

Virginia Robinson Gardens

Spring/Summer Newsletter 2011

President – Jeanne Anderson

Editor – Nancy Miller

1008 Elden Way, Beverly Hills, California 90210

310.550.2068

www.robinsongardens.org





Message from the President

JEANNE ANDERSON — PRESIDENT 2010-2011



Many of you had the privilege of experiencing our stunning spring garden tour, *Under the Tuscan Sun*, which truly reflected the perennial verdure so preferred by the Italians.

I would like to thank the Benefit Committee, docents, volunteers, and garden hosts for all they did to make the day as beautiful and remarkable as it was.

The Gala Committee, chaired by Adrienne Horwitch, is now preparing for our Centennial Celebration on September 10, when we will literally walk through time with Virginia and all she loved. In preparation for the event, the Robinsons' turn-of-the-century piano is out for a full restoration so our caretaker, horticulturist, musician Dale Witt can play the Robinsons' favorite tunes to welcome guests.

Members of the 2011-12 Board are hard at work planning next seasons education lectures, cooking classes in our newly restored kitchen, and garden talks - all open to society members and the public. The Special Events Committee is creating a special garden tour and museum event for the Friends, and for those who join at the Fellows level, some additional exciting adventures.

The Docents and Friends continue to work on expansion of our children's programs including learning opportunities for preschoolers. On October 12, 2011, we will roll out the "green carpet" for our new members at the Friends Annual Luncheon, as we kick off next year's benefit theme, *California Dreamin'*.

Sincerely,

Jeanne Anderson

2010-2011 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Treasurer

Ann Petersen

Assistant Treasurer

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Benefit Chairs

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Kerstin Royce

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Kathy Toppino

Botanical Illustration

Tania Norris

Boutique

Tania Norris

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Marcella Ruble

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Chrys Stamatis

Children's Holiday Party

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Community Outreach

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Restoration

Ellen Levitt

Special Events

Ellen Lipson

Sunday Taylor

March Wiseley

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Julia Klein

Volunteer Liaison

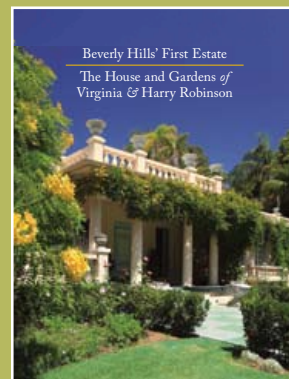
Robin Blake

Website

Leslie Kavanaugh

Beverly Hills' First Estate Available Fall, 2011

A 100th anniversary is a wonderful occasion to commemorate, and what could be better than the history of this remarkable landmark?



Friends Members Marcella Ruble, Evelyn Carlson, and Superintendent Tim Lindsay have written a wonderful account of the Robinsons and their passion for culture and life, the construction of the house and its five distinct gardens. The book includes a rich archival history of the Robinsons with many historic photographs and the work of renowned contemporary photographers Tim Street-Porter and Salli MacAller. This beautiful book will be available in the fall. *Beverly Hills' First Estate: The House and Gardens of Virginia & Harry Robinson* will be a must-have for garden-lovers everywhere.



**LOS ANGELES COUNTY,
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS
AND RECREATION**

**Superintendent,
Virginia Robinson Gardens**
Timothy Lindsay

Presidents Luncheon-February, 2011



Seated: Bridget Martens, Phoebe Vaccaro, Sophie Mastor, Joan Selwyn, Carol Mancino, Barbara Namerow, Lois Howard-Ruffner.

Top Row left to right: Jayne Wilson, Linda Ford, Ellisa Bregman, Tracy Smith, Kathy Toppino, Claudia Deutsch, Maralee Beck, Deborah Shaw, Leslie Kavanaugh, Jeanne Anderson.

To begin our Centennial Year, Friends President Jeanne Anderson invited all of the past presidents' to a love feast in honor of Valentine's Day and the Gardens. The Pool Pavilion was set with beautiful tables covered in silver organza and arrangements of anemones in sparkling silver vases, gifts to take home. During lunch, Joan Selwyn, founder of the Friends, and several other presidents made toasts and shared their memories.

Friends of Robinson Gardens began with an invitation by Supervisor Edelman to a tour of the Virginia Robinson Estate. In 1979 when Joan Selwyn and Phoebe Vaccaro accepted his invitation, the hope was that they would form a group to raise funds to restore the property to its former "glory." The group became official in 1982 with 100 members on the roster. From the start, elegance, energy and flowers were the order of the day. Past President, Barbara Namerow remembers:

"In the beginning we had flower arranging classes and little else. Mrs. Robinson's August Moon Ball was reintroduced some years later. Donna Wolff came up with the idea for the Garden Tour and the Docent Tours became a reality after many hours of instruction. It was fun and gratifying to be part of the first group...The "friends" was formed to raise money so that the property would not be sold off to developers, but the association became more than that as friendships were formed, ideas were implemented and recognition grew."



Jeanne Anderson,
Lynda Ford



Carol Mancino, Karsten Royce,
Maralee Beck



Debra Shaw, Ellisa Bregman,
Tracy Smith



Phoebe Vaccaro,
Bridget Martens



Jayne Wilson, Sophie Mastor



Tracy Smith and
her mother, Barbara Namerow



Founder Joan Selwyn,
Lois Howard-Ruffner

2011 Benefit

"Under the Tuscan Sun"

Hi friends,

Wish you could have been there. The temperature was cool, the sky blue and the air filled with the fragrant exuberance of spring – a perfect day for the Friends 23rd Annual Benefit Tour, "Under The Tuscan Sun." From 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., guests toured five private gardens in the community, which extended from the cliffs overlooking the Pacific Ocean to a secret topiary retreat in Holmby Hills. This year's tour featured intimate outdoor rooms where the family could enjoy the peace and beauty of the garden, while continuing their active lives.

At the Robinson Estate, thirty-six interior designers and florists created outstanding exhibits. On the tennis court, specially selected vendors presented items for sale. Amid the blush of "peach fuzzies" and a delectable al fresco luncheon, Grand Marshals Bridget and John Martens



Garden Tour

were presented with a commemorative garden shovel. Bridget is a Past President of the Friends and John has created special events at Neiman Marcus for the Friends, as well as supported restoration projects throughout the years. During the lunch hour *Leggiadro*, Melrose Place, modeled elegant fashions for daytime and evening wear.

This year the tour was expertly chaired by Jeanne Anderson, Greer Saunders, and Sunday Taylor. The Garden Selection Committee, Jeanne Anderson, Maralee Beck, Ellen Lipson and March Wisely, are to be congratulated for finding such exceptional gardens. Once again, the Friends wish to extend their heartfelt gratitude to the homeowners – we could not do this without YOU. Special thanks go to the entire Benefit Tour Committee who worked so diligently to make this wonderful day a reality.

Hope you can come next year for California Dreamin'!





2011 Benefit Garden Tour Committee

Top Row (L-R): Angela Movassaghi, Tania Norris, Ann Koral, Leslie Tillmann, Robin Blake, Katrina Fuchs, Tim Lindsay, Suz Landay, Cynthia Tribull, Cathy Kurstin, Julia Klein, Margy Hudson, Bobbie Furrey, Audrey Jessup, Leslie Kavanaugh, Barbara Marcus.
Bottom Row (L-R): Jill Collins, Cindy Fields, Greer Saunders, Sunday Taylor, Jeanne Anderson, Kerstin Royce, Ann Petersen, Nancy Miller.



Cynthia Tribull and Ann Petersen



*Joan Selwyn, Howard Rootenberg
and Judy Carroll*



*Sunday Taylor
and Leslie Kavanaugh*



Jackie Tesoriero and Cathy Kurstin



**Grand Marshals Bridget and John Martens,
Sunday Taylor, President Jeanne Anderson, Greer Saunders**



*Claudia Deursch
and Maralee Beck*



Angela Movassaghi and Anne Koral



*Adrienne Horwitch
and Brenda Cooke*



*Krista Everage, Barbara Duskun
and Angela Cohan*



*Madeline Lindsay, Tim Lindsay
and Robin Blake*



Jill Collins

Designers and Floral Exhibitors

Anna Clark Interiors
 Anthropologie
 B & L Rootenberg Books
 Christofle
 Cottage Garden Design
 Dale Witt Garden Design
 Edelweiss Flower Boutique
 Floral Art Therapy
 Hollyhock
 Inner Gardens
 Kathleen Spielgelman
 Kristen Buckingham
 Mayfair House
 Mindy Weiss
 Leslie Tillmann



Entrance Hall by Mark's Garden and Mindy Weiss

Lily Pad Floral Design
 Lucia Burke Garden Design
 Magical Blooms
 Flowers & Boutique
 Mary Falkingham
 Floral Designs
 Sally Paul
 Sticks & Stones
 Swanson-Ollis Interiors
 Sweet Leaf Floral Design
 Teryl Designs
 The Language of Flowers
 Tic-Tock Couture Florals
 Wildflower Events
 Yamaguchi Bonsai Nursery
 Yves Delorme



Dining Room by Roumy Entchevska and Joseph Burkhart for Mayfair House with Eddie Zarastian for Tic-Tock Couture Floral Creations



Kitchen by Anthropologie Erica Contreras and Halley Solar



Mary Falkingham Floral Designs



Concierge Luncheon by Wildflower Events



Pool and Balustrade Terrace: Majid Sadr - Floral & Art Therapy

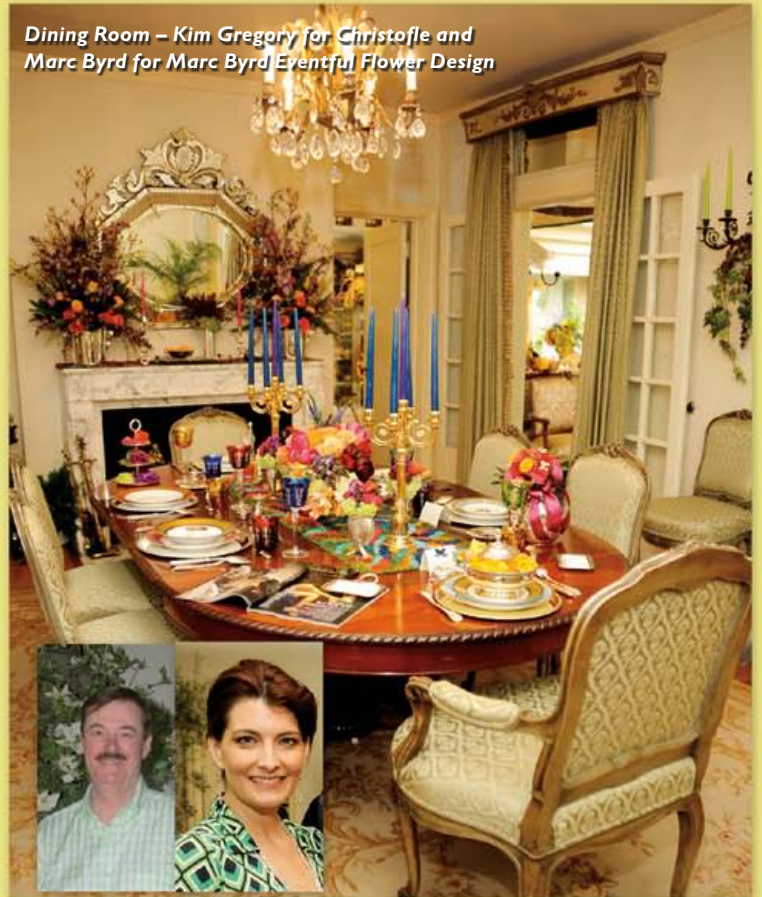
Living Room – Hal Swanson from Swanson & Ollis Interiors
and Tanya Sowa of Sweet Leaf Floral Design



Howard Rootenberg for
Rootenberg Rare Books



Dining Room – Kim Gregory for Christofle and
Marc Byrd for Marc Byrd Eventful Flower Design



Suzanne Rheinstein
of Hollyhock



Morning Room: Anna Clark Interiors and Lily Pad Floral



Anna Clark

Emily Denver for
The Language of Flowers



Galleria: Magical Blooms



Kathleen Spiegelman and
Samantha Greenfield

Master Bedroom – Mariah McGinnis and Casey Coleford for Yves Delorme,
Joey Corrigan for Sticks & Stone



Bel Air Garden Club



Estate vase arrangements
by Jamie Wolf



Master Bath
by Abutillon



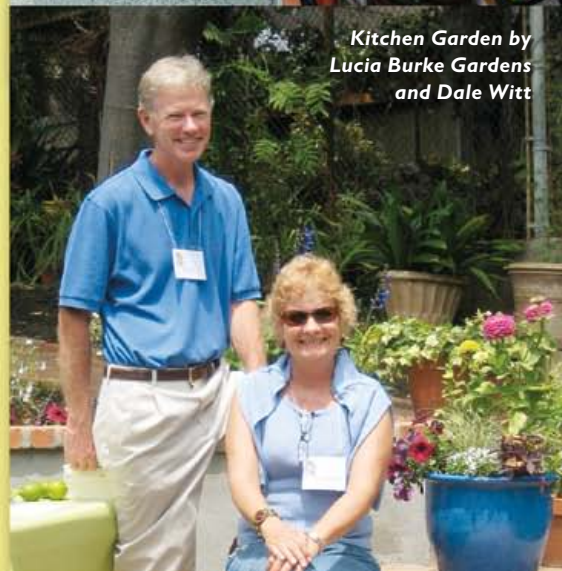
Back Terrace by
Kristen Buckingham
and Sally Paul



Inner Gardens



Entrance by Inner Garden and
Edelweiss Flower Boutique



Kitchen Garden by
Lucia Burke Gardens
and Dale Witt



THANK YOU

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

Access Tickets
Alexey Steele
Amalia Starr Products
Angela Movassaghi
Anne Christie Petersen
Artistic Nail Center
Avant-Garde Fencer's Club
Bell'Occhio
Beverly Hills Beauty Center
Beverly Hills Hotel
BOCA Pacific Palisades
Botany
Bristol Farms
Brooks Brothers
Carolyn and Marty Bloom
Catherine An
Cathy Kurstin
Cheryl Chalek Fitness
Christofle Paris
Christophe Beverly Hills
Classy Bag Lady
Colette d.
Designs by Georgina
Dr. Elda Mehrabyan

Ellen Levitt
Ellen Lipson & Mark Lipson
Eric Linermans
For Love of Home
Gearys Beverly Hills
Gourmet Blends
Habit Footwear
Jacqueline B.
Jan Naud, Urban Dog
Jay Leno
Jeanne Anderson
Jesslyn Cyr, Tamrac, Inc.
"K" Chocolatier by Diane Kron
Kerstin and George Royce
Krista Everage Design
Laura Alpert
Le Petit Bistro
Lisa Smith
Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra
Lotusland
Maralee Beck
Marc Michel Eyewear
Mayfair House
Montage Hotel

Nancy Miller
Nicole Hay
Not Done Yet, LLC
Oliver Peoples
Paul and Shark Beverly Hills
Peter Alfred Salon
Primadina
Rhona Gewelber
Richard Shapiro
Rolf and Leslie Tillmann
Seashell Collection
Shelley's Fashions
Simply Shea
Serenity Rocks
Spago
Tania Norris
The G2 Gallery
The Hub
The Peninsula Hotel
The Treasured Accessory
Tom Tom Sales
Trader Joes
Vera Cristina
Wendy Posner

Educational Lectures and Tours

“Camellias”

February 16, 2011

David Brown, Executive Director

Brian Sullian, Director of Horticulture at Descanso Gardens



Virginia Robinson Camellia

Plant partnerships are an important component of garden design. When newspaper publisher, E. Manchester Boddy built his estate and planned his gardens in the early 20th century, he was well aware of the benefit of the native oak trees that provided the perfect dappled sunlight for the thousands of camellias that he collected from all over the world. His passion became a business selling the camellia blossoms to the cut-flower industry. Almost a hundred years later, another challenge has presented itself. The mature oak trees are showing damage from over-watering because they do not need as much water as the camellias. Now the Descanso Garden staff must find ways to regulate the watering and in some cases move the camellias to areas where they will again thrive. At the end of the lecture, the Virginia Robinson Camellia was available for sale through Nuccio's Nursery in Pasadena.

“Travels, Botany, Alchemy & Color: Some Unexpected Connections in the Getty Rare Book Collections”

March 16, 2011

David Brahman, Rare Books Curator – Getty Research Institute

Science and nature - how to record - how to explain the intricacy, the mystery, the fascination of the natural world? David Brahman brought charm and intellectual insight into the vast wealth of recorded natural history that evolved during the 16th through 19th century. The “oddities, curiosities, wonders” of personal discovery represented in the Getty Rare Book Library have become as valuable and as collectable as works of art. From nature came herbal enhancements and early medicine, philosophical perspectives, botanical discovery and artistic inspiration.

Mr. Bachman presented an illustrated lecture from the Rare Book Collection at the Getty. Several of the examples that he chose came from books donated to the Getty by our dear associate and friend, Tania Norris. After the presentation, the group had lunch at the Getty Restaurant and toured the Getty Institute Rare Book Library where there was a “hands-on” opportunity to appreciate the actual engravings in several important botanical and scientific volumns. It was a day to remember.



Illustration of a passionate collector's study in the 17th century.



Suz Landay, Gail Campbell-Newman, Vicki Victor and Susan Rosenthal



David Brahman, curator of Rare Books, joins our group for lunch at the Getty Restaurant before a private tour of the library.



Don Philipp admires the Volckhamer volume donated by Tanya Norris to the Rare Book Library at the Getty.

Educational Lectures and Special Events

“Roses and Their Planting Companions”

March 21, 2011

CJ Forray, Horticulturalist of Cottage Garden Design



CJ Forray (with sunglasses) – The subject was roses and their planting companions.

“Give them good soil and good growing companions and your roses will thrive.” CJ Forray lives what she preaches. Her philosophy is to create the richest soil you can and then plant herbs, flowers, vegetables and shrubbery that will blend into symbiotic relationships. Hearty varieties of perennials give the garden a strong foundation. CJ Forray is a horticulturalist and garden designer who spent many years as a curator of 5 plant collections at a public garden and also worked as a horticultural educator. Now working in the private sector, she specializes in historic plants and theme gardens. C.J. shares easy ways to create a “non-toxic” garden, while conserving water, time and energy. A generous teacher, CJ spent time with her students in the Rose Garden demonstrating planting techniques.

“Here Comes the Butler-Guy!”

April 14, 2011

Nicholas Ash, Butler to the Stars and International Consultant



Nicholas Ash was every inch the part in a dark blazer, chalk-striped pants, white shirt and tie. His elegant English accent, wit, and engaging smile, transported the group to times gone by, when the routine for grand dames like Virginia Robinson was to have a dining room table set with polished silver, formal china and sparkling crystal. Because of an extensive restoration project in the kitchen and pantry, all of Mrs. Robinson's silver, china and crystal was laid out on tables in the Entrance Hall. This provided a remarkable opportunity for Mr. Ash to elaborate on the history and use of the fine accessories that came from generations of the

Dryden and Robinson families. He also shared many helpful suggestions that still apply today. Lunch was served in the Rose Garden. Learn more about Nicholas Ash at www.thebutlerguy.com.

Fellow's Afternoon Tour of the Italian Terrace Garden

April 16, 2011

On Saturday, April 16, 2011, Superintendent Tim Lindsay led the Robinson Gardens Fellows on a tour of the newly restored Italian Terrace Gardens. It was a rare opportunity for the Fellows to see this specialty garden at its best - in the soft glow of the late afternoon



Fellows Marcella Ruble, Elliott and Adrienne Horwitch, George and Kerstin Royce, with Friends president, Jeanne Anderson

sun, as the varied landscapes cast dramatic silhouettes against the brick paths and the brilliant sky. Some of the most impressive plant species in the garden are the Coral tree, known to be the “mother” of the coral trees along San Vicente Boulevard, the Organ-Pipe cactus, a gift from the Huntington family, and the spectacular Ginkgo tree located just above the Three Frog Fountain.



Friends Fellows Scott and Sunday Taylor

The thirty attendees enjoyed a reception featuring Mediterranean delights. Artist Alexey Steele, commissioned to paint a number of sites throughout the garden was on hand, painting the Montezuma Cypress.

2010-2011 Fellows

Laura and Harvey Alpert
Jeanne and Robbie Anderson
Maralee Beck and Andy Safir
Carolyn and Martin Bloom
Jackie and Arthur Burdorf
Margaret and Peter Dalis
Beth Rudin DeWoody
Cindy and Eddie Fields

Bobbie and Jerry Furrey
Roselyn Holt-Swartz and Allan Swartz
Andrienne and Elliott Horwitch
Audrey and Edgar Jessup, Jr.
Dorothy and Philip Kamins
Beth and Kenneth Karmin
Leslie and Jack Kavanaugh
Suzanne and Richard Kayne

Julia and Andrew Klein
Cathy and Ron Kurstin
Ellen and Harry Levitt
Marguerite and Tim Lindsay
Ellen and Mark Lipson
Merri Lee and Richard Marks
Tania Norris
Ann Petersen and Leslie Pam

Kerstin and George Royce
Clarisa and Wesley Ru
Susana and Eric Scroggins
Sunday and Scott Taylor
Reba and Dave Williams
March and Richard Wiseley
Jamie and David Wolf

Botanical Illustration Program

CENTENNIAL FLORALEGIUM

The Botanical Illustration Program at Virginia Robinson Gardens has a specific goal – to create a record, known throughout Europe as a *Floralegium*, which will permanently document the gardens, through the ancient art of botanical illustration. The plant collections in this historically significant garden were carefully selected, some of the specimens gathered during Virginia and Harry Robinson's travels around the world. How poetic it is, that in 2011, the Centennial of the estate, the first three works in the *Floralegium* have been produced.

Eleven years ago, Tim Lindsay, Superintendent of the Gardens, Tania Norris, a Friend of Robinson Gardens and Ann-Marie Evans, renowned English botanical art teacher, first discussed the idea of creating a *Floralegium* of the legendary plant collection at Virginia Robinson Gardens. To that end, master botanical art teachers were sourced from Canada, England and America to teach specialized courses. As a result, we now have a group of artists who have mastered the art of botanical illustration and produce works that are juried and worthy of inclusion in the Virginia Robinson Gardens *Floralegium*. Selected from eight paintings completed in Ann-Marie Evans spring workshop, the first botanical illustration to be included in the *Florilegium* is the work of Barbara Jaynes. It exquisitely depicts the semi-double pink camellia that was Virginia's namesake. Additional illustrations were commissioned from master teachers themselves. They include a beautiful fuchsia by Margaret Best from Canada and a steely-blue hydrangea by Elaine Searle from England. All three flowers are part of the gardens permanent plant collection.

Giclée prints and note cards of the three *Floralegium* paintings presently in the collection, as well as other plant portraits by the Robinson Gardens Botanical Art Group, are available from the Friends of Robinson Gardens Boutique.



Camellia by Barbara Jayne



Camellia by Julia Klein



Camellia by Tania Norris



Camellia by Suz Landay

For information about the Botanical Art Classes and how to purchase items from the Boutique, please call the Friends office at 310.550.2068 or visit the Virginia Robinson Gardens website at www.robinsongardens.org.

Botanical Illustration Program



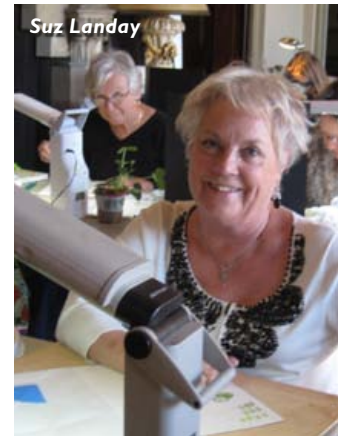
Anne Marie-Evans (bottom row, left) Winter Class – 2011



Deborah Shaw
demonstrates for students



Sydney Tanner



Suz Landay

COMING CLASSES

DEBORAH SHAW

Tuesday, JULY 26, 2011

Tuesday, AUGUST 30, 2011

Friday, SEPTEMBER 23, 2011

ELAINE SEARLE

OCTOBER 3-10, 2011

ANN-MARIE EVANS

FEBRUARY 21-25, 2012

FEBRUARY 27-MARCH 2, 2012.



Margaret Best



For more information regarding this program please visit our website at www.RobinsonGardens.org or call the office at 310.550.2068



Joann Keesey



Elaine Searle

Message from the County

TIM LINDSAY — SUPERINTENDENT OF ROBINSON GARDENS

ROBINSON ESTATE KITCHEN

**Restored & Ready for
Another Century of Gracious Living**

By Timothy L. Lindsay



When Virginia Robinson's father, Nathaniel Dryden, designed a new home for his daughter and son-in-law, he realized the kitchen needed to be equipped to serve large numbers of guests. As was their custom, the Robinson's entertained 300 to 400 guests on a regular basis. The kitchen was fully staffed by the standards of the affluent. A cordon bleu chef worked with the majordomo to set the menu and was assisted by a pastry chef, kitchen maid and several butlers. The kitchen and butler's pantry had to accommodate several people working together, as well as the elaborate tableware required for formal service. The counter in the butler's pantry was for the plate inspection. For smaller parties, the majordomo approved each plate before it was presented to the guest.

From the archives we know that the main house kitchen was in full operation September 30, 1911, when the Robinson's sat down to their first dinner in their



new home. From building permits, we also know that Mrs. Robinson did not remodel the kitchen until 1954. At that time, she upgraded her coal burning stove to natural gas, reconfigured the butler's pantry and added new Geneva metal cabinetry.

Now fifty-seven years later, the Friends have completed a historically accurate rehabilitation of the kitchen, stock pantry, and butler's pantry. The entire project took about twelve weeks. The metal cabinets had to be shipped to the factory to be reconditioned and powder coated. In the process of removing the cabinets, structural problems were discovered which required a County structural engineer to consult on the repair. Also electrical wiring was updated, and ceiling light fixtures were replaced with period appropriate fixtures. Current building codes required removal of all lead paint. Wood surfaces were sanded to the grain, while plaster surfaces were skim coated to restore the finish. One of the original colors discovered under many layers of paint was chosen because of its popularity



in the 1950's, which is the period of significance for this restoration. The color is a blue-gray, painted on all the trim; the walls are white. Five layers of flooring were discovered. The new marmoleum floor was installed to match one of the previous floors. Pull-down screens were refitted to each of the kitchen windows.

The tile in the kitchen was another challenging phase of the renovation. The walls behind the sink and stove were covered with metal tile. In order to cover the area, we needed 3,200 pieces, but could only source 300 pieces. The decision was made to use Daltile, which is similar in visual weight and color and is machine made, as was common in the 1950's. In addition, following established historic restoration guidelines, a portion of the old tile was retained behind the stove as a historical reference.

Many visitors to the estate are astonished by the size of twelve-burner, four-oven stove in the kitchen, which is, and was, unusual to find in a private home. The Garland stove had all its gas fittings rebuilt, while the porcelain portion of the stove was re-fired and the sheet metal powder coated. It is now a "working" work of art.

In addition to the many individuals in the community who, through the Friends, support restoration projects at Virginia Robinson Gardens, I wish to express special thanks to Ellen Levitt and Rita Rudin, Restoration Chairmen, the talented team of craftsman who made our vision a reality and Jeffery Alan Marks for his generous design consultation.

The Friends Boutique

Available for sale at the Friends Boutique located in the Pool Pavilion:

The Friends of Robinson Gardens present their first issue of marmalade, made from Robinson Estate oranges by E. Waldo Ward. Established in 1891, E. Waldo Ward is a family run business that began with orange marmalade as its specialty. Over the years the company branched out into olives, pickles and different kinds of marmalade. The Friends own



variety started with one hundred and sixty pounds of oranges, picked by two of our gardeners and one helper. The oranges were transported to Sierra Madre, where they were made into 682 jars of the highest quality English style marmalade. By all accounts,

even those not affiliated with the Friends, "It's delicious!"

A great gift to have on hand for hostess thank-you's or a birthday remembrance, Virginia Robinson Garden - Navel Orange Marmalade may be purchased in the Friends office or the Friends Boutique in the Pool Pavilion, (open during tours) for \$6.50 a jar.



Boxed Note Cards (set of 8) – asst. floral designs: \$26.00

Individual Cards: \$3.00 each

Botanical Prints – matted: \$85.00; framed: \$185.00

Virginia Robinson Coloring Book: \$5.00