

LOTUSLAND NEWSLETTER

Volume 3 No. 1  Spring 1994

1994 Public Visits Full

WE HAVE BARELY STARTED OUR 1994 public tour season, and we are already full! But not for members. All members at all levels will be given special consideration and priority when calling for a reservation for a tour. We greatly appreciate your support and want you to understand the benefits of your membership that allow you special access to enjoy the garden.

Friends of Lotusland at Levels II, III, and IV may visit the garden on days set aside for self-guided tours when the garden is completely closed to public tours. A list of self-guided tour days was included in our Winter Newsletter, and a special mailer was also recently sent to Levels II and above. Remember, you still need to make a reservation for the self-guided tour days. Call early as spaces will be limited. We would appreciate it if you could please reserve space for yourself and no more than three guests when you call for a reservation.

PALMS IN THE LANDSCAPE

THE SKYLINE of most vistas at Lotusland features a family of flowering plants that everyone, garden enthusiast or not, even the botanically challenged, recognizes on sight — the palms. The view from the courtyard in front of the main residence (see below) contains seven different palms, just a small sampling of the more than 60 mature palm species in the gardens of Lotusland. With palms forming such an important landscape element throughout Santa Barbara, it may be surprising to learn that none of the many palms we grow in Santa Barbara occurs here naturally. In fact, the California fan palm (*Washingtonia filifera*), from our southern desert, is the only palm native to California.

Interest in palms, however, seems to be endemic in Santa Barbara. The 1893 mail order catalog of R. Kinton Stevens, whose nursery evolved into what is now Lotusland, offered 49 kinds of palms. These included Canary Island date palm (*Phoenix canariensis*), queen palm (*Syagrus romanzoffiana*) and king palm (*Archontophoenix cunninghamiana*), which are common street trees today. Others, such as Chilean wine palm (*Jubaea chilensis*), fishtail wine palm (*Caryota urens*)

and Australian fan palm (*Livistona australis*), are still quite unusual in our landscape.

The Southern California Acclimatizing Association, begun by Dr. Francesco Franceschi in 1895 and managed by noted Santa Barbara landscape designer and plantsman Peter Riedel following its incorporation in 1907, had three nurseries: one on State Street just up from the train station, another at Dr. Franceschi's home (now Franceschi Park), and the third on Eucalyptus Hill near Five Points. Its 1908 catalog listed 64 kinds of palms for sale. Although several are no longer considered valid species, that in no way lessens the interest palms have had for Santa Barbarans for over 100 years.

How should someone with a developing interest in palms go about discovering more about these southern California icons? A good start might be to look up palms in the *Sunset Western Garden Book*. There you will find suggestions of palms for several different landscape situations, with broad ideas of their cultural requirements, along with clues for learning to tell one kind from another. To delve a little deeper into Santa

Palms—continued on page 4

Palm vista from main residence courtyard. Photo: Steven Timbrook





Madame Walska at Galluis

AN ARTICLE in the *Chicago Tribune* dated October 20, 1929, describes the elaborate house-warming party given by Madame Walska celebrating the opening of her newly acquired country home, the Chateau de Galluis, situated about 30 miles from Paris on the edge of the forest at Rambouillet after passing through Versailles.

Architecturally, the ancient chateau belonged to the Louis XIII period and was in perfect condition. The Louis XV salon contained some intricate and delicate woodwork with a superb chandelier of the same period. The excellent taste of the previous owners required little or no change for immediate occupancy.

The party was attended by a fashionable international set which included the former Maharajah of Indore and his American-born wife; Lady Peel, the former actress Beatrice Lillie; the American screen star Adolphe Menjou and his Canadian-born wife. The Menjous were in France arranging to appear in three talking films, the first ever made in France. It seems Mr. Menjou was fluent in both French and Italian as well as his native English, which he felt justified what had been described as his "exorbitant" salary of \$7,500 per week. An added excitement for the neighboring villagers was the sound of an English hunting horn which greeted any celebrated guests upon their arrival at the chateau.

In September 1939, with the wartime occupation of Paris, Madame Walska

abandoned the chateau and returned to her home in New York after arranging for her antique furniture to be safely stored. The records indicate that she left the care of her chateau in the hands of the village mason, Monsieur Eudes, who throughout the war rented it out to various refugees in order to prevent it being occupied by the Germans. There is no indication that Madame Walska ever returned to the chateau, but most of her furniture was taken out of storage and shipped to New York and later to California.

The son of a close neighbor from the village of Galluis, Jerome Dalseme, who now resides in Santa Ynez, describes the garden as being quite informal with shady woodland paths filled with wildflowers and thousands of red and white tulips in honor of the colors of the Polish national flag. Mr. Dalseme recalls hearing Madame singing from her balcony which looked down on the mass of tulips in the spring.

Although the main chateau building was recently torn down for safety reasons, the smaller pavilion remains at Galluis. A memory of Madame Walska's life at Galluis lives on in the Lotusland theatre garden. The stone figures found there came from Galluis as did an ornate Goya-tiled fountain that will one day be restored and given a place of prominence on the grounds of Lotusland.

— Patricia Tarkowska



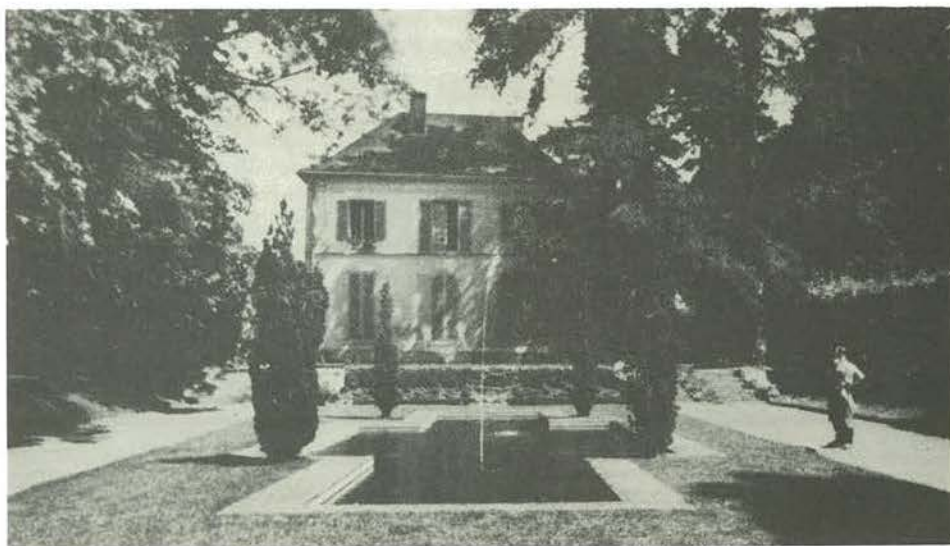
ABOVE: Ganna Walska caused a sensation when she arrived at the Metropolitan Opera House on opening night 1945 in a "bare midriff gown, trimmed with beaded spangles." Photo courtesy Gregory Padgett.

BELOW: Chateau de Galluis and a garden pond, as pictured in Madame Ganna Walska's 1943 autobiography, *Always Room at the Top*.

BELOW LEFT: Patricia Tarkowska with a bust of Madame Walska sculpted in Paris during her operatic career. Ms. Tarkowska was Ganna Walska's personal secretary for the last 20 years of Madame's life.



Wm. B. Dewey



Special Events Calendar

Friday, March 11, 7:30 p.m. — Santa Barbara Botanic Garden

CREATING A WATER GARDEN: Lecture and book signing with Charles B. Thomas. Mr. Thomas will lead you through the process of planning, installing, stocking and maintaining a water garden. He will sign his newest book, *Water Gardens*, as well as his *Water Gardens for Plants and Fish* following the lecture.

Lotusland and Santa Barbara Botanic Garden are co-sponsoring this presentation. Please call the Santa Barbara Botanic Garden Registrar (805) 563-2521, Tuesday–Friday, 9 a.m. to noon to reserve your seat. Fee \$6 (\$4 members).

Lotusland is co-sponsoring the following three lectures with the Santa Barbara Botanic Garden and the Santa Barbara Museum of Art. All lectures will be followed by a tea in the Museum galleries. To register please call the Santa Barbara Museum of Art 963-4364 and ask for information about the "Springtime in the Garden" lecture series. Ticket price: \$15 per lecture for members of one of the three institutions and \$18 for non-members.

Wednesday, March 16, 2 p.m. — Santa Barbara Museum of Art

CARDINALS AND GARDENS IN RENAISSANCE ITALY: Valerie Raleigh Thornhill, popular speaker in the U.S. and Europe, will discuss in her slide lecture the masterpieces of garden design created by popes and cardinals as oases from the summer heat and courtly tedium of late 16th century Italy. Lecture will be in the Mary Craig Auditorium.

Wednesday, March 30, 2 p.m. — Santa Barbara Museum of Art

THE GOLDEN AGE OF AMERICAN GARDENS: PROUD OWNERS/PRIVATE ESTATES/1890–1940: Lecture and slide presentation by Eleanor Constable Weller. An interior designer whose own home and other projects have been featured in *House and Garden*, *W, Town and Country* and in the Time-Life book *Country Style*, Ms. Weller is founder of the Archive of American Gardens Committee as well as co-author of the book *The Golden Age of American Gardens*. Her talk will be illustrated with rarely seen visual images from 1909 to the early 1930s, including historic works by well-known garden photographers, landscape artists' plans of country houses, and aerial views of unique gardens. Mary Craig Auditorium.

Thursday, April 28, 2 p.m. — Santa Barbara Museum of Art

DESIGNING FOR CALIFORNIA LANDSCAPES: Isabelle Greene, an internationally prominent landscape architect based in Santa Barbara, has designed more than 400 gardens during the past 25 years, covering a wide range of styles and moods. Ms. Greene's slide presentation will focus on her thorough knowledge of the flora and fauna of Southern California and how the region's climate and other special characteristics influence the design of her gardens. Mary Craig Auditorium.

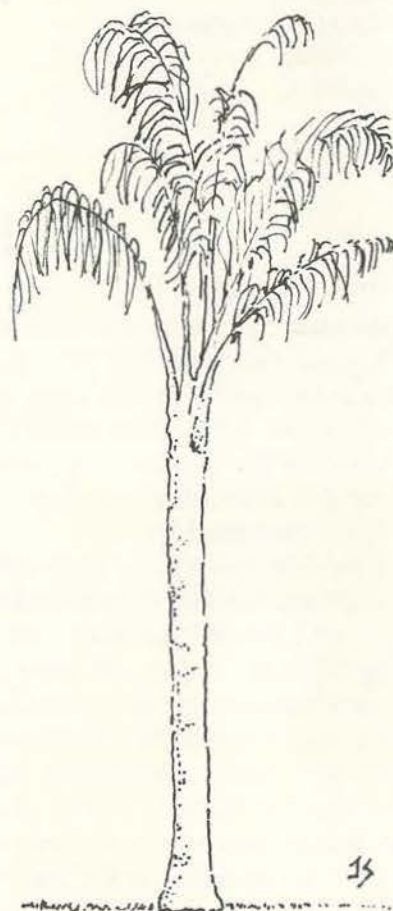
Note: This lecture has been sold out. For information about a wait-list, please call the Santa Barbara Museum of Art.

Friday, April 29 & Saturday, April 30, 1:30–4 p.m.

PALMS ON PARADE: Lotusland has over 60 different species of palms that will be the focus of a special class. See page 5 for complete class information and registration coupon.

Special Tour for Those with Mobility Impairment Friday, April 8, 1:30 p.m.

MEMBERS who do not feel up to our usual tour, which can take nearly two hours and cover more than two miles, are invited to call for a reservation for a quiet, more slowly moving tour of parts of the garden on Friday, April 8, at 1:30 p.m. Observation specialist Sydney Gay will conduct a nature awareness tour of parts of the garden for those who have endurance problems, are in the recovery process or have a mobility impairment. Sydney, a local Montecitan and founder of "Are You Listening, America?," is a graduate of the Wigmore Institute in Puerto Rico which specializes in the healing properties of plants. Please call the Reservation Office at (805) 969-9990 from 9–12, Monday through Friday, to reserve a space. The tour will be limited to ten people.



FRIENDS OF LOTUSLAND

We welcome new members who joined December 1993 and January 1994

LEVEL I

Kendra Adams
Lucette Anderson
Mrs. Edward L. Bakewell, Jr.
Joy Ballinger
Amanda Larue Besand
Albert and Aloha Borgaro
Adi Brewer
Lilla L. Burgess
Lili Ida Byall
Peter and Marsha L. Campiglio
Neill Cate
Shirley Conley
Mr. and Mrs. George Dubail
Helen M. Elliott
Ann W. Ellis
Frank Farwell Ferry
Virginia H. Fick
Karin F. Finell
Charles W. Fisher
E. Ann Forrest
Jean S. Goodrich
Dorothy J. Graves
Mr. and Mrs. Jack K. Green
Mr. and Mrs. R.E. Hall
Nancy June Harrington
Ann Marie Heath
David and Linda Hughes
Dezso Karczag
Mary L. Keeney

Hildegard Lagerquist
Enid F. Leventhal
Jane Lundin
N. Suzanne McClure
Carolyn M. Mitchell
Maura Barbara Mullahey
Peter and Ann Mullins
Hilary Claire Murray
David F. Myrick
Margaret G. Nadeau
Mr. and Mrs. Duncan L. Nelles
Marilyn L. Osborne
Marilyn M. Petersen
Barbara Ciccolella Post
Bettie P. Ravel
Lillian E. Rondeau
Kathleen Sale
Mr. and Mrs. Lloyd G. Schermer
Terri Lynn Seward
Rita G. Shaw
Andrea Slavin
Pamela J. Smith
Barbara A. Smyth
Celeste M. Varas de Valdes
Beth Westen
Eric and Lynn Woodbury

Michael Davis
Merritt S. Dunlap
Linda D.A. Fardan
Dawn Flink
Joan Haber
JK and R.H. Leason
Dora Anne Little
Lyn Longley
Lisa Meeker
Mr. and Mrs. R.S. Palmer
Ronald W. Ruther
Mr. and Mrs. A. H. Schuyler, Jr.
Martha and William Underwood
Barbara M. and Colonel H. Ben Walsh

LEVEL III

Gay W. Bryant
Hermine and Gary Gallup
Elinor Van Oosten

LEVEL IV

Andrew and Adrienne Davis

HONORARY MEMBER

Patricia Tarkowska

LEVEL II

Laura and John Bridley
George Dickson Clark, Jr.

Palms in the Landscape

continued from page 1

Barbara's palms, the Santa Barbara Botanic Garden publication *Trees of Santa Barbara* is a good next step. The palms are given a special section at the end of the book. Thirty-eight species are described and sample locations where they are growing in town are given.

If the palm bug is biting you harder, you might seek out the International Palm Society, P.O. Box 368, Lawrence, Kansas 66044. Madame Walska was made an honorary board member of the Palm Society in recognition of her contributions to the palm world. Membership, \$25, brings you the quarterly journal *Principes*, with articles on palms from around the world. For an additional \$15, you can also affiliate with the Southern California

Chapter, which publishes *The Palm Journal* bimonthly. The address is IPS, So. Cal. Chapter, 1601 Via Sage, San Clemente, California 92673.

In addition to Lotusland, there are a few much more accessible places to see a diversity of palms. The Ventura College Palm Garden that landscapes the swimming pool has about 225 species of palms, the earliest planted in 1974. The pool is near the intersection of Telegraph Road and West Campus Way. The plantings at the Santa Barbara County Courthouse, Alameda Park and Santa Barbara Cemetery feature a number of interesting palms of good size. And of course there are a great many blocks downtown with palms as street trees. The next time you're

waiting for the light to change, or for traffic to get past some unexpected roadwork, take a look at the street trees nearby. Chances are you won't have to look far to see some king or queen palms, and there are literally miles of Mexican fan palms (*Washingtonia robusta*), with a few shorter, stouter California fan palms interspersed, along the ocean side of Cabrillo Boulevard. Incidentally, in 1972 Madame Walska contributed \$10,000 to trim the palms along Cabrillo Boulevard.

If you want to learn more about the common, and some of the rarer, palms in Santa Barbara, consider enrolling in Palm on Parade, a class for Friends of Lotusland members described on page five.

—Steven Timbrook

Palms on Parade Open to Members Only April 29 & 30

WITH THE WEATHER turning warmer, it is appropriate to begin thinking tropical, and what exemplifies the tropics more than palm trees swaying in the breeze?

At Lotusland there are over 60 different species of palms, not all trees and not all tropical, that will be the focus of a special class for Friends of Lotusland.

Director Steven Timbrook, Associate Curator Virginia Hayes, and Integrated Pest Management Coordinator John Lafleur will give some insights into how to recognize, grow and care for the typical palms found in Santa Barbara landscapes.

In addition, we will visit some of the rare species in Lotusland's collections for a closer look at how they differ from their relatives.

Classes will be held Friday and Saturday, April 29 and 30, from 1:30 to 4:00 p.m., for members only. Most of the class time will be spent strolling through the grounds, so space is limited to 25 members each day.

The class fee is \$6. To reserve space please fill in the coupon below and return it with your payment. Space will be reserved in the order coupons are received.

Two Mexican fan palms tower above a Chinese windmill palm. Join the palm parade and visit these and other specimens in April.



Steven Timbrook

Ganna Walska Lotusland Registration Form Palms on Parade — April 29 & 30

Check one: _____ Friday, April 29, 1:30–4:00 p.m.
_____ Saturday, April 30, 1:30–4:00 p.m. _____ Number attending, \$6.00 per person \$ _____

Mail to Ganna Walska Lotusland, Attn: Members Events, 695 Ashley Rd., Santa Barbara, CA 93108

PAYMENT METHOD

☐ Check Enclosed (payable to Ganna Walska Lotusland)
☐ VISA ☐ Mastercard Expiration Date _____

Card Number _____

Signature _____

Member Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____



Foreign Educators Visit Lotusland

In January, twenty secondary school teachers and university education professors from Papua New Guinea, Madagascar, and 13 countries in Africa and Latin America were introduced to the wonders of Lotusland by docents Robin Primich, Sean Hutchinson, Fred Keller, and Daniel Pederson (back row: 2nd to 5th from left). Every time they recognized a plant from their homeland, our foreign visitors broke into broad smiles of pride. The field trip to Lotusland was part of a six-week study of the U.S. coordinated by University of California at Santa Barbara Extension and funded by the United States Information Agency. Participants spend four weeks in Santa Barbara, then travel to New Orleans, Boston, New York and Washington, D.C., in an intensive program to introduce them to the history, government, literature and culture of our country.



**Ganna Walska
Lotusland Foundation**

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