



LOTUSLAND

NEWSLETTER FOR MEMBERS ♦ VOLUME 20 NO. 1 ♦ WINTER 2011

Fourth Grade Outreach Program

BY DOROTHY SHANER

EVERY SO OFTEN, when I find myself out running errands or at a local event an excited 10-year-old will stop me and say, “Mrs. Shaner, Mrs. Shaner—remember me? I met you at Lotusland!” Then he or she will enthusiastically recount their memories of their field trip to Lotusland—clearly a highlight of their fourth grade school experience. Many go on to proudly tell me that the succulent plant they received at the end of the tour is still alive.

Lotusland’s Fourth Grade Outreach Program serves every public fourth grade classroom in southern Santa Barbara County. Now in its 13th year, the program was created in 1998 by then Director of Public Programs Connie Buxton, at the suggestion of Director of Development Anne Dewey and then Trustee Stanya Owen. Mrs. Buxton worked closely with local teachers and principals to create a program that would link to the State of California mandated fourth grade Life Science curriculum requirements. Our joint goal was that Lotusland would augment and reinforce concepts taught in the classroom.

With this in mind, the teachers and Mrs. Buxton developed a three-pronged program. Early in the school year, teachers receive curriculum materials developed by Lotusland and designed to help blend basic botanical concepts with plants that are part of Lotusland’s diverse collections. Along with the study of botany, subjects such as the importance of plants to sustaining life on earth and the role of humans in practicing conservation are part of this curriculum.

Prior to the field trip to Lotusland, an outreach docent goes to the classroom

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PHOTOS BY RICK CARTER

The importance of practicing plant conservation is part of the fourth grade curriculum. A favorite activity is to hug one of Lotusland’s huge Chilean wine palms, once endangered in their native home.

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Mission Statement

To preserve and enhance the spectacular collections of exotic plants and the historic Montecito estate of Madame Ganna Walska, to provide public access to their remarkable beauty and diversity and, through interpretation of these collections, to foster increased knowledge and appreciation of the importance of plants and the need for their conservation.



Visitors of all ages, including this group of fourth graders, enjoy the ant colony on loan to Lotusland through May 15. The giant queen in the Australian garden is a favorite.

Continued from page 1

for a critical pre-tour visit. During this visit, the docent reinforces life science vocabulary and talks about the important concepts that they are studying: photosynthesis, adaptation, plant and animal interdependency and the importance of conservation. Equipped with photographs of plants and insects, they weave a tale of the interdependence of plants, insects and humans.

A few days after the classroom presentation, the students come to Lotusland for a much-anticipated study tour. Classes are divided into groups of ten or fewer with an outreach docent for each. Watching these fourth graders see their classroom lessons come alive at Lotusland is a gratifying experience. Our talented outreach docents do not

lecture, but instead pull the students into the conversation and persuade them to describe what they see and have learned. It is apparent that the docents truly enjoy and understand children. As the fourth graders walk through Lotusland's 17 gardens with plants from around the world, they are encouraged to touch and feel as the concepts they learned in the classroom are reinforced. Along the way, they observe plants that are rare, endangered or even extinct in their native habitats.

A favorite activity is to hug one of Lotusland's huge Chilean wine palms, once endangered in their native home. The children are encouraged to feel the cuticle of certain plants and to see that the plants in the blue garden are in fact green.



Fascinated fourth graders listen as outreach docent Hilary Peattie points out a euphorbia plant and explains the difference between cacti and euphorbias.



While in the bromeliad garden, students learned about epiphytic plants—commonly known as air plants—that don't need to be rooted in soil. A student models a crown of tilandsias, an epiphytic plant.

After one-and-one-half hours of discussion and discovery, the groups return to the visitor center and participate in a spirited question-and-answer exchange. They are delighted to learn they are officially Junior Botanists and are reminded of their responsibilities as

members of the scientific community. As a memento of the visit and to encourage them to be stewards of the earth, each receives a succulent plant from Lotusland to care for and nourish.

Currently, Lotusland has 26 outreach docents who give classroom presentations and lead tours. Recruited from Lotusland's docent corps, their backgrounds range from teaching, medicine and horticulture to public service and art. All are passionate about sharing the garden and its inspiration with youngsters who may never have an opportunity to see such an astounding variety of plants in a beautiful and dramatic setting such as Lotusland.

This partnership with the schools comes with no cost to the schools—Lotusland pays for everything from bus transportation to graham crackers and apple juice. We are very dependent on funding from grants to support this important program, and each year we must write to local foundations asking for their help.

The letters we receive from students and the feedback from teachers confirm that this is a valuable and much-loved program that strengthens the students' understanding of curriculum concepts.

In 2009, the *Santa Barbara Independent* published essays, by students from Harding School, answering the question: What was the best day of your life?

"Have you ever been to Lotusland? There are a lot of plants! We went on the bus to get there. By the time we got to Lotusland, I was smiling from ear to ear. I stood up fast so I could be first in line to get out! We saw all different kinds of plants from all over the world. We saw trees, and we got to go in a really fun maze. After a fun day, we started heading back to the bus. The people from Lotusland gave us a free plant. That was the best day I've ever had in my life."

—Alexis Moctezuma

Director's Letter

THIS IS THE TIME of year when I wish Madame Ganna Walska's gardens were open for all of you to visit, because the aloe plants are in full bloom. The tall *Aloe arborescens* just inside the historic Sycamore Canyon gate bear long rows of bright orange floral torches along the main drive, and the Dr. Seuss-like plants in the aloe garden pop with flower spikes patterned in yellows, pinks and oranges, making this garden even more spectacular. We celebrate the aloes every January with our Aloe Outing and hope to see you in the gardens at this very special blossom time. Watch the progression of aloe blooms throughout the winter on Lotusland's Facebook page.

We have been busy with some other exciting projects we will share with you this winter. Thanks to the support of an anonymous donor, we are putting the finishing touches on a new website for Lotusland—one that will be evocative of these amazing gardens and truly interactive for users.

One of our more consuming projects in 2010 has been the restructuring of our Membership Program. We appreciate

all of you who responded to our membership survey last summer and are incorporating your comments into our new Membership Program, which will launch in January. One of the most popular benefits of membership has always been the ability to explore Lotusland on your own, at your own pace, and that benefit will continue. Now, with the new Membership Program, all members at any level may visit the garden for free, as many times as desired—with a reservation, of course. We have added many other wonderful benefits, and as your membership comes up for renewal, I hope you will take the time to look over our new Membership Program or call our Membership Office now to hear all the details.

We are thrilled to kick off our spring opening of the garden with a provocative exhibit of visual works of art by local artist Penelope Gottlieb, whose artistic vision is inspired by the fragile beauty of nature and the ever-increasing loss of plant species on earth. Entitled *Gone*, the theme of this exhibit is an ideal complement to the scientific significance of Lotusland's plant collec-



Gwen Stauffer

RICK CARTER

tions, 10% of which are globally rare. *Gone* will be our first exhibit using the pavilion as a gallery to display two-dimensional art, and we look forward to this initial exhibit as a trial to consider similar exhibitions in the future. Please come out to see it, and tell us what you think.

We hope you will join us for all the exciting changes happening at Lotusland, and I look forward to seeing you in the gardens!

Warm regards for
a Happy New Year,
Gwen L. Stauffer

Become a Lotusland Docent

DOCENT TRAINING BEGINS FEBRUARY 7

COFFEE RECEPTION FOR PROSPECTIVE DOCENTS

THURSDAY, JANUARY 20 • 9:30 AM

MADAME GANNA WALSKA'S extraordinarily creative vision of garden design was transformed into reality by many talented landscape designers and horticulturists.

This transformation has been an ongoing process, each garden yielding fascinating stories about its beginnings and metamorphosis into its present-day form.

Visitors to Lotusland are treated to botanical and historical information about the estate, interpreted by docents who under-

go extensive training to prepare them for giving public tours.

A 14-week docent training course provides all the necessary information for conducting a tour of the garden. Instructors are drawn from the Lotusland staff, the Santa Barbara community and other California academic and cultural institutions. These informative and enjoyable Monday-morning sessions last from 9:30 AM to noon. This winter's docent training begins on Monday, February 7.

A coffee reception for prospective docents will be held on Thursday, January 20. This event offers prospective docents an opportunity to learn more about docent training and to meet some of the very knowledgeable docents who currently lead tours of the garden.

Please tell your friends and neighbors about the program. To reserve a place at the reception, contact Volunteer Coordinator Jean Parry at 805.969.3767, extension 112 or jparry@lotusland.org.

NEW TO THE COLLECTIONS *Astrophytum ornatum*



Golden spines and chalk-white striations embellish the star cactus, *Astrophytum ornatum*.

contractor and large animal trainer, Jim worked often with horses, but had trained pigs, cows and many other animals for their moment of fame in the film industry.

His plant collections ranged from Japanese maples to a collection of ivy cultivars. In the last 20 or so years, his tastes ran to agaves, cacti, bromeliads and even a few cycads. His wife, Sally, enjoyed the fruits of his labors and the landscape he created around their modest home, but when Jim passed away this spring, she became a bit overwhelmed by the many potted plants that needed constant tending. She began looking for new homes for some of them and eventually contacted Lotusland. After reviewing the plants on offer, we were happy to bring some of them to the garden.

Among the new plants, which include a number of interesting xeric bromeliads, are several large and old specimens of *Astrophytum ornatum*. Only after many years do these ball-shaped

cacti reach several feet in height. The plants are all about three feet tall, indicating their great age. Characterized by their relatively few acutely angled ribs, the plants would be star-shaped in cross-section, thus the name *Astrophytum*—astro meaning star and phytum, plant. This species is native to Mexico in the states of Querétaro and Hidalgo, where it grows in tropical dry forest. A unique habitat, these forests are home to a wide diversity of plants and animals. Rains may only fall during two months of the year. The larger trees and shrubs are mostly deciduous during the very long dry period. Succulent plants such as cacti must survive on the water they are able to store in their tissues.

At Lotusland, *Astrophytum ornatum* is planted in the cactus garden as well as along the driveway. These prime new specimens are enjoying the protection of the small greenhouse at the back of the succulent garden, where they are easily visible from the tour path.

—Virginia Hayes

Gone

A VISUAL EULOGY FOR LOST PLANT LIFE BY PENELOPE GOTTLIEB
FEBRUARY 26 THROUGH APRIL 23

PENELOPE GOTTLIEB is the featured artist for the inaugural exhibition in Lotusland's pavilion. Each of the 25 botanical paintings in the exhibition, aptly titled *Gone*, is a "visual eulogy for lost plant life."

The particular plant species that Gottlieb depicts are in fact extinct, and she is able to re-create them only from historical descriptions by botanists. Lotusland's collections include many endangered plants, and even some that

are extinct in the wild, so it is fitting that this exhibition launches the use of the pavilion as a gallery.

Gottlieb says, "This new series of paintings arises from my attempt to synthesize concerns both artistic and ecological. Imagery of extinct plant life, at once real, imagined and reinvented, becomes a metaphor and literal iconography, subject to processes of explosive fragmentation."

After receiving her BFA from the Art Center College for Design in Pasadena, Gottlieb went on to earn her MFA from the University of California in Santa Barbara, where she currently lives and works. She is represented by Heather James Fine Art in Palm Desert, California and Jackson, Wyoming.

Gottlieb paints with a range of materials using combinations of oil, acrylic and ink. The pieces in *Gone* are from 14"x12" to more than 6'. All of the paintings are for sale, and a portion of the proceeds will benefit Lotusland.

Prominent architect George Washington Smith designed the pavilion, which Madame Walska used as her residence. This is the first time the pavilion has been included in public tours.

Gone will be part of our regularly scheduled docent-guided tours, or view



Monardella pringlei; 40x34"; acrylic, ink and oil on canvas over panel.



Campomanesia lundiana; 50x40"; acrylic, ink and oil on canvas over panel.

COURTESY PHOTOS

it at your own pace on a self-guided tour. To see *Gone*, please make a reservation with Visitor Services at 805.969.9990 or email reservation@lotusland.org. Regular admission prices apply or use your passes.

Penelope Gottlieb is one of 12 artists in the group exhibition Eating Apples in Paradise at the Santa Barbara Contemporary Arts Forum March 6 through May 1. Visit sbcaf.org for more details.

A Salon

WITH PENELOPE GOTTLIEB,
GWEN STAUFFER AND DIETER WILKEN
SATURDAY, MARCH 19 • 3:00 TO 5:30 PM

PENELOPE GOTTLIEB says that whereas the older traditions of botanical art involved "calm, studio-bound reflections of natural beauty and visual order, a new paradigm seems appropriate in the more fragile condition of the world today." *Gone* "addresses the dire state of the planet, offering visual 'eulogies' for lost plant life and larger patterns of ecological destruction." She adds that her work "tries to sound an alarm about the grim

prospects of a future in which extinction is a way of life."

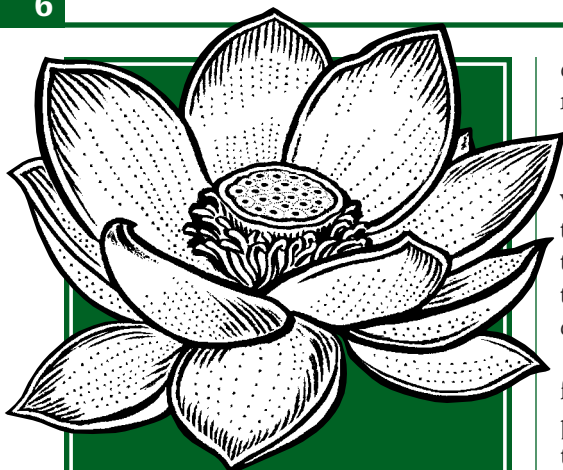
Join Ms. Gottlieb, Lotusland's Executive Director Gwen Stauffer and Dieter Wilken, the Director of Conservation at the Santa Barbara Botanic Garden, for a provocative conversation stimulated by this exhibition.

Wine and hors d'oeuvres will be served. The cost is \$55 for members and \$65 for nonmembers. Please call 805.969.9990 to make a reservation.

Gone Opening Reception for Upper-Level Members

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 25
4:00 TO 6:00 PM

Invitations to the opening reception for the artist will be mailed to upper-level members (Level III and above) in early February.



The LOTUS SOCIETY

JILL VANDER HOOF

JILL VANDER HOOF came to Santa Barbara in 1952 as a young girl when her father, then a professor at Stanford, became a petroleum geologist for a local oil company. In short time, Dr. Vander Hoof became Executive Director of the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History.

Jill grew up with the companionship of her father on the museum's campus. "The museum was my playground," Jill tells me. Although Jill attended Laguna Blanca and Montecito Union schools, her true education came by spending hours browsing through the volumes in the museum's library. Ever her father's



Jill Vander Hoof

daughter, Jill became fascinated with natural history and life sciences, and the inquisitiveness of a research scientist became engrained in her very fiber. "I was my father's shadow," Jill says, and the experience of growing up under his tutelage and soaking up the museum's treasures inspired her to pursue a degree in biology.

Jill also developed a love of travel from her parents' insistence that young people's understanding of the world and their place in it was not possible unless they traveled abroad. At the age of 17, Jill traveled through Europe at her mother's urging, and since then she has never missed an opportunity to travel. "Carpe diem is exactly the phrase I live by," Jill asserts. "If an opportunity comes up, I take it, because you never know what it might lead to." This motto has served Jill well, for she has had great adventures all over the world.

One such adventure led her to travel to Tuscany, Italy, where she ultimately returned every year, and where she had the opportunity to study the stone of Pietrasanta and Carrara. By now, Jill had found a love of art and melded her love and knowledge of nature with her creative work as a sculptor. "I had all of the tools," Jill explains, "I knew botany and geology. I tend to think in the third dimension, and these building blocks of life come together with stone." While Jill was an adjunct professor at Westmont College, where she taught stone sculpture for 13 years, she met some carvers who invited her to western Australia for a month. Carpe diem! Jill jumped at the offer and while there was offered a studio—carpe diem, again! She stayed for a year, studying the aboriginal art and making her own.

Jill first visited Lotusland in the 1990s when her friend, Pam Palmer, a docent from the very first class, brought her for a visit. With her love of gardens and plants, Jill came to love Lotusland, too, and later joined a docent training class. Jill has been giving tours of Lotusland for nine years.

While Jill celebrates Madame Ganna Walska's accomplishments in creating the garden, she prefers to focus her tours on the wonder and significance of the plant collections. Jill explains, "Madame Ganna Walska was intelligent with forethought to save Lotusland,

and I appreciate her artistry and of course her ambition as a collector, but for me, Lotusland is really all about the plants! That's what interests me the most."

It is that love of Lotusland that moved Jill to join *The Lotus Society* in 2010. "Santa Barbara is my home, and I want to give back to my community. "I love being at Lotusland," Jill tells me. "It is an oasis of beauty, calm and sanity. That is how I always describe it. Actually, sanity comes first!" Then she adds, "Everyone here at Lotusland is wonderful."
—Gwen Stauffer



NEW MEMBERS

THANK YOU TO THESE additional new members for their generous support.

Rosalind Rea Amorteguy
(listed incorrectly in fall issue)

Louise M. Parent & John P. Casaly
Jill Vander Hoof

Members of *The Lotus Society* have each made a gift or bequest of \$10,000 or more to Lotusland's Endowment. Names of *The Lotus Society* members are engraved on the Wall of Honor, which is located at the Visitor Center at the end of the Australian tea tree arbor.

To learn more about *The Lotus Society*, please call Anne Dewey, Lotusland's Director of Development, at 805.969.3767, extension 105.



All visitors walk by the Wall of Honor as they enter Lotusland.

HORTICULTURAL HAPPENINGS

Winter Projects

THE GARDEN is in a constant state of flux, and maintenance tasks are ongoing. Current and upcoming projects are described below.

CYCAD GARDEN

LOTUSLAND STAFF HAS BEGUN the very first work on a phased plan to improve collection display and diversity in the cycad garden. Unlike the five-year project that spanned 1999 to 2004 and addressed serious soil problems, this project aims to improve the aesthetics of the garden. In recent years, we have been able to acquire wild-collected seeds (and a few plants) of several cycad species. It is our policy to increase the research value of the collection whenever possible by including such material. Since some of the seeds are of species already represented in the garden, we are preparing to swap them for some of the new



The oaks set the scale and provide cultural conditions conducive to understory plantings in many areas of the garden.

accessions. The plants that are removed still have horticultural value and can be sold to partially fund the renovation.

In this first phase that centers on the *Dioon* collection, some interesting caudiciform plants have been removed as well. These are hybrids of two related genera *Beaucarnea* and *Calibanus*. The plants were very crowded and will be displayed much better somewhere else in the garden. In the resulting space, several species of *Dioon* will be planted and a few other plants relocated to better show their relationships.

—Virginia Hayes

OAK TREES

THERE ARE MORE THAN 175 coast live oaks (*Quercus agrifolia*), excluding small trees and seedlings, on the property at Lotusland. A corridor of oaks just north of the public tour area requires minimal maintenance, but the trees in or near public areas are monitored regularly and require variable amounts of maintenance. The long horizontal branches on many of the oldest, largest oaks in horticultural settings throughout the garden need to be lightened by an arborist every couple of years. Reducing the weight on the end of the branches decreases the chance of branch failure and allows the branch to rise above pathways, roads and planting beds. Often the loss of a large branch will accelerate the failure of the whole tree



PHOTOS BY MICHAEL IVEN

Only a light covering of leaves remains after the first phase of a fire safety project in the eucalyptus forest.

because of the shift of tension and stress throughout the rest of the tree.

Structural pruning of priority oaks in the garden is now in progress. Additional work is budgeted in 2011. Removing dead wood and aesthetic pruning will continue to be deferred until additional resources are available.

EUCALYPTUS FOREST

LOTUSLAND STAFF HAS MET with representatives from the Montecito Fire Department to discuss fire safety regarding trees, specifically eucalyptus trees. Some of the work intended to reduce the fire hazard in the eucalyptus forest bordering Sycamore Canyon Road has already been accomplished. Loose brush, bark and leaves, pieces of wood and old stumps were removed from the forest. Some small trees were removed to reduce crowding. Lotusland staff will identify larger weak or leaning trees for removal in order to establish at least a 10' spacing between trees.

—Michael Iven

THE ALOE OUTING JUST GOT BETTER!

Aloe Outing

SATURDAY, JANUARY 15 • 1:30 TO 4:00 PM

GLOBAL GARDENS, a specialty food company in Santa Barbara County's wine country, has generously offered to set up a tasting bar featuring several varieties of their local Extra Virgin Olive Oil—First Cold Pressing for Aloe Outing guests to enjoy. The owners are the first family in the region to plant a Certified Organic olive grove specifically for extra-virgin first-cold pressed olive oils.

This opportunity to spend an afternoon in the garden and enjoy the spectacular blooms of more than 170 species and cultivars of aloes—and to sample delicious olive oils—during the winter recess is a special privilege for members only. The cost is \$25 for members and \$35 for members' guests. Please call 805.969.9990 to make a reservation.



BILL DEWEY



Marge Kelly

"I'M GOING TO HAVE to learn to share my garden with others." No, this wasn't Madame Walska talking. This was Marge Kelly's reaction when she learned that Lotusland would formally open for public tours in 1993.

Marge recalled with a laugh what happened on opening day in 1993. She staffed the kiosk while Executive Director Steve Timbrook waited for the first busload of visitors to arrive. To their dismay, they listened and watched as a bus stopped on Cold Springs, and all the passengers got off and streamed in through the entrance gate. Staff had just completed negotiating and laboring over the requirements of our Conditional Use Permit, which included specific rules about no stopping or unloading of people on Cold Springs.

Marge surmises that the time she spent growing up in a large and very close-knit Wisconsin family of dairy farmers resulted in her appreciation and love of nature.

After graduating from Southern Illinois University, Marge lived in Pittsburgh before moving to Santa Monica in 1973 where she worked for the California State Board of Equalization in West Los Angeles. She and her husband Gary moved to Carpinteria in 1978, and her introduction to Lotusland began in 1989 when she was a work-experience student in the Landscape Horticulture program at Santa Barbara City College. "I came twice a week and every day during the summer. I remember how good the garden looked when I first came. But there was still a wildness about it—especially the area where our Australian and cactus gardens are now. I was part of the A-Team—the people

who worked with augers to improve the soil in the cycad garden. And we had the "Hot Shot Team," which spent each Monday and Tuesday working on a group project." Among Marge's early responsibilities was tending the "the broms" (bromeliads). Marge joined the staff full-time for one year, before her career took her back to Los Angeles.

Eventually, the allure of being back in the garden and the chance to learn more about its history were deciding factors in enrolling in our 1994-1995 Docent Training program. After graduation, she signed up to lead Saturday tours, needing to head back to Los Angeles for the workweek. This went on for ten years, until she moved back to Carpinteria full-time. Marge has been leading tours ever since.

Given her early work experience at Lotusland, it's not surprising that when Marge gives tours, she has "a flood of memories: I think of the morning teas with Patricia Tarkowska and Bill Paylen; working with the bromeliads; learning about fertilizers and checking for pests under the direction of John La Fleur; the lemon arbor trees being planted; Isabelle Greene refreshing the theatre garden; B. Jo Dake setting up the garden shop; playing croquet with the Stollenwerks; or Frank Fujii teaching us pruning techniques." With a smile, Marge recalls the quarterly visits from Bill Paylen when she, Ken Opiat and Bill would begin their morning with tea in the kitchen of the main house before heading out into the garden.

"I get people on my tours who've been here before. They always say the garden looks so much better than their last visit. And I get my share of couples where the husband, at the beginning of the tour, acts as if he's being pulled and dragged through the garden. But by mid-tour, he's smiling, asking questions and enjoying himself. There really is something for everyone to see."

"It's the scent of eucalyptus, the textures of all the plants, the colors and the light coming through the gardens that resonate with me as I walk through Lotusland," Marge says. "I love the surprise as you turn the corner from one

garden to another. It adds mystery and excitement to the tour. It continues to amaze me that plants from all over the world thrive here in their various microclimates."

Marge also has been indispensable help as a key event volunteer. When she's not at Lotusland giving tours or helping stage a LotusFest or Twilight Tour reception, Marge serves as secretary for the Carpinteria Creek Committee. That group educates people about the watershed and preserving creeks. She serves as a volunteer host for the city of Carpinteria, and she is eager to continue work on her Zimbauer family genealogy. Marge tends her home garden of succulents and other drought-tolerant plants, always making room for lavender, salvias and her treasured bromeliads.

Marge became a member both to support Lotusland and to learn new things. "I want to keep informed. It's a wonderful place. Lotusland is my little magic kingdom."

Thank you, Marge, for helping in so many ways.
—Jean Parry

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Charles Glass...In His Own Words

PART VIII OF A SERIES OF EXCERPTS FROM HIS UNPUBLISHED MEMOIRS WITH THE WORKING TITLE OF *EXPERIENCES OF 12 YEARS AS DIRECTOR OF LOTUSLAND: THE FABULOUS ESTATE OF MME. GANNA WALSKA*

THE NEXT MAJOR PROJECT was the Aloe Garden. This was an incredible area, a Victorian fantasy garden with Aloes, Abalone shells and giant clam fountains and a shallow baby-blue pond...about an acre, all landscaped with only one genus of plants! Outrageous and outlandish! To make things worse, the Aloes were planted rows, borders and geometric patterns in a very flat unbroken terrain of heavy, poorly draining soil.

We were to remove every single Aloe from the ground and replenish the poor soil. We persuaded her [Madame Walska] to let us bring in mountains of new soil and hundreds of sacks of soil amendment, in some areas raising the soil level 7 feet above the old ground level, and hundreds of medium and large volcanic rocks with which to make cliffs and crags and sunken paths. The catch was that she absolutely refused to open up a temporary access road, even a few yards long, to enable us easily to bring in all this soil and rocks. So alternatively we had to use all the gardeners almost without pause to haul in the dirt by hand in wheelbarrows up and down narrow twisting brick paths over a period of four months...and Da Ros's Italian stone masons to bring in the rocks one at a time with a temporary plank roadway and rollers of pipes, levering their burdens forward an inch at a time! I

always found it impressive to watch how Da Ros's men handled and maneuvered the great rocks. I remarked to Mme. Walska, "Just like they built the pyramids!" She threw me a glance and responded coolly, "I don't know...I wasn't there!"

Mme. Walska and I had a big go-around about our bringing our Aloe collection to Lotusland. Mme Walska: "I was thinking...or rather I wasn't thinking—I have no time to think! Bring your Aloes that you can plant yourself without interfering with your work with gardeners!"

Mme. Walska was thrilled with the new Aloe Garden. I must admit I was too! It was very exciting working with the resources at our disposal and transforming a garden on this scale. We were stuck, so to speak, with the fantasy quality of the area, thanks to the shallow blue pond lined with abalone shells and fed by two dripping fountains of giant Tridacna clam shells on coral pedestals, so we tried to tone it down somewhat by blending the fantasy with the more naturalistic landscaping, if a garden of all one genus, and that succulent Aloes, could ever be considered to be naturalistic! We purchased dozens of gigantic hunks of coral from Florida and used these among the volcanic boulders around the pond so that the centerpiece would not be quite such a "sore thumb" ...It sounds horrible, but surprisingly it

"worked." Mme. Walska would expound walking through the paths in the Aloe Garden, "For me this remains priceless! What I love is getting all sorts of new Aloes. What we don't have it, that's my..." and she would wave her hand in circles in the air to convey her meaning, instead of the precise word she wanted but could not find. She was too impatient to take the time to find one necessary word, so out of impatience she developed other ways to communicate. One time she asked us, "Can we do this with the this?" gesturing at the sprinklers and then at the light rain. I answered that the rain was too light to affect our watering schedule. On another occasion, relating how she had laughed so hard she cried, she simply said, "I laughed until these were coming down my this!" pointing to her cheek.

At Lotusland, Mme. Walska was not the only one who had a rather unorthodox use of the language. Among the Mexicans, Innocencio would come out with some prizes such as, "I can't find este the good hoe!" And more than 50% of what Mario, the Italian gardener, said was totally incomprehensible. He would usually communicate through gestures, good will, intuition and luck more than language!

NEXT TIME

MORE STORIES FROM the Glass memoir.
—Excerpts edited by Virginia Hayes

Morning Bird Walk at Lotusland

SATURDAY, JANUARY 22 • 9:00 TO 11:30 AM

JOIN LOTUSLAND RESEARCH ASSOCIATE Jeff Chemnick and Director Emeritus Steve Timbrook as they lead their annual winter bird walk. The morning tour focuses on seeing as many species as possible. This is a great way for both experienced birders and beginners to seek out avian "tourists" that spend the winter in Santa Barbara.

We will have several pairs of binoculars to loan if you don't have your own. The cost is \$35. For questions or to make a reservation, please call 805.969.9990.



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Winter and Spring 2011 Member Events

MANY LOTUSLAND EVENTS are open to nonmembers, so please let your friends and neighbors know about the great activities we offer.

Saturday, January 15

Aloe Outing

1:30 TO 4:00 PM

See details on page 7. Please call 805.969.9990 to register.

Thursday, January 20

Coffee Reception for Prospective Docents

9:30 AM

See page 4 for details.

Saturday, January 22

Morning Bird Walk at Lotusland

9:00 TO 11:30 AM

See details on page 9. Please call 805.969.9990 to register.

Wednesday, February 16

Garden reopens after winter recess.

Friday, February 25

Gone Opening Reception for Upper-Level Members

4:00 TO 6:00 PM

See details on page 5. Invitations will be mailed in early February.

February 26–April 23

Gone

Paintings by Penelope Gottlieb

See details on page 5.

Saturday, March 19

*A Salon with Penelope Gottlieb,
Gwen Stauffer and Dieter Wilken*

3:00 TO 5:30 PM

See details on page 5. Please call 805.969.9990 to register.

Tours

Regular Tours and Family Tours are offered at 10:00 AM and 1:30 PM, Wednesday through Saturday, between February 15 and November 15. Family Tours are available for groups with children under age 10 and are child and parent friendly. They are separate from regular adult tours. Please call 805.969.9990 for reservations.

Help Make Lotusland's Wishes Come True

OUR REFRIGERATOR AND DISHWASHER are on their last legs and our Rototiller just died. To help with any of these indispensable items, please call Anne Dewey, Lotusland's Director of Development, at 805.969.3767, extension 105 or email her at andewey@lotusland.org. Thank you!

DISHWASHER

We need a high-end workhorse for all of our special events. \$630

ROTOTILLER

A garden tiller is an essential tool for our gardeners. \$1,200

REFRIGERATOR

A refrigerator with a freezer is a basic need for staff and special events. \$1,400