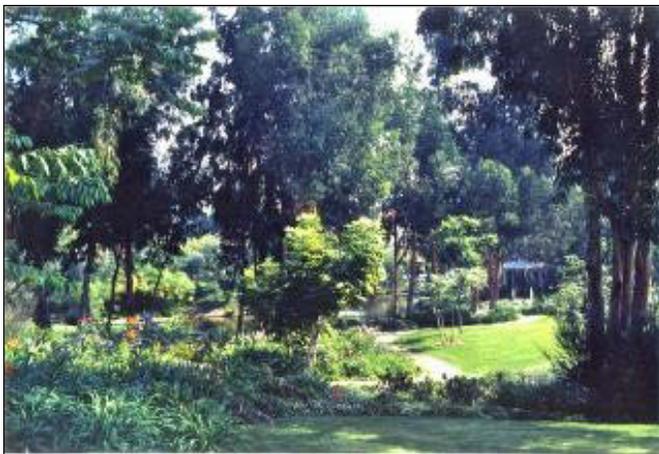
Our Work Together

This was the newly empowered Fred who interviewed me in 1971. He had every asset for success in his endeavors—intelligence, persistence, courage. But in his mind he lacked what I had just earned: a master's degree. I had no idea at that time that he was in awe of this accomplishment. He'd had such an unorthodox, free-spirited education, and in his persistent, self-directed way had learned more than any master's program could have taught. Yet he wished he could explain what he knew by having a few letters after his name. He thought that as a team we'd have the perfect combination of qualities for success in his planning efforts.

The Subcommittee Fred organized completed the general plan for South Laguna, and it was adopted by Orange County in 1973–74. It led to the preservation of the South Laguna hillsides, the creation of the South Laguna Village Green (which we also designed), and many community improvements, including the planted medians on the Coast Highway.

The work on the general plan was very controversial since Orange County had never before used environmental factors to control the limits of development. Conservative developer-oriented groups and attorneys came out in force to testify against our plan. Among them was Pete Rimel, secretary of Orange County's Central Labor Council and president of CEEED (Californians for an Environment of Excellence, Full Employment and a Strong Economy through Planned Development), a pro-development lobbying group. In his 1974 testimony against Lang, he condemned Lang by citing his environmental résumé.

I think the public should know ... that this man, along with others in the group, was on the board of directors of the Environmental Coalition, was connected with the University's Project 21 Open Space (Team), Laguna Greenbelt committee, the Citizen's Direction Finding Commission, and almost every anti-growth, anti-business organization in the county.... He can be counted upon at these citizens' commissions to deliver the straight party line against business and growth.¹



At the five-acre Quisling residence Lang planted a garden along the stream and among the mature eucalyptus. Photo: Ann Christoph.



This planting plan for part of the Brandenburg residence at Pebble Beach is an example of the intricate planting plans that Fred Lang would develop. From the author's collection.

Lang saw it differently. He would deliver the straight party line that promoted preservation of the environment and reasonable growth. He did not back down in response to the intense criticism. And he did not let the political troubles affect his work and his enjoyment of the world of plants and garden design. At the same time that we were planning for South Laguna, we were busy with project design for residences, commercial projects, parks, and schools. When Fred met with clients, sometimes I would go along to take notes and measurements, as well as see the situation. The detail that he considered was instructive: his plans considered how the clients would be using the spaces, and what they would see from every vantage point. The resulting plans were flowing and very complex. We would take those tissue paper sketches, full of notes, color, and plant names with overlaying connecting lines, and make them into drafted biddable documents. There would always be a few plants I had never heard of on each plan. The question would inevitably arise, "But Fred, where are these plants available?" This was in the day when most offices were designing in a simplified fashion with a very limited plant list; the nurseries' offerings likewise lacked much variety. Fred's complicated Gardenesque approach was out of style for everyone but his appreciative clients. Fred had fun with his projects, inserting meanings into design that only fellow designers would appreciate—as in planting *Muehlenbeckia axillaris* (wire vine) in front of the building complex of a wire manufacturer.

One day in the late 1970s Lang was especially excited. A client had called to say that a lump in his driveway was getting larger every day. "Could it be a truffle?" Lang was ecstatic. Lang sometimes used clients' gardens for his own experiments. While in Spain, he had gathered the mycelium that forms gourmet truffles. It has a symbiotic relationship with cork oak trees, so when Fred got home he put the mycelium in the cans holding 10 or so small cork oak trees. He proceeded to plant the trees in various clients' homes, then waited to see what would happen. Now for several days the office was in an uproar while Lang was digging up the lump and getting it tested. It turned out to be a fungus, all right—but, disappointingly, not a truffle.

When the United States sent troops to Somalia in 1992, it stirred up interest in the country and its customs—including the Somalians’ practice of chewing Qat tree leaves, which contained a natural stimulant. Federal drug authorities considered Qat a controlled substance.

One day when I went over to his office, Lang was in a big hurry. “I have to go. I have to meet a reporter from the *Los Angeles Times* who wants to interview me about the Qat tree that I planted.” I confronted him: “How did the *Times* know about that?” “Well,” he said sheepishly, “I called them and told them about it.” The reporter was shown the tree, and he wrote his article without disclosing the tree’s location.

I still get phone calls asking me where that tree is—just one of the many Lang legacies I still live with. The more important legacies involve Fred’s design and planting approach, his attention to detail, his persistent concern for the environment. I am still not giving up on the community planning we started together: always striving for the best solution, and enjoying the networking with people who can help make it happen.

Postscript

In 1981 Fred and Ken decided to close Lang and Wood. Each formed his own separate firm, and I began my practice as Ann Christoph Landscape Architect ASLA. I had moved out of the ocean front apartment into my own home a block from Fred’s. So we established a new working relationship, operating it from our home offices. We served as consultants to each other’s firms. We shared equipment, and our secretary/bookkeeper walked back and forth from one office to the other. We continued our community-planning involvement with the South Laguna Civic Association and served on the South Laguna Specific Plan Board of Review. We worked together on plant studies and on the history of the Irvine Ranch Agricultural Headquarters for the City of Irvine. Fred consulted with the Irvine Company, taught plant materials at UC Irvine and Cal Poly Pomona, and designed several large estates and many smaller residences.

In 1983, together we toured historical gardens of France, Spain, Italy, and East Germany, where we visited his cousins in his home town of Meiningen. On this trip I had the opportunity to hear stories of his growing-up days and the history of Europe as it had affected him. East Germany at that time seemed almost untouched by modernization. Horses were still pulling hay wagons and pre-WWII buildings dominated (with some still showing the broken walls of wartime bombing). So it was easy to picture the setting in which Fred had lived as a boy.

In 1987 South Laguna was annexed to the City of Laguna Beach, and we embarked on a new planning chapter. The South Laguna plan had to be done a third time. Fred and I continued to be involved in this new venue. I opened an office on the Coast Highway, and again we shared staff. (His name is on the office sign to this day.)



The 5-acre Quisling residence in Lemon Heights was landscaped by Lang and Ann Christoph over several years, beginning with the site planning, grading concept, then hardscape design and planting. Site design from the author’s collection.

Fred remained very active and energetic, even into his 70s. I would see him jogging up the street from the post office. Then he was struck with Parkinson’s disease. With that and a series of small strokes he began to deteriorate. He stopped his usual morning calls and increasingly needed help with daily living. He and Bonnie hired caregivers to help them. Still, I could often get good advice from him, and he enjoyed walking the neighborhood slowly with his caregiver and inviting the neighbors for cocktails. Then one evening in May of 1996 I saw the fire engine at Fred’s house. Paramedics were taking him away on a stretcher. He died several days later from the heart attack he had suffered.

Fred Lang would be remembered, the *Laguna Coastline News* declared on May 24, for his extensive public service and the thoughtful use of native and Mediterranean plant species in the public and private spaces he designed. And when the City of Laguna Beach created a new park on the site of the former Aliso School, it was named Frederick M. Lang Park in honor of the man who, in person and through his influence on other landscape architects, has done so much to shape the look of Laguna Beach.

Fred’s third daughter, Karen, writes, “The way he gave drama and thrills to the little things most people don’t even notice is what I love him for the most. He passed his love of life to me. Big adventures aren’t necessary because every moment and every cranny can be wonderful.”

With Fred Lang I got what I had asked for—and so much more.

Notes: Portions of this article were adapted from a series originally published in the *Laguna Beach Independent* in 2006. Some information in it came from a series of interviews with Lang conducted ca. 1994 by Rena Lasch & Elizabeth Leland. Lang’s memoir was never written.

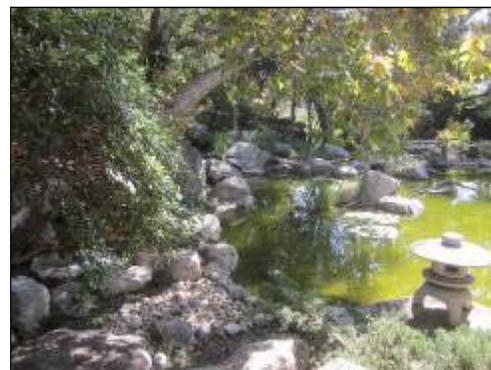
1. Personal communication after Fred died in 1996.
2. Transcription from a ca. 1974 Orange County Planning Commission hearing on the 2nd amendment to the South Laguna General Plan.

Ann Christoph, who grew up in Wisconsin and Arizona, earned an MLA from University of Michigan. She then moved to Southern California in 1971 to work with Fred Lang at the firm of Lang and Wood. This article profiles their working and personal relationship that lasted until his death in 1996. In 1981 she established her own landscape architecture firm in South Laguna, Ann Christoph Landscape Architect, ASLA, which provides services to a broad range of public, institutional, and residential clients. Projects range from landscape master plans, parks, and open spaces to specialty gardens, both public and private. She has often undertaken assignments that involve preservation and restoration of historic gardens. Among her notable accomplishments are designing the Shakespeare Garden at the Huntington Botanical Gardens, the Sunset Demonstration Garden at the LA County Arboretum, the Irvine Ranch Historic Park landscape, and parks, streetscapes, and community gardens in her home city of Laguna Beach. Additionally, she taught landscape architecture classes at Saddleback College and UC Irvine, and has served as Laguna Beach mayor and councilmember. She writes a biweekly column on environmental and community issues for the Laguna Beach Independent. She is a CGLHS member. Visit <http://www.ac-la.com/company.php>

Pasadena's Historic Designed Gardens: A CGLHS Tour & Talk

Leslie Comras Aiken

On Saturday morning, October 13, some 50 landscape architects and designers, horticulturists, professors, and garden enthusiasts gathered at the venerable La Casita del Arroyo building to learn more about an important garden survey going on in Pasadena. This one-day “Tour & Talk” conference had been organized by CGLHS membership secretary Ann Scheid, who introduced Kevin Johnson. A Pasadena City Planner and the survey’s Project Manager, he gave attendees a succinct overview of the survey and its progress. In 2011, the California State Office of Historic Preservation awarded the City a grant to identify the city’s historic “designed gardens.” The ongoing project includes a description of the history and different types of gardens, and also identifies important landscape architects and designers. It may be the nation’s first such survey. When the study ends, one historic district and 10 properties will be nominated for listings in the National Register of Historic Places. (The Summer *Eden*



Pond at the Storrier Stearns Japanese Garden.



A view of lush planting down the steep hillside at the Kencott garden.

announced that three CGLHS members—Ann Scheid, Kelly Comras, and Marlise Fratinardo—were taking part in the survey work.)

Following the lecture and a lively Q&A session, participants enjoyed an elegant box lunch, then drove off to visit three local historic gardens—all either on or nominated for the National Register of Historic Places.

The first stop was the Storrier Stearns Japanese Garden. This large estate “stroll garden” was designed by Kinzuchi Fujii and built for Charles and Ellamae Sorrier Stearns in the late 1930s. Serene, meandering pathways lead around pools, ponds, and lovely water features. The garden has been extensively restored by current owners Connie and Jim Haddad, with help from Takeo Uesugi, Professor Emeritus of Landscape Design at Cal Poly Pomona. The Japanese teahouse, destroyed by fire decades ago, was rebuilt following the original Japanese plans. The garden, already listed on the National Register of Historic Places, is a California Historical Landmark, and recently received a

Historic Preservation Award. Email info@japanesegardenpasadena.com.

Kencott, a Tudor Revival mansion, is located above the Arroyo Seco in west Pasadena. The Kenyon Reynolds Garden, originally designed in the 1920s by noted landscape architect Katherine Bashford, rolls down a hillside into a ravine. The current owners oversaw the refurbishment and restoration of this garden. Terraced sitting areas at different sites are ideal for quiet reading, conversing, or simply enjoying the views. Paths and steps on both sides of the ravine encourage walks up and down the slopes—to spot charming whimsies in the bushes, a grassy play area, the swimming pool, a gazebo, and fantastical artwork. Although most of the garden is groomed, the natural pond at the ravine’s bottom conveys the Arroyo area’s original seclusion.



Covered deck and concrete pathway lined with plants at the Richard and Mary Alice Frank modernist home.

Leaping forward to mid-20th-century architecture, the Richard and Mary Alice Frank Garden designed by Barrett Eckbo complements the modernist design of their 1957 Calvin Straub/Buff and Hensman house. Distinct features of that era include modular arrangement, wood decking, pebble pavement, and see-through glass features that allow distant views from many angles. Integrated terraces and decking surrounding the house offer indoor-outdoor access and extraordinary views across the Arroyo. Both the Frank and Kencott gardens are nominees for the National Register of Historic Places.

This unique study is turning up numerous previously unidentified historic gardens in Pasadena, with some evidently qualifying as national treasures—worthy of becoming resources for further research. Owners hitherto unaware of their gardens’ unique historic value may be inspired to preserve them—and restore them if need be.

*Leslie Comras Aiken reported in the Fall 2012 issue of *Eden* on the CGLHS conference on Sonoma County nurseries held last September in the Santa Rosa area. A Southern California native, she is converting landscapes in her several urban residential properties into ecologically beneficial orchards and edible gardens. When traveling abroad, this “garden connoisseur” tours representative installations, and most recently explored ancient gardens in Israel and China. The photos above were taken by her.*

April in Fresno: An Upcoming CGLHS Weekend Event

April 12–14

An underground summer cave (house)-and-garden 40 years in the making ... a 1929 Helen Van Pelt *boulingris* ... a sequestered Japanese stroll garden with views through almond trees to the Sierra ... a nearly quarter-mile-long carriage drive lined on two sides with hundred-year-old olive trees ... an estate with pond, parterre, buried wine cellar,



pool, tennis court, bocce court, orchard, and vista over the bed of the dammed San Joaquin River: that is the Fresno CGLHS offers you during the weekend of April 12th to 14th.

Robert Boro, a fourth-generation Fresno native who has worked as a landscape architect in Belgium and Israel, as well as in the Central Valley, will be our principal guide. Bob's work is ubiquitous. (His signature boxwood will greet you if you arrive by train at the renovated Southern Pacific Railroad Station.) He has contributed, as either the dominant or secondary agent, to the shaping of four of the five contemporary gardens we shall see.

Bob was *not* involved with our opening salvo: the city's vernacular monument, the Forestiere Underground Gardens (1906-1946). Baldassare Forestiere's subterranean maze is a far cry from the commodious houses of the Fig Garden area where the majority of our subject gardens are located ... and where we will be hosted for a garden reception on Friday evening.

When Bob opens up his home to us on the same evening, we will also have the opportunity to see the interior of a 1930s house in the historic Tower District.



Above: The Torii Gate and Gatehouse at the Clark Center for Japanese Art and Culture in Hanford. Below: Bob Boro standing in the Clark's Garden. Photos: Jean Von Berg.

It is hard to think of another city in the state that has as extensive—or as intact—a pre-World War II residential area as Fresno's contiguous Tower and Fig Garden districts.

This "Fresno Frolic" will take us through a period of 125 years, beginning with M. Theodore Kearney's 1889, seven-mile-long, palm-and-eucalyptus-lined West Kearney Boulevard, and continuing, later, with in-town gardens from our own era.

The itinerary will also lead us to the Japanese building-garden-and-museum complex created, over a period of many years, by Willard G. ("Bill") and Elizabeth Clark in Hanford. There the visit will encompass two *very* recent happenings: the remodel completed last October of the bonsai garden; and the arrival, on January 4th, 2013—and the placement on exhibit—of a 6' x 12 ½' screen, painted in 1917, that depicts an idealized view of a rugged Chinese mountain chain.

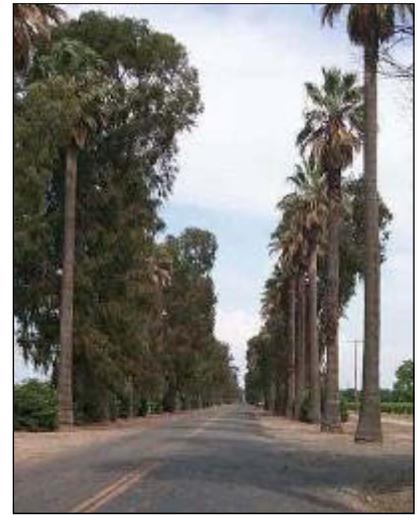
With a flourish we will finish late Sunday morning on a bluff covered with giant solar panels overlooking the wild, empty bed of the otherwise occupied San Joaquin River.

If Fresno alone can supply all this, consider the garden and landscape treasures that remain to be discovered in the Great Central Valley.



Sicilian immigrant Baldassare Forestiere, born in 1879, when creating his Underground Gardens "learned by doing" whatever skills were needed in engineering, architecture, art, construction work, and horticulture. He died in 1946. Photos: <http://forestiere-historicalcenter.com/index.html>.

—Phoebe Cutler



Left: Fresno's "Raisin King" and benefactor M. Theo (Martin Theodore) Kearney (1842-1906). Middle: Kearney and a group of friends pose in their horseless carriages, c. 1905, on what is now Kearney Blvd. (Kearney is driving the foremost horseless carriage on the left; he has a lap robe over his legs. Note the horse and buggy in the background. The palms and eucalyptus are discernible, although the eucalyptus trees greatly overshadow the palms during that period.) Photos: Courtesy M.T. Kearney Collection, Fresno Historical Society Archives. Right: Kearney Blvd. today, still lined with palms and eucalyptus. Photo: Marlea Graham.

REGISTRATION & LOGISTICS FOR THE "FRESNO FROLIC"

The tour will begin late Friday afternoon with the Forestiere Underground Gardens. The fee for the Frolic is a flat \$85. It covers two entry fees, two Friday receptions, a sandwich at lunch, and a dinner Saturday night at an Armenian restaurant. The fee is *NEITHER DIVISIBLE NOR REFUNDABLE*. In case of cancellation, it will become a donation to CGLHS.

Please write a check to CGLHS and send it to Phoebe Cutler, 445 Clipper St., San Francisco, CA 94114-3622. Include contact information. Brief questions requiring even briefer responses can be addressed to Ms. Cutler at 415-648-4823 or amis@cutlersmith.com. The itinerary will be e-mailed upon receipt of the check. Checks must be postmarked by March 15. *SPACE IS LIMITED.*

A block of rooms will be reserved until March 31 at the Park Inn, Radisson, 3737 N. Blackstone (\$89 per room—tax but not breakfast, included). Contact 559-226-2200 to obtain the group rate.

By car, Fresno is 3 hours from San Francisco and 3½ from Los Angeles. Or try Amtrak: Four hours from the Bay Area (\$32 one way); ca. 5 hours from LA (\$31 one way, which includes a bus link and sometimes a quick change in Bakersfield). A taxi ride to the hotel completes this relatively painless (especially from the north) mode of travel.

Suggestions for a Self-guided Tour of the Fresno Area

Have you *never* been to Fresno? When I-5 replaced Highway 99 as the main north/south route, it ended many drivers' passage through the city. Located in the very center of the Central Valley, it isn't exactly a small town. With a population of over a half-million, it's the fifth largest city in California, and the metropolitan area doubles that population.

Fresno has plenty of history. Founded in 1856 (its name is the Spanish word for the ash tree, which abounded beside rivers), it became the commercial center for shipping out agricultural goods grown in the San Joaquin Valley, after both railroad lines and irrigation canals were introduced during the latter part of the 19th century—when M. Theo Kearney became a major developer. Its most prominent products are cotton, nuts, vegetables, poultry, and many kinds of fruit, including table, raisin, and wine grapes.

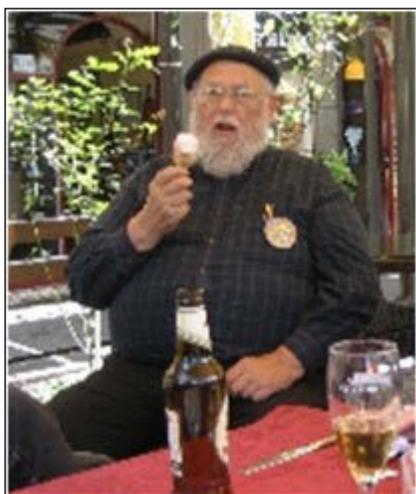
Additional sites to visit in Fresno might include the lively commercial and residential Tower District near Roeding Park and City College. This district is distinguished by its tower-topped movie theater, its Art Deco stores, and distinctive residences from the 1920s to the '40s. Just a few blocks south you can make up your own mind about the controversial Fulton Mall; Garrett Eckbo's contribution to the city center is one of the nation's few survivors from the '60s fashion for downtown malls. The Cultural Landscape Foundation has made up its mind and is championing this modernist pathway. Roeding Park has a leafy canopy, a distinguished heritage, and the imaginative '50s Storyland featured in the Summer 2012 *Eden*. Fresno State has an even more bountiful tree cover. A guide to this virtual arboretum can be downloaded at <http://www.fresnostate.edu/adminserv/arboretum/documents/TreeWalkGuide.pdf>.

The city is close to numerous mountain and lake resorts, and near the west side of the Sierra Nevada Range. Yosemite, Kings Canyon, and Sequoia National Parks are all only about an hour's drive away.



The old Fresno Water Tower, built in 1894, once held 250,000 gallons. Photo: <http://historicfresno.org/nrhp/wtrtwr.htm>.

In Memoriam: Thomas Alfred Brown, ASLA (1932–2012)



Tom enjoying a vanilla gelato in Rome, 2012. Photo: Sherman Bloom.

Thomas A. Brown, ASLA, founding member and immediate past president of the California Garden & Landscape History Society, died unexpectedly in Rome on October 8, 2012.

Tom was returning from a sketching tour of Italian gardens, which he had helped to organize with artist and landscape architect Lisa Guthrie. He was buried in Rome.

He leaves a cousin, Mary Ann Grannemann, in Wilmette, Illinois, and a host of friends from all walks of life, who will miss his presence and his larger-than-life personality, says his friend, colleague, and executor, Thomas Bassett.

Brown was a scholar, author, and by profession, a landscape architect—and, a man of strong wit. He was a popular speaker on a full range of topics from world gardens (Italian to Islamic), and a noted scholar and restoration consultant for California missions and their gardens. He was also an expert on early California roses and on American ships.

He belonged to a chorus, his voice adding a fine bass to performances of the Chanson Sonoma and to the choir of the United Church of Christ Church of Petaluma.

Tom Brown was born in Illinois in 1932. He received a BLA in landscape architecture in 1963, and an MLA from UC Berkeley in 1969. He worked at Royston, Hanamoto, Beck & Abey in San Francisco before starting his own firm in Petaluma in 1974, specializing in historic landscape restoration and research. He worked on many important historic surveys in California, including Monterey's Presidio Chapel, the Pardee House and the Camron-Stanford House in Oakland, the Leland Stanford Mansion in Sacramento, and the Johnson House in Half Moon Bay.

He was a lecturer in the UC Berkeley Extension Landscape Architecture Program, and taught at Bay Area community colleges. Tom gave generously of his time and knowledge to others who were working in his numerous areas of expertise.

Tom served 10 years on the board of CGLHS, including four as president ((2007–2011). He was a featured speaker at a number of our conferences. He contributed a fascinating three-part article to our journal, *Eden*, on the plants of Japan and how they made their way to California. (See the Fall 2007, Spring 2008, and Summer 2008 issues.) His long article on "Sonoma County's Landscape and Horticultural History," written to promote our upcoming conference in Santa Rosa, appeared in the Summer 2012 issue of *Eden*.



Tom sketching in Italy. Photo: Sherman Bloom.

Members of CGLHS who attended the conference in September learned from Tom himself about his work and research on the historic planting plan for the Luther Burbank Home & Gardens in Santa Rosa. We are grateful to have seen and heard him this one last time.

Two memorial services were held in November: on Sunday, November 4 at the United Church of Christ in Petaluma; and on Thursday, November 15 at UC Berkeley's Botanical Garden.

—Marlea Graham and Judy Horton

Publications by Thomas A. Brown

19th Century Horticulturists and Plant Raisers (1998) monograph.

A List of California Nurseries and Their Catalogue, 1850-1900, (1989, revised 1993) monograph.

Landscapes and Gardens of the Mission Era (1980) monograph. "How Should Designers Think about Nature?"

Review of *Denatured Visions* (with Robert S. Sena, Ph.D.) in *Planning for Higher Education* (Winter 1993-94).

"Paradise in Print." A discussion of eight new and old books on Islamic gardens in *Pacific Horticulture* (Winter 1982-83).

"California Mission Gardens." *Pacific Horticulture* (Spring 1988).

"The Landscape of Early Monterey," in *The Monterey Mesa, Oldest Neighborhood in California* (City of Monterey, 2002).

"Plants of Japan." *Eden* (Fall 2007).

"Japanese Plants Come to California." *Eden* (Fall 2007).

"Japanese Plants: The Yokohama Connection." *Eden* (Summer 2008).

"Sonoma County's Landscape and Horticultural History." *Eden* (Summer 2012).

Note from Marlea Graham: *The Ships of Colonial California* (2010), an incomplete monograph, may be published "as is" unless the updated (corrected) version can be found in Tom's computer files. He said that this one contained a lot of errors. But if the corrected version can't be retrieved, this one may be issued just to get the basic information out there. Then some other interested party may correct it later.



Postings

Reporting on the Memorial Service for Tom Brown

Tom Bassett, the master of ceremonies, and Tom Brown's oldest friend present that day, was astounded. He always figured Tom Brown for a loner, but the Ornduff Room at UC Berkeley's Botanical Garden on the afternoon of November 15 was full-to-overflowing. More than 50 people came to honor the distinctive figure who for over 40 years wrote, thought, and lectured about landscape history, plants, and preservation.

Betsy Flack, formerly an educator with the Garden Conservancy, and Lisa Guthrie, an artist and designer who with Tom led that fateful Fall program in Italy for artists, had organized the event.

Tom Bassett, a longtime practicing landscape architect and Tom Brown's classmate at UC Berkeley, described how in early October he was awakened at 5 a.m. to learn from the State Department the news of Tom's sudden demise. He reassured the audience that his old friend is about as near to heaven as one can get, buried as he is at the Murano Cemetery, not far from the Borghese Gardens.

A succession of speakers spoke to the variegated past of the honoree. Several had been Tom's students. One, David Hansen, was both a fellow landscape architect and fellow chorister. Pat and Jane Miller had co-taught with him. One couple had hosted him at an annual get-away. At least two, Dick Turner, former editor of *Pacific Horticulture*, and Christopher Carmichael, Associate Director of the Botanical Garden, shared a bond with him as former Michiganders.

Since the organizers came from Tom's landscape circle, the principal portion of the guests was also from that connection. Only Tom Bassett and Dick Turner alluded to his nautical side. The former told the story of the honoree's near-disastrous sail on a stormy Lake Michigan when he was in charge of a crew of young students.

Tom Bassett, who is Brown's executor, announced that he had found a Michigan college friend, the Kentucky-based Horst Schacht, who would see through to publication this scholar's tome on shipping during California's colonial era. In this work the president of CGLHS from 2007 to 2010 combined two of his great loves: the California Missions and sailing.

The gathering gave a sense of what might have been Tom Brown's most powerful, among his many, legacies: his ability to inspire others in subjects of great interest to him. Landscape architect Jane Miller said that she had been an art student with no perceptible interest in history until she took Tom's garden history course at Merritt College. The course opened up two worlds for her—garden history and history in general. A more recent student from a Merritt plant identification course seconded Jane. She described her ongoing involvement with plants and how the course led her to a lasting friendship with her teacher, as it had done for Jane.

Tom Brown's legacy will endure.

—Phoebe Cutler

Preservation Matters!

Landslide, the Cultural Landscape Foundation's annual thematic compendium of threatened and at-risk landscapes, in 2012 focuses on visionary patrons and organizations and the sites they helped create. Among the 12 landscapes are three located in California: Fern Dell in Griffith Park and the Hannah Carter Japanese Garden in Bel Air—both in Los Angeles; and Jack London Lake in Jack London State Historic Park in Glen Ellen, Sonoma County.

Visit <http://tclf.org/annual-spotlight/landslide-2012-landscape-and-patronage>.

Publication Notice

Laurie Hannah has just published "A Source of Wonder and Delight: The Gardens at Berylwood, Home of Thomas and Mary Bard" in the *Journal of Ventura County History*. Thomas R. Bard was a US senator from 1900 to 1905, a land developer, oil magnate, bank president, local politician, and avid gardener. He built his home and gardens on a former Spanish land grant: Rancho El Río de Santa Clara o la Colonia. He had acquired the land from Thomas A. Scott, a former vice president of the Pennsylvania Railroad, whose lands Bard came to California to manage in 1870.

Besides his business and political interests, Bard was an early environmentalist, and he was known for creating one of the first significant gardens in Southern California. The estate was often compared to a botanic garden, as it was a showplace for rare and unusual plants and a testing ground for species new to Southern California.

Victoria Padilla, an early California garden historian, called Bard "one of the most enthusiastic plant collectors" of the early 20th century in California, citing over 580 species and varieties of plants growing on his property. Now largely unknown and inaccessible to the public, the 62-acre estate, named "Berylwood" after his eldest daughter Beryl, was famous for more than 60 years and delighted visitors and gardeners who rarely saw such a cosmopolitan collection of specimen trees and shrubs growing on one property.

To obtain a copy, please contact Charles Johnson at library@venturamuseum.org.



Book Review

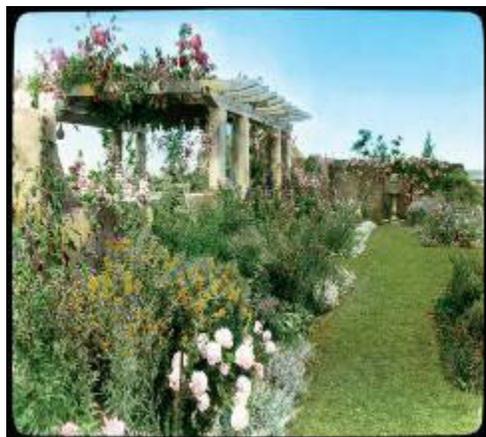
Gardens for a Beautiful America, 1895-1935: Photographs by Frances Benjamin Johnston. Sam Watters. (Woodbridge, Suffolk, UK: Acanthus Press, in association with the Library of Congress, 2012). 376 pp.

For those of you looking for a sumptuously illustrated history of the breadth of early 20th-century garden design in America, go treat yourselves to this preeminent coffee-table book. It is a preservation success story: the culmination of a years-long effort to catalog and publish a cache of over 300 hand-colored glass plate lantern slides depicting a lost golden age in the development of the American garden. Held by the Library of Congress for more than 70 years, Johnston's photographs are considered among the best of their genre. Their painterly images not only recorded time and place, they touched the senses and inspired; they were both document and art.

Johnston worked as a photojournalist and lectured extensively on garden design. A leader in the City Beautiful movement, her photographs gave sight to the principles of beauty and moral



The Frances Benjamin Johnston hand-colored lantern slide used on the book cover.

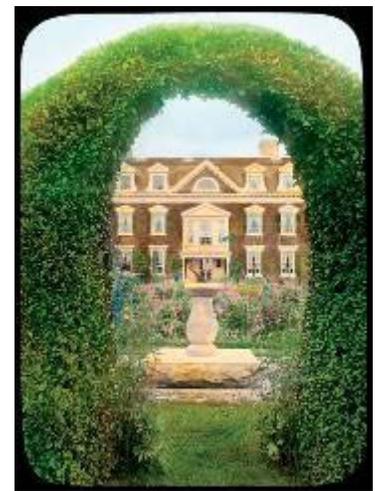
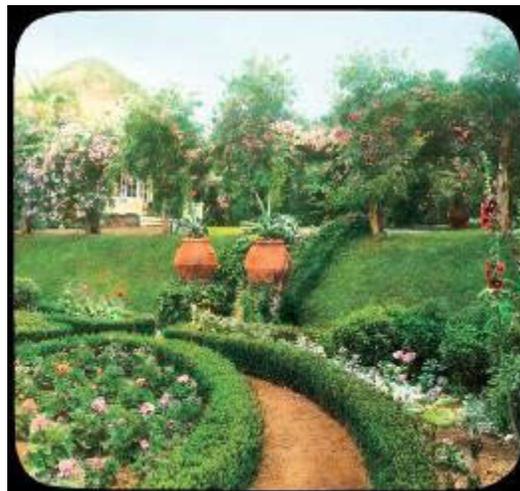
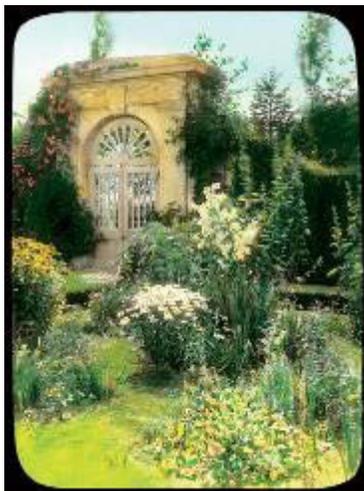


The Rose Pergola at Grey Gardens in East Hampton, designed in 1914 by Anna Gilman Hill.

edification that were to be derived from garden making. She was published in all of the major garden magazines and worked with some of the best architects and landscape architects of her time, including Daniel Hudson Burnham, Frederick Law Olmstead, and McKim, Mead & White at the World's Columbian Exposition, Chicago, 1893.

Sam Watters' scholarly essays are an excellent accompaniment to the images: part biography, which leads us through the turn-of-the-century career of a woman with talent and gumption; part garden photography, which reviews the field as it evolved from a craft to a fine art; and part American history, which helpfully analyzes the social context of Johnston's images. Watters' multi-dimensional approach helps us understand the significance of Johnston's images, thereby giving us a depth of meaning that furthers our appreciation for the role of the American garden in our national history.

—*Kelly Comras, RLA, ASLA*



Left: *Landscaping around the garden gate at Millefiori, designed to resemble a triumphal arch.* Middle: *The sunken garden at Steppingstones, Southampton, Long Island, in 1915.* Right: *Privet hedge framing Claverack, a Dutch Revival estate landscaped by Frederick Law Olmsted in the 1890s.*



President's Message

As I start this crisp and fresh new California year, I think about what we have accomplished, all of us, in CGLHS during 2012.

It was a good year, overall:

- For the first time in our history, CGLHS has more than 200 members.
- *Eden* is now posted on our website, www.cglhs.org, six months after publication.
- Our conference in September, “Plants, Passion, and Propagation: A Horticultural Tour of Sonoma County,” and the Tour & Talk in October, “Pasadena’s Historic Designed Gardens,” were both sold out.
- Membership renewal and event registration are now possible by credit card on our website.
- CGLHS now is working “in the cloud” and not on individual members’ computers in order to assure safe storage of membership and financial records.
- We partnered with The Garden Conservancy, the Los Angeles Conservancy, and the Cultural Landscape Foundation to support efforts to save the UCLA Hannah Carter Garden. (See <http://hannahcarterjapanesegarden.com/>.)

We did, however, lose our immediate past president, Tom Brown, whose obituary is in this issue, and whom we will sorely miss.

Our new board will be meeting in late January to make plans and set goals for the next two years. We will plan future events; discuss the redesign of our website, and in general, our mission to improve the celebration of the beauty and diversity of California’s historic gardens and landscapes.

Here are two wonderful upcoming opportunities to tell you about:

An Invitation from the Southern Garden History Society. Susan Hitchcock, board member of the Society, was in Sonoma with us last year and in San Luis Obispo in 2011. She has extended an invitation to our members to join the Southern Garden History Society at their next annual meeting, May 3–5, 2013, in Lynchburg, Virginia. In addition to hearing great speakers and touring gardens, attendees will dine at Thomas Jefferson’s Poplar Forest retreat on Friday evening and at Pharsalia on Saturday evening. Visit www.southerngardenhistory.org/annualmeeting.html. Their 2014 meeting on February 28–March 2 will be in Savannah, Georgia, and will feature lots of private gardens and dinner at the home of one of the characters in *Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil*. In 2015 the Society’s meeting will be hosted in Nashville by one of the South’s foremost landscape architects, Ben Page, and his wife, Libby.



Eschscholzia californica, California poppies, Silverado Canyon, 1899. Artist: Clara Mason Fox (1873–1959). Watercolor on paper. Collection of Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden.

A Botanical Art Exhibit. Two years ago CGLHS board member Carolyn Bennett had the brilliant idea of celebrating our California flora through an exhibit of botanical art. Carolyn, along with John Wickham from the Theodore Payne Foundation and Bart O’Brien of Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden, went to work on the project. Thinking big, they presented their exhibition idea to Jim Folsom at the Huntington Library, Art Collections, and Botanical Gardens. He and his colleagues loved it ... and the result is “When They Were Wild: Recapturing California’s Wildflower Heritage.” It will open on March 9th in the Boone Gallery of the Huntington. The artwork and ephemera come predominantly from the collections owned by the three institutions, other California botanic gardens, and several individuals. Most have never been displayed in public exhibitions. For more information, visit <http://huntington.org/huntingtonlibrary/02.aspx?id=11538>.

Best wishes to all for a happy and productive new year!

—Judy M. Horton
president@cglhs.org

EDEN

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Editor: Barbara Marinacci, 501 Palisades Drive, #315 / Pacific Palisades, CA 90272-2848.

Eden: Call for Content

Eden solicits your submissions of scholarly papers, short articles, book reviews, information about coming events, news about members' activities and honors, and interesting archives or websites you have discovered. In short, send us anything pertaining to California's landscape history that may be of interest to CGLHS members. Also, more regional correspondents reporting on local landscape preservation concerns, efforts, and accomplishments will be welcomed, along with other relevant issues.

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

All other submissions should be sent to *Eden* editor Barbara Marinacci (see above contact information). Deadlines for submissions are the first days of January, April, July, and October.

Material may be photocopied for academic purposes, with appropriate credit.

EDEN Staff

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California Garden and Landscape History Society (CGLHS) is a private 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.

CGLHS was founded in 1995.

The Society organizes annual conferences and publishes *Eden*, a quarterly journal.

For more information, visit www.cglhs.org.

Locations & Years of CGLHS's Conferences:

- 1995 – Santa Cruz (founding)
- 1996 – Santa Barbara (Spring)
San Diego (Fall)
- 1997 – UC Berkeley (Spring)
Huntington Gardens, San Marino (Fall)
- 1998 – Sacramento
- 1999 – Long Beach (Rancho Los Alamitos)
- 2000 – Monterey
- 2001 – Sonoma County (city of Sonoma)
- 2002 – San Juan Capistrano
- 2003 – San Francisco Peninsula (Stanford University)
- 2004 – Riverside
- 2005 – Napa Valley (10th anniversary)
- 2006 – Westside of Silicon Valley (Saratoga)
- 2007 – Los Angeles (for Japanese-style gardens)
- 2008 – Lone Pine and Owens Valley
- 2009 – UC Berkeley (SF Bay Area)
- 2010 – Santa Cruz County (15th anniversary)
- 2011 – San Luis Obispo County
- 2012 – Sonoma County (Santa Rosa)

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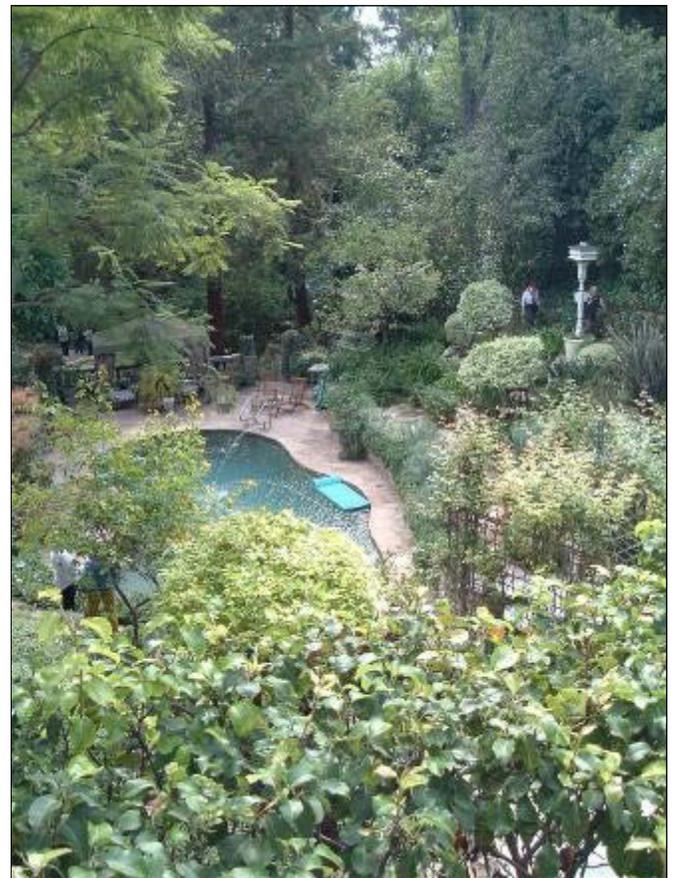
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The view down the steep hillside to the swimming pool area at Kencott, the historic Kenyon Reynolds Garden in Pasadena's Arroyo Seco area. It was originally designed by Katherine Bashford in the 1920s. Photo: B. Marinacci. (See page 15.)