

# ROBINSON GARDENS

## WINTER NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 2015



### In this Issue:

- Masterpiece Garden Tour
- Children's Program
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## A YEAR IN REVIEW

*Water conservation efforts inspire landscape changes.  
See before and after photos on page 2...*



# A Message from the Presidents



What an exciting time to be involved at Robinson Gardens! From the 27th Annual Garden Tour “Masterpiece,” which occurred in May of this year, to our September Moonlight and Roses Gala, there is constant activity on the property.

We think Virginia would be thrilled to see how active the daily calendar has become. Our Children’s Program has continued to grow with the assistance of the grant money we’ve been awarded. Our fall educational and botanical programs are being scheduled. Due to the increased hours of operation, the number of

docent-led tours has increased and thus introduced so many new faces to the property.

The Gardens have been the site of many photo shoots. The beautiful blooming bougainvillea on our tennis court has been the backdrop for celebrity magazine photo shoots as well as for couples engagement photos. It’s hard to find a more spectacular setting to photograph than our Palm Garden. Of course, our resident cat Harry has to give his approval to all of the activity. He comes by for a brief moment to get his ears rubbed and then, off he goes to chase lizards!

The chickens in the Poule Palace are enjoying their home, and do what chickens do, lay eggs for the children to see. The Kitchen Garden produces many seasonal vegetables for all to enjoy.

In keeping with the demand for decreased water usage, the grass on the front yard and pool lawns were replanted this summer with drought tolerant plants. Our water usage has decreased dramatically.

Our devoted members, County staff, and volunteers have dedicated many hours to ensure that Robinson Gardens always looks its best.

There are so many ways to become involved at this beautiful estate. Once you have had the opportunity to take a step back in time, to wander through the gardens, to hear the rustle of the palm branches blowing in the wind, and admire the architectural water features and Pool Pavilion, you’ll understand why it is important to keep this First Estate of Beverly Hills - with its incredible history - alive and relevant for future generations to enjoy.

*Julia Klein & Adrienne Horwitch*

## Continuing the dream of Virginia Robinson

In the social tradition of the Robinson Estate, the swimming pool was central to weekend gatherings of friends and family. First filled with water in 1923, this magnificent pool is slated for complete restoration starting this month and should take three months to complete. The reactivation of the medusa head will add water to the pool, while the operating side gutters will keep the pool surface smooth to mirror the architecture of the Pool Pavilion, acting as a reflecting pool as was originally intended. All pumps and pipes will be replaced, and the tile will be cleaned and replaced with custom tiles to match existing ones. This first swimming pool of Beverly Hills will soon be magnificent again and ready for synchronized swimmers, perhaps at our next Patron Gala in September.

The Main House and Pool House have charcoal grey awnings just like the originals, adding a distinctive look to the architecture while protecting the house museum. Additional county approved projects include the replacement of the HVAC systems in both the Pool Pavilion and Main House, upgrades to the electrical service to the estate and the automation of the employee parking lot driveway gate, and improvements to the employee storage building and lunch room.

With the help of the Friends, the county is able to execute these major restoration projects and serve the community even more than at any time in its history; possibly barring the roaring SIX decades it was occupied and programmed by the First Lady of Beverly Hills, the legendary Virginia Dryden Robinson!

*-Tim Lindsay*

Editors: Diane Jenkins & Kathy Choi; Design: Diane Jenkins

Contributing authors: Kathy Choi, Linda Meadows, Marian Power, Tim Lindsay, Julia Klein, Adrienne Horwitch, Maralee Beck, Greer Saunders

Contributing photographers: Joshua Johnston, Diane Jenkins, **Garden Tour:** Sang Eun Lee; **Gala:** Lee Salem; **Cover:** Laura Alpert





**BEFORE: Front lawn with excessive water consuming grass.**

**TODAY: Front lawn with drought tolerant plants.**

*Photo: Joshua Johnston*

# Water Conservation

*How Robinson Gardens reduced it's water use by 35%-45%*

The current 35% water conservation state mandate for Beverly Hills has us all thinking about how to make the best use of every drop! There are many options to manage water used to maintain our landscapes. Most importantly, we must preserve our mature trees and shrubs. Lawns can easily be reduced in size or replanted with climate appropriate ground cover. Below is a modified list of what we have done at Robinson Gardens in our conservation efforts:

1. Reprogrammed the irrigation clocks to run just 2 instead of 3 days per 7 day period.
2. Reduced lawn areas and replaced lawn with Mediterranean plants, resulting in reduced water use in these areas by 75%.
3. Reduced number of potted plants to be hand watered.
4. Repaired leaks in irrigation and changed out irrigation heads, installing the highest efficiency type, MP3's. (Friends funded project).
5. Repaired leaky faucets and toilets.
6. VRG staff and volunteers wash dishes in a plastic basin in the kitchen sink. Instead of sending dish water down the drain, the plastic basin is carried outside, and grey water is used to water plants.
7. Purchased several rain gages to monitor rainfall. For every ½ inch of rainfall, the irrigation system is shut off for 3 days.
8. Stainless steel soil probes are used to probe the soil and check the moisture level before adding water.
9. Plants are used as indicators as to when to water. Gardeners learned to read plants for drought symptoms before adding water, at which time they receive a deep watering to encourage the development of deep plant roots. The deep rooted plants stay hydrated longer and do not wilt so soon after watering. This approach saves a considerable amount of water.
10. Wood chip mulch has been added to planting beds to reduce water evaporation from the soil and help control erosion when it rains.
11. Water thirsty plants have been selectively replaced with climate appropriate plants that use a fraction of the water. This new planting also saves staff time, and they can perform more important functions in the garden.



**Back lawn by pool pavilion today**

*Timothy L. Lindsay*



**How can you reduce water consumption around your home and garden? Read Tim's Tips on water conservation at [www.robinsongardens.org/h2o](http://www.robinsongardens.org/h2o)**





# Masterpiece GARDEN TOUR

The 27th Annual Garden Tour, aptly titled “Masterpiece,” brought more than eight hundred well-heeled guests to Robinson Gardens. The rain the night before was a little tricky for those planning their outfits ahead, but the sun managed to come out in its full glory, leaving the outdoors fresh and sparkling like jewels. The tent on the Great Lawn provided much needed shade, cascading with sheets of pink, purple, and lace, where models sashayed between tables and posed at pedestals wearing the latest haute looks from fashion partner Ted Baker. Victoria Tennant, actress and author, charmed the crowd and spoke of her love of the gardens, while guests picked over the last of the delectable offerings at the buffet catered by Kitchen for Exploring Foods. Over 45 vendors sold their gorgeous wares on the famous pink tennis court where Charlie Chaplin, among many celebrities, played tennis; from hand printed note cards, to sun wide brim hats, and luxury items for our fabulous furry friends. Concierge ticket holders had prime seating along the pool, shaded under ornamented tents.









# OUR FLORISTS & DESIGNERS

## Front Lawn

### Greenwood Gardens

562-494-8944

[www.greenwoodgarden.com](http://www.greenwoodgarden.com)

## Front Entrance Doorway

### Eric Solberg

[www.eric溶berggardens.com](http://www.eric溶berggardens.com)

## Entrance Hall

### Silver Birches

626-594-9231

[www.silverbirches.net](http://www.silverbirches.net)

## Living Room

### Luna Gardens Events

310-281-2565

[www.lunagardensevents.com](http://www.lunagardensevents.com)

## Juan F. Bastos Portrait Artist

323-655-6112

[www.juanbastos.com](http://www.juanbastos.com)

## Loro Piana Interiors

210-283-9588

[www.loropiana.com](http://www.loropiana.com)

## Dale Witt

## Library & Library Patio

### Beverly Hills Flower Gallery

310-859-0210

[www.beverlyhillsflowergallery.com](http://www.beverlyhillsflowergallery.com)

## Kenneth Boyer

323-481-0247

[www.kennethaboyer.com](http://www.kennethaboyer.com)

## Morning Room

### Beverly Hills Garden Club

## Kathleen Spiegelman Interiors

310-273-2255

[www.kspiegelmaninteriors.com](http://www.kspiegelmaninteriors.com)

## Dining Room

### Christofle

323-330-1229

[www.christofle.com](http://www.christofle.com)

## Sweet Pea's Custom Floral

310-843-0255

[sweetpeasbeverlyhills@gmail.com](mailto:sweetpeasbeverlyhills@gmail.com)

## Loggia

### Lotus & Lily Floral

818-515-3499

[www.lotusandlily.com](http://www.lotusandlily.com)

## The Timeless Table

310-378-1929

[www.thetimelesstable.com](http://www.thetimelesstable.com)

## Pantry

### Flora Lux

323-434-6374

[www.floraluxla.com](http://www.floraluxla.com)

## Kitchen

### Contemporary Catering

310-558-8190

[www.contemporarycatering.com](http://www.contemporarycatering.com)

## Lotus & Lily Floral

818-515-3499

[www.lotusandlily.com](http://www.lotusandlily.com)

## The Timeless Table

310-378-1929

[www.thetimelesstable.com](http://www.thetimelesstable.com)

## Kitchen Patio

### Yamaguchi

310-473-5444

[www.yamaguchinursery.com](http://www.yamaguchinursery.com)

## Ivo's Office

### Botanical Artists Guild

### Beverly Hills Rose Society

## Galleria

### Jamie Wolf

## Shoreh: East to West

310-285-8174

[www.shoreheasttowest.com](http://www.shoreheasttowest.com)

## Guest Bedroom

### Menuah Flowers

818-625-5243

[www.menuah.com](http://www.menuah.com)

## Grande Maison de Blanc

310-598-1982

[www.gmblanc.com](http://www.gmblanc.com)

## Master Bedroom

### Butterfly Floral

323-882-8400

[www.butterflyfloraldesign.com](http://www.butterflyfloraldesign.com)

## Frette Beverly Hills

310-273-8540

[www.frette.com](http://www.frette.com)

## Nicole Antoine Design

310-858-8819

[www.nicoleantoinedesign.com](http://www.nicoleantoinedesign.com)

## Pool Pavilion Front Room

### Pasadena Garden Club

### Santa Barbara Garden Club

## Pool Pavilion Billiard Room

### Kassandra Cambas &

### Savannah Farris

310-770-2059

[www.kasandracambas.com](http://www.kasandracambas.com)

## My Secret Garden

323-464-1514

[www.mysecretgardenla.com](http://www.mysecretgardenla.com)

## Concierge

### Brad Austin

323-658-8874

[www.bradaustin.com](http://www.bradaustin.com)

## Lily Pad Lawn

Linda McKendry

818-974-0405

[linda@lindamckendry.com](mailto:linda@lindamckendry.com)

## Dirt Diva Designs

818-370-3200

[www.dirtdivadesigns.com](http://www.dirtdivadesigns.com)

## Eye of the Day

805-566-6500

[www.eyeofthedaygdc.com](http://www.eyeofthedaygdc.com)



# OUR VENDORS

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310-918-7951

beltinibelts@gmail.com

**C. Kumlin**

c.s.kumlin@cox.net

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lorimarks@ymail.com

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**Dale Michelle**

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dma451@yahoo.com

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www.hostessgiftstogo.com

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www.jvanryn.com

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www.joannsmyth.com

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310-780-9922

bedheadpjs@gmail.com

**The Kit Vintage**

917-754-4489

www.thekitvintage.com

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louisekt@sbcglobal.net

**MOONLITE**

310-573-0013

moonlite10@verizon.net

**Nancy Clavin Art**

310-617-9880

www.nancyclavinart.com

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323-939-4759

ronelle7654@aol.com

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orderroyalaccessories.com

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www.strut-this.com

**THE TREASURED ACCESSORY**

818-383-5868

www.thetreasuredaccessory.com

**YA LIVING**

310-569-2929

www.yaliving.com

**Social Butterfly Designs**

310-418-5512

www.socialbutterflydesigns.com

**MLM Designs**

310-476-9885

merrileemark@earthlink.net

**Hearst Ranch Winery**

805-467-2241

www.hearstranchwinery.com



## SPECIAL THANKS TO:



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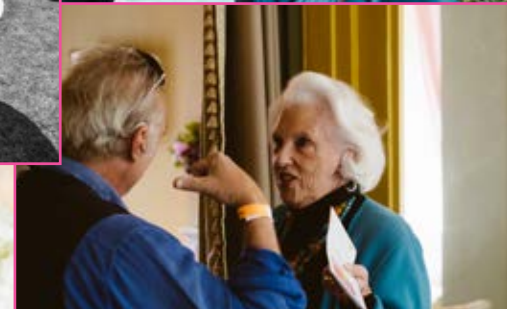
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27th Annual Garden Tour



at the Robinson Gardens

Masterpiece





# ROBINSON GARDENS HIGHLIGHTS



## Robinson Gardens Featured in Martha Stewart's **WEDDINGS** Magazine

Recently, **Sofia Vergara** was photographed at the Virginia Robinson Gardens estate for Martha Stewart's fall issue of 'Weddings' magazine. The themed gardens on the estate were the perfect setting and as you can see, complemented each of the spectacular dresses worn by Sofia.

## Friends of RG Member Lunch

Patty Elias Rosenfeld and Betty Rodriguez Goldstein, co-chairs of the 2015 Members Luncheon, along with the help of Juliette Ambatzidis, regaled the Friends of Robinson

Gardens with a beautiful party held at the gardens on October 2nd. VRG welcomed nine new members. Pictured above are six of our new members, from back row left to right: Diana Doyle, Kathleen McGillivray, and Shawna Clark. Front row left to right: Christine Centolanza Hansom, Deidra Gordon, and Linda Schwartz.



## Fellows adventure on a Malibu Garden Tour

A recent outing by the Fellows took them to three spectacular gardens near and on the beach in Malibu. The weather was fair and the sea air sultry. Each garden offered a different design style to experience and gather inspiration from, as the Fellows heard the story of how the gardens were created. The narrative of each garden led to discovery, as the visual language of each site spoke to the viewer, while they heard the various solutions employed by the designer to solve the site's challenges.

## Virginia Robinson Gardens in **Southern California Life Magazine!**

**Camila Alves**, model, designer and wife of actor Matthew McConaughey, visited the Robinson Gardens for a photo shoot and video interview with Southern California Life Magazine in January 2015. With three children in tow, Camila was the essence of beauty, class and grace, and spoke about her health, her work, and her philosophy of balance in body and mind. Read more at:

[www.socallifemag.com/camila-alves](http://www.socallifemag.com/camila-alves)



## Virginia Robinson Gardens in **August Company!**

Famed interior designer Charlotte Moss is the author of eight books and her latest, *Charlotte Moss: Garden Inspirations*, is both a work of beauty and usefulness as well as an amazing accolade for Virginia Robinson Gardens. Ms. Moss has visited gardens all over the world and features many of them in her latest book.

For American gardens, Ms. Moss selected Monticello, Swan House, Montpelier, Dumbarton Oaks, Mt. Vernon, Madoo and Virginia Robinson Gardens. Our special treasure is the only garden featured west of the Mississippi! Virginia Robinson Gardens is honored to be included with so many other historic American gardens.



# THE CHILDREN'S PROGRAM at ROBINSON GARDENS



## School Tours

Los Angeles County Parks and Recreation, along with the Friends of Robinson Gardens, offer a tour of the six acre Garden which is free to public and private elementary schools. On the docent-led tour, the children learn through hands-on experience while grasping a better understanding of the 3 R's: recycling, reusing, and reclaiming their environment. These children gain greater interest in how to grow a garden of their own and motivation for eating more fruits and vegetables, while experiencing the beauty, history, and serenity of the Garden.

The Children's Program welcomed over 1700 young visitors in the past year! This number could not have been possible without the help of the County of Los Angeles: Tim Lindsay, Vicky Huynh, Josh Johnston, April Walton, Leticia Chihuahua, and Karun Thanni. Major funding for this program which included bus transportation was donated by the following Foundations:

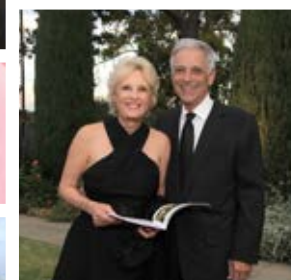
- Annenberg Foundation
- The Rose Hills Foundation
- Robert Anderson
- Ken and Carol Schultz Foundation
- Callie D. McGrath Foundation
- Beverly Hills Garden Club Foundation
- Rotary Club of Beverly Hills
- The Harold McAlister Charitable Foundation
- The Winnick Family Foundation
- The Ralph M. Parsons Foundation



## Children's Science Fair

Our annual Science Fair brings children from Maryvale, Hillside, Hathaway-Sycamores and other group homes to the Gardens for a memorable day of exploration. From the Kitchen Garden, where they smell, touch and eat what we grow, to the monkey cages which are now home to the chickens, the children are constantly learning. The Mad Science Show, the entertaining magician and the delicious lunch while a DJ plays their favorite songs, add to the magic of the day. For most of our guests, this is a dream come true, and they depart with a bag filled with gifts and garden resources. In the true spirit of Virginia Robinson, the children are treated to a memorable, potentially life-changing experience.

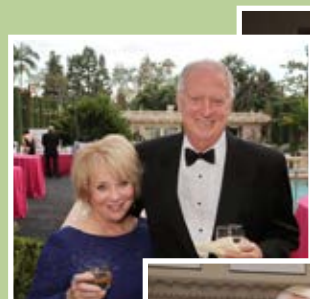




# MOONLIGHT and ROSES

## The Friends of Robinson Gardens' 2015 Patron Gala

This year's annual Patron Gala "Moonlight and Roses" was a remarkable example of how the beneficiaries of the Friends of Robinson Gardens came together to celebrate and contribute towards our beloved First Estate of Beverly Hills. The guests were generous in their contributions, as well as with silent and live auction bidding, allowing us to raise more funds towards much-needed property improvements at the Virginia Robinson Gardens. Perhaps it was the moonlit sky, impeccable setting, and delicious food, but it was certainly the honorees, County Superintendent Tim Lindsay and Beverly Hills Courier Editor Marcia Hobbs that brought such generosity and warmth to the evening.







Thank You to our Sponsors:

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# MOONLIGHT and ROSES

"...a night to remember"





## Thank you to our Donors...

### Ago

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# 2016 EDUCATION & EVENTS

You don't want to miss!

## Fellows New Orleans Tour

April 11-15, 2016

A group of the Fellows will be on a private tour of New Orleans. They will experience the private gardens and homes, the fabulous architecture and cooking of the Crescent City. On the tours and talks, the Fellows will be escorted by experts in the various aspects of the tour.



## Children's Annual Science Fair

Tuesday, April 22, 2016

Volunteers are needed to welcome 100 children from local group homes. Contact April at (310) 550-2087 to volunteer for the event or to donate gifts in-kind.

## De Colores Garden Tour

Saturday, May 14, 2016

Keying off the popular Spanish song, this year's theme refers to Spanish-influenced gardens, from the beautiful Alhambra to other gems throughout Latin America. Florists and designers will transform the Robinson Estate into a riot of colors, while patrons will be inspired by the private gardens and enjoy the loveliest day of the year at the most incredible public garden in Los Angeles County. Come join us!



## Patron Gala

Saturday, September 24, 2016

The annual black tie Patron Gala is the classiest night of the year as Friends of Robinson Gardens come together to celebrate the year's success and honor those who have gone out of their way to improve the Gardens. Dining and dancing under the stars always makes for a perfect evening!

## Anne-Marie Evans Botanical Illustration Course

November 7-11, 2016

Renowned botanical illustrator Anne-Marie Evans is known throughout the world as a master teacher of botanical art. Her classes are filled with the most thoroughly researched methods of giving information so that students can benefit to the fullest from their attendance.



## Stay Informed with the Robinson Gardens Website!

Our website is an excellent resource for information on the history of Robinson Gardens, along with information on Robinson Gardens' current events. Learn about upcoming classes, lectures, Robinson Gardens' annual garden tour and gala, volunteer opportunities, membership, and much more. We are also preparing for the new look of our website, so stay tuned! Go to: [www.robinsongardens.org](http://www.robinsongardens.org)

