

# LOTUSLAND NEWSLETTER

Volume 2 No. 2 端 Winter 1993

## Overwhelming Response

WHAT A WONDERFUL response we have had to our membership program! Thank you for becoming a Friend of Lotusland and helping us to preserve this historic estate and its magical garden.

Between opening to the public, creatng a new reservation system and setting up a new membership program, we have been a bit overwhelmed—but very gratified—to discover how much community interest and support there is for Lotusland. Now that public tours for 1993 have ended, we can work out any of the "bugs" of the reservation system and make sure our members understand how to take advantage of their benefits in 1994.

We have been deluged by calls for reservations since we opened three months ago, and we are now nearly full for 1994. But the very good news for members is that we have special opportunities, tours and events reserved for you. Members at all levels will be given special consideration and priority when calling for a reservation and will be invited to sign up for our classes, such as the Aloe Outings (page 7), plus special events that we will be offering. Lotus-'and's newsletter will be published quarerly with announcements of the special opportunities for the Friends of Lotusland.

Members at Level II and (cont. pg. 3)



Candelabras of aloes light the garden path.

# Aloe Garden Surprises

THE ALOE GARDEN is always a surprise for the first-time visitor to Lotusland. Approaching from the Japanese garden by a brick pathway between a grove of bamboo on one side and a thick-trunked Chilean wine palm (Jubaea spectabilis) on the other, one suddenly comes upon a striking landscape of lava rock and volcanic cinders. The contrast to the serenity of the Japanese garden could not be more dramatic. The camellias, azaleas and rhododendrons of Asia give way to an African extravaganza of aloes. Virtually every plant in sight, from low-growing ground cover to 20-foot trees, is an aloe. The winter view of December and January is warmed by candelabras of vermilion flowers, accented by the occasional spike of yellow or red-orange. A closer look shows some pinks among the dominant reds.

Aloes are indigenous to parts of Africa and the Arabian peninsula which are arid in differing degrees. They are all succulents and come in a wide variety of plant forms which have (cont. pg. 3)

## Public Visit Season Successful

November 13 marked the last public visit day for Lotusland's 1993 season. During this nine-week period of 36 public visit days, 2916 people visited Lotusland, an average of 81 visitors per day. On average there were only 25 vehicles per day, which shows how cooperative our visitors were in carpooling. After two months of experience with the new visitor facilities, Lotusland is pleased to report that they work wonderfully well.



### Ribbon Cutting Sparks Opening

SPECIAL ribbon cutting ceremonies September 15 through 17 marked the fulfillment of Madame Walska's dream of opening Lotusland to the public. From left to right are: Arthur R. Gaudi, Secretary-Treasurer; Elizabeth Dake, Trustee; Carol L. Valentine, President; Steven Timbrook, Director, and Michael Towbes, Trustee.

#### Thanks to Our Visitor Facility Designers and Contractors

PAUL GRAY of Warner & Gray was the project architect, with original design work by William LaVoie and revisions and construction phase liaison by Mario da Cunha. Engineering design for the site and construction management services were under the direction of John Maddock of Martin, Northart and Spencer. Landscape architect Sydney Baumgartner was responsible for the new Australian garden that landscapes the entire visitor facility — entry, parking area, buildings and surrounding open space. Frank Louda of Chismahoo Construction was the general contractor and Acorn Landscaping installed the new Australian garden. There were many fine subcontractors under the direction of Mr. Louda who were responsible for various phases of the project, from site grading and preparation to tile work and fabrication of decorative metal work. To all of these designers, contractors, craftsmen, and especially our Permit Planner Laura Bridley, Lotusland extends its sincere thanks for a job well done.



Arbor leading to visitor center is planted with Australian tea trees.

## What Your Contribution to Lotusland Can Accomplish

As THE END of the year draws near there are numerous appeals to our generosity by non-profit institutions. While it is unlikely that each of us is able to respond to all requests for tax-deductible contributions, such donations are vital in accomplishing the missions of Santa Barbara's many outstanding organizations.

As an example of the importance of your special contributions to Lotusland, here are some of the things that they make possible:

\$30	puts three new plant identification labels in the garden.		
\$50	adds a reference book to the Lotusland library.		
\$100	covers one week of a 15- week work experience program on Lotusland's grounds for a Santa Barbara City College environmental horticulture student.		
\$250	allows one sandstone grotesque in the theatre garden to be stabilized and repaired.		
\$500	provides one-fourth of the cost of a 10-week summer resident intern- ship at Lotusland for an outstanding student in a college horticultural degree program.		
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Please consider helping Lotusland enhance its horticultural and educational programs through your gift. Taxdeductible contributions may be sent to: Lotusland, 695 Ashley Road, Santa Barbara, CA 93108, and will be greatly appreciated.

## Aloes: A Proliferation of Species

ALOE cont.—adapted to local conditions of heat and dryness. The genus Aloe was formerly included in the large family Liliaceae, but current taxonomy places Aloe in the much smaller family Asphodelaceae alongside such genera as Gasteria and Haworthia.

Medicinal aloes from the island of Socotra in the Gulf of Aden were known to the Greeks as early as 400 B.C. They were also cultivated by the Romans as pot plants. The first aloe species in recorded history appears to have been Aloe barbadensis (formerly A. vera). It was referred to by the Greeks in 78 A.D. as having medicinal properties. A colored drawing appeared about 512 A.D. Although its exact place of origin is not known, A. barbadensis was cultivated all around the Mediterranean and also probably in the Cape Verde Islands and India. It is believed that the Spaniards introduced it to the New World, where it is now grown commercially-still for its medicinal properties.

The best current references on aloes are Gilbert W. Renoylds' The Aloes of South Africa and The Aloes of Tropical Africa and Madagascar, published in 1950 and 1966, respectively. Reynolds gave the following breakdown of the worldwide distribution of Aloe:

South Africa: 136 species (89 in the eastern Transvaal province alone)

Madagascar: 46 species Tropical Africa: 133 species Socotra Island: 2 species Yemen and Saudi Arabia: 17 species

RESPONSE, cont.—above may take advantage of our many Self-Guided Tour Days set aside for the Friends of Lotusland when the public is not admitted. (See Special Events Calendar , pg. 4 for dates.) Members at Levels III & IV may call for a reservation anytime we are open to the public, and we will always have space for you and your guests.

Lotusland will open again for public tours on Wednesday, February 16, and be open until November 12. We offer guided tours on Wednesdays through With only 9 aloe species shared between South Africa and the rest of Africa, this meant a total of 324 species were recognized in 1966. Since that time roughly 100 additional aloes have been discovered, bringing the world total to about 430 and the South African total to 150.

Madame Ganna Walska was very interested in the dramatic effect that could be created by many different kinds of plants including aloes and other succulents. Her first aloes were purchased in the

early 1960s and included such species as Aloe bainesii, A. dichotoma, A. ramosissima and A. pillansii. Within ten years she had aquired about thirty species and a large number of hybrids. Since she was apparently unwilling to throw any plant away, the aloe garden soon became overcrowded. In the early 1970s Charles Glass, her garden manager, together with Bob Foster, redesigned the aloe garden. All aloes were removed and the garden was laid out and contoured much as it is today. Her collection was restored to the aloe garden, and Glass added at least 100 new species from Abbey Gardens.

For the last few years Corey Welles has been the gardener responsible for the aloe garden. He, associate curator Virginia Hayes and docent Robin Primich have been working to improve the collection and complete an inventory of Lotusland's aloe collection. An incomplete accession list from the mid-1970s refers to about

Saturdays at 10 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. We have a Garden Shop run by our volunteers which offers gifts and educational items unique to Lotusland.

Remember, all members must make a reservation for both guided and selfguided tours, and an admission fee is charged, or you may use your free member's passes. The Reservation Office phone number is (805) 969–9990, and it is open Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to noon all year.





130 species, of which about 100 were identified in the recent survey. Roughly one-half are native to South Africa with the remainder native to tropical Africa and the Arabian Peninsula.

Although plants in Lotusland's aloe collection come from regions of very diverse climates, they grow remarkably well in the relatively cool climate of Santa Barbara. At one extreme we have *Aloe plicatilis* from near Cape Town, where rainfall which can reach 100 inches per year, and at the other, aloes from the Richtersveld, such as *A. ramosissima*, which can survive on less than five inches of annual rainfall.

Aloes do not have strong sterility barriers preventing crossing between related species, so many naturally occurring hybrids have been recorded. The Lotusland aloe garden contains numerous hybrids, some of them very attractive, but unfortunately, in most cases, the parentage is not known. One whose parentage is known numbers in the hundreds at Lotusland and is now in bloom. It is very striking and bears some resemblance to both of its parents, *Aloe ferox* and *A. arborescens*.

Although we may never know for sure, we can speculate on why Madame Walska used so many plants of one kind. She evidently chose these showy hybrids purely for their beauty, regardless of their lack of pedigree. It was this flair for the unusual or unorthodox that adds so much character to her aloe garden.

-Robin Primich/Steven Timbrook

# Special Events Calendar

#### Friday, January 7 & Saturday, January 8, 10 a.m.

ALOE OUTINGS: Don't miss our aloes in bloom! While Lotusland is closed to public tours, our aloes are blooming, so we are offering two informative classes on Lotusland's collection of over 100 species, varieties and hybrids of aloes, along with a tour of the aloe garden. More information and registration coupon on page 7.

#### Monday, February 14, 2 p.m. – Santa Barbara Museum of Art

COLOR IN THE GARDEN: Lotusland is co-sponsoring a four-part lecture series, "Springtime in the Garden," with the Santa Barbara Museum of Art and the Santa Barbara Botanic Garden beginning with internationally known garden consultant, designer, and author Penelope Hobhouse. Reception in a museum gallery follows. Information and a reservation form will be mailed to all members the first week of January.

#### Beginning February 23

UPPER LEVEL MEMBERS' SELF-GUIDED TOUR DATES: Members at Levels II, III and IV can enjoy Lotusland on their own when we close the garden to public tours on the dates listed below. Members may use these times to stroll, paint, photograph, study plants and bring a guest (up to three guests each visit). Members need to make a reservation for these dates as we limit the number of reservations by members in order to preserve the tranquil nature of the garden. The Reservation Office phone number is (805) 969-9990 and is open Monday-Friday, 9 a.m. to noon all year. An admission fee is charged or you may use your membership passes for you and your guests.

February 23	Wed.	1:30–4 p.m.	July 16	Sat.	1:30-4 p.m.
February 26	Sat.	10 a.m12:30 p.m.	July 22	Fri.	10 a.m12:30 p.m.
March 19	Sat.	1:30-4 p.m.	August 17	Wed.	1:30-4 p.m.
March 24	Th.	10 a.m-12:30 p.m.	August 27	Sat.	10 a.m12:30 p.m.
April 15	Fri.	1:30-4 p.m.	September 17	Sat.	1:30-4 p.m.
April 23	Sat.	10 a.m12:30 p.m.	September 22	Th.	10 a.m12:30 p.m.
May 11	Wed.	10 a.m12:30 p.m.	October 1	Sat.	10 a.m12:30 p.m.
May 21	Sat.	1:30-4 p.m.	October 21	Fri.	1:30-4 p.m.
June 4	Sat.	10 a.m12:30 p.m.	November 5	Sat.	1:30-4 p.m.
June 16	Th.	1:30-4 p.m.	November 9	Wed.	10 a.m12:30 p.m.

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

CREATING A WATER GARDEN: Lecture & Book Signing with Charles B. Thomas. Lotusland and Santa Barbara Botanic Garden are co-sponsoring this presentation. See announcement at right for information and registration instructions.

#### Beginning March 12

FREE ADMISSION TO SANTA BARBARA COUNTY RESIDENTS: In 1994 the second Saturday of each month from March through November will be free of admission for Santa Barbara County residents. All visitors—including members — must make a reservation. Please call the Reservation Office for more information (805) 969-9990 (Mon.-Fri. from 9 a.m. to noon).

## New Volunteer Group Forming

WREATHS of living succulents made by Lotusland volunteers were one of the most popular items in the Garden Shop this season. Garden Shop coordinator B. Jo Dake is seeking additional volunteers to turn the wealth of unusual seed pods, leaves and other plant materials at Lotusland into interesting creations.

If you enjoy working with your hands and would like to volunteer a few hours a week to help enlarge the selection of hand-crafted items in the Garden Shop, please call B. Jo at 969-0105. With the diverse selection of materials from Lotusland's living collection of over 2000 species, the possibilities for artistic expression are unlimited.

#### "Creating a Water Garden" with Charles B. Thomas March II, 7:30 p.m.

Co-sponsored by Ganna Walska Lotusland Foundation and Santa Barbara Botanic Garden and held in the Botanic Garden Library

SANTA BARBARA area gardeners will be able to explore an exciting new dimension in gardening. Water gardens offer the soothing sounds of flowing water, the unique beauty of water lilies and are almost care free. Charles Thomas will lead you through the process of planning, installing, stocking and maintaining a water garden.

His discussion will include the plants such as water lilies, lotus and bog plants needed to insure a proper balance in your pond; the role of animal life in the form of ornamental fish, snails, tadpoles and beneficial bacteria will also be covered — in short, everything you need to know to create your own water garden. Mr. Thomas will sign his newest book, *Water Gardens*, as well as his *Water Gardens for Plants and Fish* following the lecture.

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).

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(as of November 30, 1993)

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# Aloe Outings Open to Members Only January 7 & 8

IT MAY NOT be spring yet, but one of Lotusland's gardens is in bloom. The aloe garden will be the site of an in-depth look at these winter-blooming succulents. In January Director Steven Timbrook and Associate Curator Virginia Hayes will give attendees a closer look at this diverse group of plants. The lecture will include discussions of the biology, taxonomy, and geographic distributions as well as the cultural requirements of the genus *Aloe* and will be followed by a walk in the garden to view the aloes. Joining the discussions will be Lotusland's Specialist Gardener Corey Welles and Docent Robin Primich. Classes will be held Friday and Saturday, January 7 and 8, from 10 a.m. to noon, for members only. Admission is \$6. To reserve space please fill in the coupon below and return it with your payment by January 4, 1994. Classes are limited to 25 members each day.

Attendees, please use the Cold Springs Road entrance, check in at kiosk. Gate will open at 9:30 a.m. and close at 10:15 a.m.

Ganna Walska Lotusland 🦀 Registration Form Aloc Outings — January 7 & 8

Check one: \_\_\_\_\_ Friday, January 7, 10 a.m. – noon. \_\_\_\_\_ Saturday, January 8, 10 a.m. – noon

Number attending, \$6.00 per person \$\_\_\_\_\_

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

PAYMENT METHOD	Member Name
Check Enclosed (payable to Ganna Walska Lotusland)	Address
Card Number	Dhoma
Signature	Phone

# "Color in the Garden" with Penelope Hobhouse

February 14, 2 p.m.

Co-sponsored by: Ganna Walska Lotusland Foundation, Santa Barbara Botanic Garden and the Santa Barbara Museum of Art



WHAT BETTER WAY for garden enthusiasts to celebrate Valentine's Day than with a slide presentation about "Color in the Garden" by Penelope Hobhouse?

Penelope Hobhouse, one of England's most cherished gardeners, enjoys an international reputation as a garden consultant, designer and author. Known as a gardener's gardener, she puts the most sophisticated concepts into a "down-to-earth" presentation. Her latest

book, *Gardening Through the Ages*, is destined to join her other classics in the gardener's library: *The Country Garden*, *The Smaller Garden*: *Planting and Planning* and *Color in Your Garden*. At present, she heads the restoration of the National Trust Garden at Tintinhull House in Somerset, England.

"Color in the Garden" is the first of a four-part lecture series, "Springtime in the Garden." Information and a registration form for this lecture and the series will be mailed to all members the first week of January.

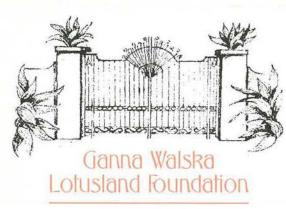
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