

Virginia Robinson Gardens

Spring/Summer Newsletter 2010

President – Jeanne Anderson

Editor – Nancy Miller

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Message from the President

JEANNE ANDERSON — PRESIDENT 2010-2011



The Robinson Estate will begin its centennial year in September of 2011. The Friends are making exciting plans to celebrate Virginia Robinson and her enchanting gardens. How proud she would be to know that her passion has been shared not only with the surrounding community, but also with visitors from around the world! In preserving her legacy and extending her vision, we become a part of its history as well.

As your new president, I am very fortunate to have an enormously talented incoming board, which includes new positions to manage innovative programs and expand ongoing projects to ensure that we are operating as efficiently as possible. One of our most exciting programs is expansion of the Children's Outreach Committee. It has long been our goal, if not our dream, to offer children of all ages the opportunity to enjoy the gardens and greenhouse projects. With increased community funding through grants and individuals, we will also be able to serve a wider geographic area.

Another new committee is the Special Events Team, which has already scheduled outstanding programs for Friends and Fellows including private garden tours, an evening in the Chinese garden at the Huntington and a visit to Hearst Castle, just to mention a few!

Finally, perhaps the most challenging project of the year will be the publication of our first book about Virginia Robinson Gardens. Marcella Ruble has dedicated years to researching the history of the Robinson family and archiving photographs of their lives in the swiftly growing frontier that was early Southern California. Evelyn Carlson is co-chairing the project, functioning as editor and assisting in the production of the book. Photographs of the development of the property will be included, along with many beautiful pictures of the gardens as we know them today.

Strolling through the gardens, it is exhilarating to imagine how gratifying it would be for Virginia and Harry to rediscover the intriguing landscape they sowed from seed in 1911.

Sincerely,

Jeanne Anderson

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AND RECREATION**

**Superintendent,
Virginia Robinson Gardens**
Timothy Lindsay

Friends Fellow's Trip to Montecito



The Fellows trip to Montecito demonstrated the importance of preserving our historic and cultural heritage. Jeanne Anderson, the Friends tour coordinator, greeted us when we arrived at Carrie and George Fox Steedman's home, Casa del Herrero. A jewel of Spanish Colonial Revival architecture, designed and built by George Washington Smith in 1925, the home reflects the passion for Spanish art and architecture that Mr. Steedman developed through the enthusiastic encouragement of Arthur Byrne and Mildred Stapley. The home is a complete work of art in itself, incorporating the many antiques Steedman purchased and the creations Steedman continued to make in his well-equipped workshop, such as his exquisite silver plates. The gardens also had a thoughtful complexity developed over time by the Steedmans in collaboration with several garden designers including Lockwood de Forest, Jr. and Francis T. Underhill.

Next, we visited the home of Cynthia and Chapin Nolen on the grounds of the Birnam Wood Country Club golf course and learned the interesting history of the Birnam oak trees. Here, we were joined by our luncheon hostess, Joan Selwyn, founder of Friends of Robinson Gardens. The group enjoyed a delicious lunch in a private dining room at the Birnam Wood Country Club.

After lunch we had the opportunity to see another breathtaking estate that has been meticulously restored, enhanced and expanded by the creation of seven outdoor garden rooms. This perfect place is the work of John Saladino, an architect and designer whose time spent in Rome is evident everywhere you look. He revived a dilapidated stone structure into a truly romantic Italian hillside fantasy with spectacular views to the ocean. He described the entire project as "a complete act of folly," which inspired him to name the estate, *Villa di Lemma*.

We ended our tour with a trip to a contemporary hillside villa garden. The garden provided many lovely statements, including a wonderful belvedere with a pavilion containing a dining table and a view to the ocean. A bubbling stream, a unique fountain and a clever stone maze were some of the other thoughtful elements included in this garden.

Each location we experienced underscored the importance of learning from the past in order to create a richer future. Indeed, as the sun set, we all were richer for having had the opportunity to spend such a magical day in Montecito.

By Marcella Ruble

Jewels & All That Jazz

Benefit Patron Gala - May 7, 2010



"Spirit of Beverly Hills" Award Honorees, Michelle, Douglas, Virginia and Michael Kazanjian with Gala Chairmen, Angela Movassaghi, Leslie Kavanaugh and Jill Tavelman Collin

Kazanjian Hollywood Collection

The Kazanjian Foundation sponsors the Jewels for Charity Hollywood Collection Tour featuring prized jewelry formerly owned by Hollywood's A-list celebrities including Bing Crosby, Clark Gable, Eva Gabor, Howard Hughes, Franklin Roosevelt and Madonna, among others. The Jewels for Charity Hollywood Collection is shown at select venues worldwide and recently was presented at The Natural History Museum in Los Angeles, California.



Brilliant color, dazzling flowers, wonderful music, exciting entertainment and divine food... *"who could ask for anything more?"* The 2010 Benefit Patron Gala was as successful as it was beautiful. When the stage was set with exquisite jewelry from Kazanjian & Fogarty, displayed in the richly paneled Pavilion Game Room; when the estate tennis court was alive with Jazz musicians performing above an expansive bar; when the tented Great Lawn became a shimmering ballroom bathed in jewel toned light, the Friends of Robinson Gardens once again welcomed the community to Virginia Robinson's glorious home. Gala Chairmen, Jill Tavelman Collins and Angela Movassaghi, along with Friends

President Leslie Kavanaugh presented this year's *"Spirit of Beverly Hills"* Award to the Kazanjian Family Foundation, represented by Virginia, Michael, Douglas and Michelle Kazanjian, as well as Michael's brother and partner Stan and his wife Kristie Kazanjian.

Throughout the evening, models presented formal gowns by David Tupaz Couture and estate jewelry from the Kazanjian collection. It was a glorious night when the starlit sky mirrored the sparkling party below. Friends of Robinson Gardens wishes to thank the many patrons and sponsors who supported this special event. Proceeds will go to fund future restoration projects.



The Friends wish to gratefully acknowledge the following additional contributions received during the Benefit Season.

**Rose Hills Foundation
Jackie and Howard Banchik
Katherine Damagaard
Maria and Michael Kantor
Bruce McLucas and Gwen Aldridge**

Peter and Merle Mullin
"Congratulations and best wishes to our dear friends Virginia and Michael Kazanjian"



Ann Peterson, Dr. Leslie Pam, Thomas and Christine Hanscom



Flowers by Marc Byrd



Kirstin Royce, Kristina and Jordan Grotzinger and George Royce



Howard and Ruth Gilliam, Madeline Gussman and friend



Barbara Marcus, Andy and Julia Klein, Jeanne Anderson



Kazanjian jewels in centerpieces



Carolyn Bloom and Audrey Jessup



Gala chairs Angela Movassaghi and Jill Collins



Paul and Joan Selwyn



Phyllis and James Easton with Virginia and Michelle Kazanjian



Elliot and Adrienne Horwitch, Cindy and Eddie Fields



Martin and Donna Wolff



Ron and Cathy Kurstin, Jackie and Joe Tesoriero



Claudia and Benjamin Deutsch



Suz and Peter Landay



Robin Blake and Steven Stewart



George Fenimore, Mary Davis, Ali and Donanne Kasicki



Joan Borinstein, Marcella Ruble, Julie Bernstein



Hannah and Catherine An



Leslie Kavanaugh, Kenneth Cohen, Susan Lindsey Cohen



Bobbie and Jerry Furrey



Kathy and Charlie Toppino



Harvey and Laura Alpert, Kazia Kubrick and Blake Holden



Michael Kazanjian (center) with guests



Maralee Beck and Andy Safir

2010 Benefit Tour

Bringing a garden tour to “concert pitch” requires the forces of man, nature and luck to all come together on the same day. This year everything and everyone was in perfect rhythm, resulting in a spectacular, if not flawless, Benefit Tour. The five extraordinary private gardens were acclaimed by all to be a wonderful selection – each complemented the other – each exemplified excellence in landscape architecture. None of this would have happened without Jeanne Anderson, Sunday Taylor and Cindy Fields who masterfully conducted. Other musical sections were overseen by Laura Alpert, Maralee Beck, Robin Blake, Marion Buxton, Evie Carlson, Jill Tavelman Collins, Elaine Doran, Katrina Fuchs, Leslie Kavanaugh, Cathy Kurstin, Ellen Levitt, Ellen Lipson, Shiva Moshtael, Kerstin Royce, Leslie & Rolf Tillmann and March Wisely.

The floral and design exhibitions at the Robinson Estate once again transformed the house into a world of color, style and a bit of whimsy. Each artist interpreted his/her individual

space with an innovative eye that resulted in an open, casual elegance. Guests were invited to enjoy a delectable buffet luncheon complete with our famous peach fuzzies and a dramatic fashion show by Kevan Hall. Grand Marshal Peri Ellen Berne of the Rodeo Retailers Association was presented with an engraved silver tray to commemorate the occasion. Throughout the day the “Sparkling” Gift Boutique, as well as plant sales by Proven Winners and Greenwood Daylily Gardens, was open to shoppers. This year’s book signings featured Nancy Goslee Power – *Power of Gardens* and Mark Peel of Campanile Restaurant – *New Classic Family Dinners*. In addition, a botanical art exhibit by students in the Robinson Garden Botanical Illustration Program, a floral workshop by Marc Byrd AND a silent auction/opportunity drawing kept everyone busy until late afternoon, when the last number was drawn and the champagne flowed. Thank you to everyone who participated in the 2010 Benefit Season. We look forward to seeing you next year!



Garden Tour Chairmen Sunday Taylor, Jeanne Anderson and Cindy Fields with Friends Chairman Leslie Kavanaugh



Debra Shaw, Kersten Royce and Leslie Tillmann



Kitchen Garden by Greenwood Daylily Gardens



Designers and Floral Exhibitors

Anthropologie
 Big Daddy Antiques
 Campanile Restaurant
 Christopher Guy
 Cottage Garden Design
 Everage Design
 Floral Art Therapy
 Garden of Eva
 Gearys of Beverly Hills
 Greenwood Daylily Gardens
 Holly Flora
 J-Art Iron
 Language of Flowers
 Lily Pad Floral Design
 Lucia Burke
 Garden Design
 Luna Gardens Events



Magical Blooms
 Flowers & Boutique
 Marc Byrd Flower Design
 Mark's Design
 Mayfair House
 Merrihew's Sunset Gardens
 Nancy Goslee Power
 & Associates
 Orchids de Oro
 Rolf Tillmann
 Special Occasions
 Event Planning
 Stephanie Burton
 Floral Design
 Swanson-Ollis Interiors
 Sticks & Stones
 Tic-Tock Couture Florals
 Yves Delorme



Swanson Ollis Interiors



Peri Ellen Berne & Mark Peel



Garden of Eva



J. Art Iron



Stephanie Burton



Pashgian Brothers



Mark's Garden



Mayfair House



Furniture by Christopher Guy



Emily Denver for Language of Flowers



Abutilon



Tic-Tock Couture Floral



Joey Corrigan for Sticks & Stones



Poplar Schoerner & Jen Johnson for Anthropologie



Mistyka J. Garcia
of Special Occasions



Casey Coleford for
Yves Delorme



C.J. Farrey Cottage Garden Design



John Schoustra of Greenwood Daylily Gardens



Krista Everage Design



THANK YOU

**A VERY SPECIAL THANK YOU TO ALL THE CONTRIBUTORS FOR THEIR GENEROUS
SUPPORT OF THE OPPORTUNITY DRAWINGS AND GIFT BASKETS...**

Accessor Eyes	Dominique Duval	Krista Everage	Proven Winners
Anawalt Lumber Hardware Nursery	Dr. and Mrs. Andy Schwartz	Leslie Pam Ph.D	Rhona Gewelber
Ann Petersen	Dumont Jewelry	Linda Meadows	Richard Schnell
Anne Koral	El Dorado Hotel and Spa	Lisa Smith	Robert Holzman
Artistic Nails	Ellen Levitt	Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra	Roberto Cavalli, Art Fashion Corp.
Avant-Garde Fencers Club	Gearys Beverly Hills	Lotus Land	Robin Ruby
Barbara Lazaroff	Gourmet Blends	Louise's Hats	Rolf Tillmann
Barney's New York	Greystone Mansion	Maralee Beck	Ronnelle Designs
Beverly Hill Beads	Gunilla Horacek	Mark Lipson	Rosanna and Gary Grabel
Big Daddy Antiques	H Concours	Mark's Garden	Rowley Portraiture
Borrowed Bling	Habit Footwear & Accessories	Marni Hoffman	Sharon Blair-The Groove Store
Bottega Veneta	Harvey Alpert	Mediterranean Magic	Serenity Rocks
Bradford Renaissance Portraits	Henry's Jewelers	Montage Beverly Hills	Southwest Airline Charitable Giving
Brighton Shave Company	Hilary Beane Jewelry Designs	Moonlite	Stella Nepture
Bristol Farms	House of An	Mr. and Mrs. Gary Grabel	Susan Chalek
Claudia and Benjamin Deutsch	J. Art Iron	Mr. and Mrs. Mark Lipson	Susan Rothenberg and Ricki Ring
Cathy Kurstin	Jacqueline B.	Neiman Marcus	The Beverly Hills Hotel
Center Theatre Group	Jacqueline Marie Accessories	Nobu Los Angeles	The Broad Stage
Cheryl Chalek	James Folsom	Over the Top Gifts	The Shout Factory
Christophe Salon	Jeanne Anderson	Pasadena Showcase for the Arts	The Treasured Accessory
Classy Bag Lady	Joseph Martin Salon	Pauline's Handmade Brittle	Timeless Gems
Collette d.	K Chocolatier by Diane Kron	Peggy Dark - The Kitchen	Trader Joe's
Damiani Jewelry	Kerstin & George Royce	Platt Boutique Jewelry	Votre Vu
Daniel Koral	Kevan Hall	Premier Valet	Web Teck LA
Designs by Georgina	Kiki Bean & Bed Head	Primadina	Mr. and Mrs. Martin J. Wolff

Educational Lectures and Tours

Collecting for the Public: Ten Years of Paintings Acquisition Scott Schaefer, Senior Curator of Painting at the J. Paul Getty Museum

February 16, 2010



Scott Schaefer and Marcella Ruble

Scott Schaefer, Senior Curator of Paintings, gave an informative presentation in which he discussed the overarching intent of the Getty Museum's painting collection. Significantly, the direction that J. P. Getty left to guide the trust in creating this unequalled institution was the following 25 word statement: "Whereas the founder desires and proposes to found, maintain and perpetuate a museum, gallery of art, and library, for the diffusion of artistic and general knowledge." Scott showed us how the Getty has implemented this assignment by presenting a number of paintings and explaining why they were significant in the history of art, why they were chosen by the Getty and finally, how they enrich the collection as a whole.

DINING WITH VIRGINIA

The lifestyle and menus of the First Lady of Beverly Hills

March 11, 2010

Maite Gomez-Rejon of ArtBites

Twelve lucky "students" enjoyed an al fresco luncheon in the loggia at the historic home of Mrs. Virginia Robinson on March 11, 2010. The menu featured recipes from Mrs. Robinson's own cookbooks adapted for the occasion by museum educator, Maite Gomez-Rejon. Before the cooking session began, Maite took the group around the house to discuss various decorative objects, which were selected as a window onto Virginia, her formality and her love of romance. Style and service was very much a part of everyday life on Elden Way. Although the "guests" at the luncheon prepared the delectable dishes they all enjoyed *à table*, their appreciation for the day was all the greater. Everyone who participated agreed that Virginia's life must have been quite wonderful.

Menu

Green salad with Parmesan Dressing

Salmon with olives, green onion,
anchovies and tomato

Potatoes with fresh herbs

Chicken Fricassee

Warm Plum Cake with Crème Chantilly



Helping to Preserve America's Exceptional Gardens Suzanne Rheinstein – Garden Conservancy Board Member

April 8, 2010

Suzanne Rheinstein, renowned interior designer and owner of Hollyhock on La Cienega, spoke on the preservation projects of the Garden Conservancy. Her presentation included Steepletop located in Austerlitz, New York, (*in the Taconic Ridge near the Berkshire Mountains*), beloved home of Edna St. Vincent Millay; Pearl Fryer Topiary Garden in Bishopville, South Carolina; the Ruth Bancroft Cactus Garden in Walnut Creek, California; and Longue Vue House and Gardens in New Orleans, newly restored after hurricane Katrina.

The goal of the Garden Conservancy is to preserve exceptional private gardens across America in order to keep them open to the public – a mission shared by the Friends of Robinson Gardens. Suzanne, a native of New Orleans, inspired the southern style lunch, Veronique Chicken Salad with pecans, Southern Cornbread and Biscuits and Berry Bread Pudding – served after the lecture in the conservatory of the Pool Pavilion.



Suzanne Rheinstein

Botanical Illustration Program

Anne Marie Evans

February, 2010

Ms. Evans returned to Robinson Gardens to conduct two five-day sessions. The subject for the first session was a fuchsia that grows in Virginia Robinson's garden. During the second session, a few of the students painted the Virginia Robinson camellia, a beautiful pink variety named by Mr. Nuccio of Nuccio's Nursery in Pasadena. The Friends look forward to Anne Marie's next session in February 2011.

**Anne Marie Evans upcoming 2011 Classes – Two separate 5-day sessions
February 21-24 & February 28-March 4**

Margaret Best

June, 2010

Watercolor Brush Technique for Botanical Art — The class considered the use of basic plant elements such as petals and fruit for understanding the application of washes, glazes, color blending and color layering. Using a cherry as their subject, the class learned how to build form and shadow, while avoiding making muddy colors and overworking the paper surface. Wet brush, dry brush and lifting techniques were also covered.



CONTINUING CLASSES

Three Day Classes – Robinson Garden Pool Pavilion
Fee: Members \$275.00 – Non-members \$295.00



Margaret Best – Three day class August 4 – 6, 2010

Botanical Art Composition – Students will be led through exercises to train the eye on how to plan and create visually appealing and natural compositions. Traditional compositions and contemporary works will be studied for technique and compositional effect.

Margaret Best – Three day class September 1-3, 2010

How and When To Add Details? – Building washes to get the right intensity and give value to the subject. When to add the details that give the final painting its personality and “punch.”

Margaret Best – Three day class October 6-8, 2010

Full Flower Painting – Students are asked to have prepared a detailed drawing for review by Margaret. This will be used for a full color and detailed water color study, utilizing all the technical elements learned in earlier classes. A special emphasis will be placed on innovative composition and accurate use of color.



Garden Educational Lectures

Spring 2010

Ten Most Common Problems with Trees and How To Avoid Them

Lisa Smith, Registered Consulting Arborist, Friends of Robinson Gardens Member

January 28, 2010

Lisa Smith gave a lecture on the “*Ten Most Common Problems with Trees and How to Avoid Them.*” In this talk, an extensive powerpoint presentation was provided which gave examples of the best ways to maintain our valuable trees and which practices can cause challenging conditions and shorten the lives of our trees. Topics such as pruning, mulching, fertilizing, staking, planting and proper watering were also discussed. Ms. Smithy is the owner of **The Tree Resource**, a Southern California tree consulting firm providing all aspects of tree management and preservation, with expert knowledge by certified arborists, experienced in the arboriculture industry. Over the past 209 years, her firm has participated in a wide range of commercial and public landscaping projects.



Excursion to Huntington Botanical Gardens

February 1, 2010



A group of fourteen Friends enjoyed a guided tour of the Huntington Botanical Gardens on a chilly morning in February. Just as Virginia and Harry Robinson saw potential on the westside of Los Angeles, Henry Huntington found paradise on a working ranch with citrus and fruit groves in San Marino. He and his superintendent, William Hetrich, created the botanical garden of exotic and rare plants that now covers more than 120 acres. Over 14,000 varieties of plants are grown in theme gardens throughout the estate. The Friends were not able to see every garden, leaving more to discover on another visit.



Bountiful Beautiful Bromeliads

Paul T. Isley, Rainforest Flora

March 16, 2010

Mr. Isley, owner of one of the finest Tillandsia nurseries in the country, presented the history and culture of growing Tillandsia, a genus of air plant bromeliad found in the deserts, forests and mountains of Central and South America, Mexico and the southern United States in North America. The thinner-leaved varieties grow in rainy areas and the thick-leaved varieties in areas more subject to drought. Moisture and nutrients are gathered from the air through structures on the leaves. Airplants are not parasitic, depending on the host only for support. The genus Tillandsia was named by Carolus Linnaeus after the Swedish physician and botanist Dr. Elias Tillandz (originally Tillander) (1640-1693). The roots are used as anchors only. Reproduction is by seeds or by offsets called “pups.” Although not normally cultivated for their flowers, some Tillandsia will bloom on a regular basis.



Upcoming Educational Events

Highlights of the Getty Museum Botanical Art Collection David Brafman, J. Paul Getty Museum

Wednesday, September 22, 2010

Mr. Brafman, Rare Books Curator at the Getty Institute will give an illustrated lecture on the rare botanical prints and books in the Getty Library. Participants will be given the opportunity to visit the Getty at a later date to see the actual illustrations. The visit to the Getty will be limited to 20 reservations.

Fall Entertaining Peggy Dark and Mark Held

Thursday, October 14, 2010



Critically acclaimed caterer, Peggy Dark of *Kitchen for Exploring Foods* and floral giant, Mark Held of *Mark's Garden* in Sherman Oaks, join forces to present "tricks of the trade". They will share imaginative table design and delicious dinners that you can manage and enjoy as well! *Fabulous Parties*, Peggy and Mark's current book on entertaining will be available for sale. Drawing on many years of experience as floral designers and caterers to Los Angeles's A-listers, Mark and Peggy have adapted the principles of putting together a large, lavish event to a more intimate scale suited to home or small venue entertaining. The harmonious relationship between food and flowers is clearly demonstrated in their collaboration.

Everything I Needed to Know I Learned from Jane Austen Charles Lynn Batten, Professor of English Literature, UCLA

Tuesday, Nov 16, 2010



Charles Lynn Batten is an American literary critic and Vice Chairman of the English Department at the UCLA. He has won numerous teaching awards throughout his career at UCLA, including the Distinguished Teaching Award in 1981. Austen's works critique the novels of sensibility of the second half of the eighteenth century and are part of the transition to nineteenth-century realism. Austen's plots, though fundamentally comic, highlight the dependence of women on marriage to secure social standing and economic security. Like those of Samuel Johnson, one of the strongest influences on her writing, her works are concerned with moral issues.

Professor Batten will speak on the cultural, political and social aspects of Jane Austin's writing.



The Reproduction of "Rare" Books Jim Heiman of Taschen Books

January 6, 2011



TASCHEN Editions have been described as "*Pieces of art, pieces of life, pieces of joy! They are the balm for the eyes of the soul!*" From comic books to fine art, the history of Taschen Books is a fascinating story.

Cultural anthropologist and graphic design historian Jim Heimann is Executive Editor for TASCHEN America and author of numerous books on architecture, pop culture and the history of the West Coast, Los Angeles and Hollywood. His unrivaled private collection of ephemera has been featured in museum exhibitions around the world.

DOCENT TRAINING SESSIONS

The training sessions will be on the following Thursdays:
October 28, 2010; January 27, 2011;
March 31, 2011 and July 28, 2011.

For additional information on docent training, please contact
Jesse Harris at 310.550.2065
or JHarris@parks.lacounty.gov

Happy Birthday Tim

DIPLOMAT

LANDSCAPER PAR EXCELLENCE

PROFESSOR OF HORTICULTURE

CONSULTANT

CONSTRUCTION MANAGER

COFFEE MAKER

FLORAL DESIGNER

BUSINESS MANAGER

CHEF DU JOUR

WRITER

PHOTOGRAPHER

ARCHIVIST

PLANT DOCTOR

NEGOTIATOR

TRAFFIC CONTROLLER

TOUR DIRECTOR



Celebrating Tim Lindsay

Superintendent of Virginia Robinson Gardens



On April 27, 2010, The Friends celebrated Tim Lindsay's 50th Birthday with an elegant lunch and one glorious desert after another.

What's a man to do when surrounded by women? Eat cake and smile, which is exactly what he did. Even more, he wore a garland of flowers presented by Kerstin Royce. Tim Lindsay is not only a talented manager and steward of this remarkable garden, but also a creative, enthusiastic, generous partner in all that we do.

Tim Lindsay was 35 when he came to Virginia Robinson Gardens. He quickly discovered that his new job was as much about people as it was plants. Tim has a Masters of Science in Forestry and a Bachelor of Science in Plant and Soil Science. He was an Assistant Professor of Horticultural Science in



Florida before coming to California. He worked as Assistant Superintendent for the Los Angeles County Arboretum from 1990 to 1998, when he was appointed Regional Park Superintendent II at Virginia Robinson Gardens.

At the Robinson Gardens and Museum, his duties include fiduciary management and accountability for all contributions, income and agency assets. He serves as County representative on the Friends of Robinson Gardens Board jointly developing conservation and restoration projects and expanding collaborations and relationships with the City of Beverly Hills to maximize community access, while adhering to current Environmental Impact Regulations governing the facility.

We are so lucky to have Tim at the helm.

Happy Birthday, KID!

Message from the County

TIM LINDSAY — SUPERINTENDENT OF ROBINSON GARDENS

ORCHID HOUSE RECONSTRUCTION COMPLETE

By Timothy L. Lindsay



One March morning, while perusing the personal files of the Robinson family, I stumbled across a file labeled “Plants.” Interested in identifying original plantings in the garden, I opened it anticipating the discovery of important archival information. Unfortunately, I found only two plant sales receipts, but to my surprise, it also

contained the original blue prints for the orchid greenhouse. The plans, dated 1961, were from Rosemead Greenhouse Inc., a manufacturer that is no longer in business. As it happens, finding this file was a serendipitous event, because the Friends budget already included funds to reconstruct the orchid



greenhouse.

Historically, the orchid greenhouse was used, as the name implies, to grow orchids. Orchids are not terribly exciting to look at until they bloom, when their intriguing beauty is revealed. Mrs. Robinson’s gardeners would coax her orchids back to bloom in the greenhouse, and then selectively place them around the estate, a tradition we continue today.



The first step in the reconstruction process was to prepare a photo essay of the structure.

This was for our archives and for use by the carpenter during reconstruction. Next, it was time for demolition! It was easy to find help for this part. The gardening staff, along with volunteer David Barvossa, completed demolition in about a week. All the glass panels were numbered and carefully removed. Glass lost to breakage ran about 45%. With the exception of the doorknob, all original hardware was saved for reuse, preserving much of the historical fabric. The doorknob was replaced with a period piece, because the original was not made for exterior use and had deteriorated beyond repair.



The new greenhouse is built per plan out of redwood. Since the color of the original structure was not known, and had been painted for the Garden Tour by various exhibitors, we decided to leave the wood unfinished. Over time, redwood will naturally turn gray and harden to the elements.

Beginning this fall, children’s tours will use a portion of the new orchid greenhouse to stage educational activities related to plant growth and conservation. In addition, Robinson Gardens staff will begin to propagate heirloom plants for use in the gardens.

Virginia Robinson Gardens and Friends of Robinson Gardens wish to acknowledge the generous support of the Beverly Hills Rotary Club, the Barth Family and everyone who helped make this valuable reconstruction project possible.



Warmest Regards...

LESLIE KAVANAUGH — PRESIDENT, 2008-2010



Dearest Friends,

Serving as President of Friends of Robinson Gardens for the last two years has been a wonderfully rewarding experience. I want to take this opportunity to thank all of you who have guided, aided, served and counseled me during my presidency.

It is my hope that we have paved an ongoing path of new opportunity, developed programs to expand our base of Friends, and significantly advanced the methods and direction of preservation at Virginia Robinson Gardens.

It is only through the work and dedication of the Board of Directors, its officers, committee chairs and committees, docents and volunteers that we were able to accomplish so

much during the last two years. Additionally, I want to thank the County of Los Angeles for its outstanding support of the Friends. There are so many people responsible for helping to preserve Virginia Robinson Gardens as an historical landmark, that I cannot name them all. However, I wish to give special thanks to Superintendent Tim Lindsay, Curator Jesse Harris, Caretaker Dale Witt, and Friends Administrative Assistant and Events Coordinator Bianca Costin, for their hard work each and every day. They are priceless treasures of our beautiful garden.

As I leave office and hand the gavel over to the capable hands of Jeanne Anderson and her new Board of Directors, I am confident that Virginia Robinson Gardens and Friends of Robinson Gardens has a beautiful future. The Friends is a remarkable group of women. I am proud to have been your President.

Warmest regards,

Leslie Kavanaugh

