



LOTUSLAND NEWSLETTER

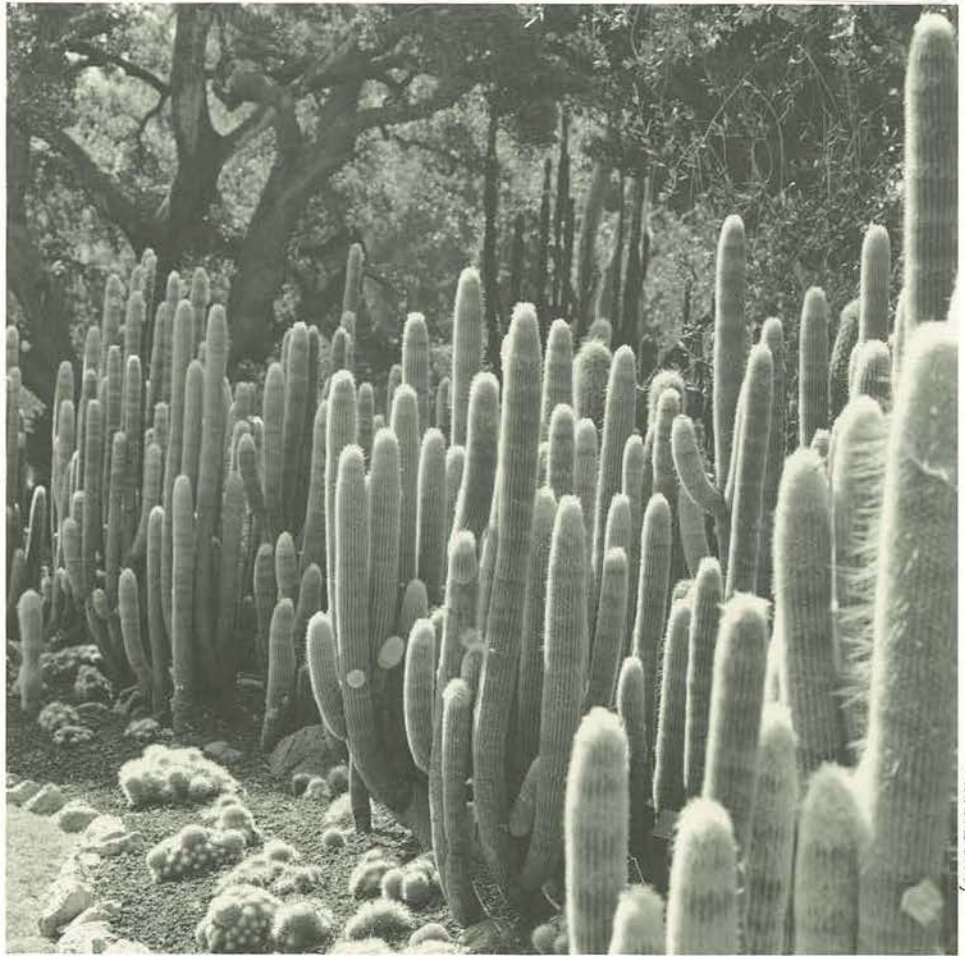
Volume 2 No. 1  Summer 1993

How to be a Friend of Lotusland

By now you should have received an invitation to become a Friend of Lotusland. The membership brochure (you can't miss the pink lotus on the cover) was mailed in mid-July to all those who currently receive a newsletter. Please call the office (805) 969-3767 if you have not yet received a brochure and are interested in membership information.

One of the benefits of membership is that you will continue to receive our newsletter with advance notice of lectures and classes. This newsletter is the last issue for non-members. Other benefits include free admission passes for you and your guests. As a special benefit of some levels of membership, you may enjoy self-guided tours. If you join now, you may make an advance reservation for a visit beginning in mid-September. We're only open for a limited period this year, so reservations may fill up quickly.

As a Friend of Lotusland, you not only receive special garden privileges, but your membership will support the Foundation in its endeavor to carry out Madame Walska's wishes that her garden be preserved and shared with visitors. Your contribution will also assist the Foundation in its goals to increase the garden's value to the public by plant propagation, preservation of rare species and by presenting educational programs and classes.



Wm B Dewey

It's called Lotusland, but there's much more than the lovely lotus gardens to see. The extensive cactus collection is a special attraction any time of year.

We're open!

Well, almost! We will be opening our new gates on Cold Springs Road for public tours on September 15, and we will begin to accept reservations starting Monday, August 16. (If you are a member, we'll take your reservation right now!)

Lotusland will be offering guided tours on Wednesdays through Saturdays at 10 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. All tours are by reservation only. The reservation phone number is (805) 969-9990, and the reservation office hours are Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to noon. The

number of visitors and vehicles will be limited on a daily basis to make viewing the garden a more enjoyable experience for everyone.

Admission to Lotusland will be free of charge on two Saturdays, October 11 and November 15, although advance reservations are still required.

This will be a very short year for tours of Lotusland as we will be closing November 15 to February 15 for winter maintenance. Please call early. We would like our friends and supporters to enjoy a visit as soon as possible.

Friends of Lotusland receive:

- Subscription to this newsletter with news of upcoming events and classes
- Free admission passes for themselves and their guests
- Self-guided tours (for some levels of membership)
- The satisfaction of nurturing a unique botanical garden

Thirty-one Enthusiastic Docents Graduate

In preparation for the mid-September opening, Lotusland conducted a 16-week training course for new docents.

The informative, demanding program required attendance at every weekly meeting. Course material covered everything from botany to garden design to reminiscences from people who worked with Madame Walska.

Among local experts conducting classes were Dr. Edward Schneider, Director, Santa Barbara Botanic Garden, who spoke on plant anatomy; Dr. Bruce Tiffney, Professor of Geology, UCSB, who gave a presentation on the evolution of major modern plant groups, and Dr. Robert Cummings, Professor of Botany at Santa Barbara City College, who lectured on the life cycles of ferns, cone-bearing plants and flowering plants.

Lectures, slides and handouts were



Virginia Hayes

supplemented by many walks in the garden to study plants and garden design. New docents participated in practice tours with experienced docents.

Lotusland is delighted to have 31

newly trained docents added to the ranks of volunteers who will conduct guided tours. Volunteers are also hard at work in the nursery propagating plants for sale in the Garden Shop.



Wm. B. Dewey

Left to right: Laura Bridley, Permit Planner; Steven Timbrook, Director; Arthur R. Gaudi, Secretary-Treasurer; Carol L. Valentine, President; Anne W. Jones, Vice-President; Michael B. Towbes, Trustee; Frank Louda, General Contractor. Not pictured: Elizabeth W. Dake, Trustee.

Visitor Center Nears Completion

Ground-breaking last November for Lotusland's new Visitor Center culminated five years of planning and design work.

Chismahoo Construction, Ltd., began site preparation with temporary fencing of tree and planter areas.

Tree relocation was barely finished when a series of heavy rains drenched Montecito from December through

March. Though other garden areas lapped up the welcome moisture, the clay soil of the construction site did not. Each time the ground dried enough to begin work, new storms shut things down, resulting in a 10-week delay.

Finally in late April, grading work began in earnest at the same time that foundations were poured for the Visitors

Center. Buildings accommodate restrooms and a Garden Shop, connected by a brick patio and portico. South of the Garden Shop, landscaped with Australian tea trees (*Leptospermum laevigatum*), lies a tiled assembly area where visitors will meet their docents.

Building framing, sheathing and roofing began in late April, continuing



Lotusland's Water Gardens

It should be no surprise for visitors to Lotusland to discover the water gardens. As the name implies, Lotusland is home to the aquatic lotus flower.

While the Japanese garden pond no longer provides an unbroken vista of the Asian, or sacred Indian, lotus (*Nelumbo nucifera*), a small colony still exists there, a reminder that Kinton Stevens grew lotus in this pond in the late 1800s.

The majority of the lotus collection, however, is now grown in the lotus pond, which was once a swimming pool. Flanked by a charming bath house, the pond now hosts three species of the genus *Nelumbo* as well as ten lotus cultivars.

Lotus grow from an underground tuber, which in parts of Asia is harvested and used in much the same way we use potatoes. The peltate leaves rise out of the water as much as four feet, looking like a forest of green parasols. Towering above the leaves, the magnificent flowers open for three or four days before the petals drop away, leaving a cone-shaped seed head that, when dried, is much prized by flower arrangers.

The Asian lotus flowers are strawberry pink, but many shades of white, dark pink, lavender and yellow are now available through the efforts of hybridizers. The flowering season lasts from mid-

June through September, at which time the plants begin to go dormant. The tubers pass the winter months in a resting state, leaving the pond surface clear to reflect the sky.

On either side of the lotus pond are waterlily ponds, where both hardy and tropical cultivars of the genus *Nymphaea* are grown. The hardies range in color from white through shades of pink and red, as well as yellow and peach. Tropicals encompass the same array of colors with the addition of blues and purples. Most waterlily flowers open in the morning and close again at the end of the day. Some of the tropicals, however, open late in the day and remain open through the night, closing in mid-morning. Waterlilies are also grown in the Japanese garden pond and the koi pond in the cycad garden.

Three other kinds of waterlilies are grown at Lotusland. Spatterdock or cow lily (*Nuphar luteum* subsp. *polysepalum*), a large-leaved, prickly waterlily from Asia (*Euryale ferox*), and the wondrous *Victoria* from South America. By far the most spectacular, *Victoria* dominates the waterscape. Its leaves may reach diameters of six to eight feet in their native habitat, and can exceed four feet across even in our less tropical cli-



Lotusland's namesake in a radiant photograph by William B. Dewey.

mate. With their up-turned leaf edges they resemble an array of giant platters. Although the leaf is not particularly tough, because of the intricate webbing of the raised veins on its underside, it can support many pounds without sinking. If the weight is evenly distributed, a person can easily sit on the leaf, as many publicity photos attest.

In nature, the edge of a pond supports a great variety of other plants that require continuous moisture. Several are included in a damp area adjacent to the waterlily ponds. Varieties of taro, along with cannas, sugar cane, crinum lilies and sage form the major plantings. An island of Egyptian paper plant (*Cyperus papyrus*) rises from the west pond.

through May, when most of the grading work was also finished.

In June, replica Tuscan columns, cast from templates made of columns on Lotusland's existing bath house, were set in place at the Visitor's Center. The columns are believed to be the only exact copies of a Tuscan-style column by George Washington Smith in Santa Barbara.

A new Cold Springs Road entry was constructed in June, connecting to the existing wall. It complements the Sycamore Canyon entry, complete with iron gates and columns. The new entry was designed with care to seamlessly blend into the pink stucco wall, long a trademark of Lotusland.

In late summer, landscape irrigation

systems were installed as unusual Australian plants were delivered for the parking area garden. The landscape plan includes masses of *Xanthorrhoea* and *Banksia* species with a screening hedge of *Hakea suaveolans* around the parking area.

Construction of a small parking kiosk, final pavement treatments, and continuing landscape installation occupy July and August. All construction will be completed by the end of August.

Two weeks later, Lotusland will open on September 15, to share the magnificent garden with the public.

Framing the patio are Tuscan columns replicating those of Lotusland's bath house.



Steven Timbrook



Welcome to Lotusland!

The friendly staff of Lotusland gathered for an opening shot at the back of the main building. Front row: Frank Fujii, Japanese Garden; Terri Clay, Japanese & Epiphyllum Gardens; Mario Franceschini, Blue Garden; Laura Bradley, Permit Planner. Middle row: Corey Welles, Cactus, Succulent & Aloe Gardens; Lynda Stollenwerk, Contract Painter; Anne Dewey, Assistant to the Director; Michael Furner, Building & Equipment Assistant; Marguerite Gamon, Office Manager, Virginia Hayes, Associate Curator; Steven Timbrook, Director. Back row: Mark Kyriaco, Arborist; Andy Babcock, Theatre Garden & Crew Leader; Janet Eastman, Public Programs Assistant; Ken Opiat, Fern Garden; Jennifer Wilbanks, Plant Propagator, John Lafleur, IPM Coordinator; Peter Stollenwerk, Building & Equipment Superintendent; Bruno Reginato, Main Lawn & Topiary; Jerry Bates, Student Intern; Michael Iven, Grounds Superintendent; Marge Kelly, Bromeliad & Rose Gardens; Peter Schneider, Cycad Garden. Not pictured: Rik Dennis, Water Gardens; Tod Wilms, Fern Garden.



**Ganna Walska
Lotusland Foundation**

695 Ashley Road
Montecito, CA 93108

Address Correction Requested
Forwarding Postage Guaranteed

Printed on recycled paper

THE LOTUSLAND NEWSLETTER
is published by
Ganna Walska Lotusland Foundation
695 Ashley Road
Santa Barbara, California 93108
(805) 969-3767

Dr. Steven Timbrook, *Director*
Laura Bradley, *Permit Planner*
Anne Dewey, *Assistant
to the Director*
Virginia Hayes, *Associate Curator*
Mike Iven, *Grounds Superintendent*
Peter Stollenwerk, *Building &
Equipment Superintendent*

Newsletter
Contributors:
Virginia Hayes
Anne Dewey
Laura Bradley

Judith Sutcliffe, *Design*
Printed by J & S Graphix

Non-Profit
Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Santa Barbara
California Permit
No. 163