DAMES IN THE GARDEN

Women Who have Shaped California’s Landscape

LOTUSLAND ARCHIVES

Madame Walska in Paris: Chronicles from the Theatre des Champs-Élysées

PHOTO: Madame Walska receiving dignitaries and special guests for a performance by the Music Academy of the West in the Theatre Garden in the 1950s.
LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends and Members,

In this issue, we highlight the profound influence of women on California’s landscapes. Women have been at the forefront of Lotusland’s creation and care, shaping landscapes and leaving indelible marks on the Garden. In addition to Madame Ganna Walska, there are many women synonymous with Lotusland’s development and success. From founding trustees to gardeners, volunteers, donors, landscape designers, and staff, women have built upon Madame’s original vision, lending their resources, expertise, and energy to add to the creative masterpiece that is Lotusland.

At our spring 2024 Annual Meeting, keynote speaker Dr. Peggy Perry illuminated the legacy of Ganna Walska, whose Lotusland Gardens remain as a testament to her extraordinary spirit. Dr. Perry showcased other female horticulturists, botanists, and conservationists who left behind remarkable legacies.

Female trailblazers, through their advocacy efforts, dogged determination, and creative pursuits, cultivated pollinators, plants, and wildlife in our ecosystem. Their work transformed the landscapes we enjoy today and helped to foster a deep appreciation for the natural world. This is an ethos we embody, and we attribute our existence as a public garden, in large part, to nature-loving women.

As we share stories of the remarkable women who have shaped the landscape of American horticulture and design, their contributions continue to inspire and enrich our lives in ways that resonate far beyond the confines of history.

To these visionary naturalists,

Rebecca Anderson  
Executive Director  
randerson@lotusland.org

MISSION

Lotusland’s mission is to preserve and enhance the distinctive botanical gardens of Madame Ganna Walska. Lotusland educates and inspires visitors with its collections, sustainable horticulture practices, and plant conservation.
CELEBRATING DAN BIFANO
A Rose Amongst Us

IT WAS IN THE HEART OF Montecito, California, that a young Dan Bifano first fell under the spell of roses. Little did he know this childhood fascination would blossom and leave an indelible mark on the world of horticulture.

Dan Bifano’s early love affair with roses flourished into a remarkable expertise, garnering him national recognition as a Master Rosarian. Sought after by high-profile clients, Dan, with his keen eye and nurturing touch, skillfully transforms landscapes into mesmerizing rose gardens. Dan is also a Member of the Garden Club of Santa Barbara, a judge at the American Rose Society, and an active community volunteer.

His work on the Rose Garden at Lotusland is no exception. Dan’s dedication to nurturing beauty and fostering growth have been instrumental to Lotusland, where he brought his expertise and passion to bear as a stalwart member of our Executive Committee and Board of Trustees.

His tenure as Past Board President, Board Member, and his current role of Honorary Committee Chair, plus his many other roles over the years, have left an indelible imprint on the organization and Garden.

At the Lotusland Annual Meeting in March, we paused to honor the extraordinary contributions of Dan Bifano. His presence will continue to grace our board as our first ex-officio member, as he offers wisdom and guidance gleaned from more than a decade spent in service to Lotusland. Dan has strengthened the organization and propelled the brilliant horticultural legacy of Madame Ganna Walska.

Our board officers for 2024, President David Jones, Vice President Mari Mitchel, Treasurer Stephen Schaible, and Secretary Crystal Wyatt bring a wealth of expertise and a shared commitment to steering Lotusland into the future. Introducing new trustees Susie Cronin and Elizabeth Patterson, “In the tradition of Dan Bifano, Lotusland will be guided into its next decade of service and growth with these passionate and talented torchbearers.” remarked David Jones.

Lotusland is proud to be rated with the top honors among these independent evaluators of charities demonstrating stability, efficiency, and sustainability.
**DAMES IN THE GARDEN**

**Women Who Have Shaped California’s Landscape**

*By Peggy Sears Perry, Ph.D.*

**GANNA WALSKA** was a woman with a unique garden vision. And she had the means to realize that dream, as demonstrated by Lotusland’s continuing splendor. However, she was not the only woman in the region with a garden vision and the ability to implement it. **Anna Dorinda Bliss** made possible the existence of Santa Barbara Botanic Garden with her gift of $16,000 in 1926 to the Museum of Natural History for the purchase of property in Mission Canyon. Later, Anna’s daughter, **Mildred Barnes Bliss**, as a board member of the garden, invited **Beatrix Farrand** to advise on layout and design. Beatrix was well known for her gardens in the East, including Dumbarton Oaks in Washington, D.C., where the Bliss family lived. **Dr. Katherine Muller**, director of the garden for 23 years, authored three books as a botanist, *Trees of Santa Barbara* and *Wildflowers of Santa Barbara* which continue to inform botanists today.

The Santa Barbara region benefitted from many other women who contributed to our garden heritage. **Sarah Plummer Lemmon** was a local, self-taught botanist who explored the Southwest with her botanist husband during the late 1880s. We can credit Sarah with the campaign and legislation to confer the title of State Flower upon the California golden poppy (*Eschscholzia californica*). An entrepreneurial **Theodosia Burr Shepherd**, down the coast in Ventura, became a breeder of flowers such as petunias, begonias, and morning glories. Her seed business supplied wholesale companies across the country and her prolific speaking and writing tours earned her the title, the “female Luther Burbank.”

Landscape architects also left their imprint on the region. **Elizabeth Kellam de Forest** initially worked with her husband on projects and co-published the *Santa Barbara Gardener Magazine*. **Florence Yoch** was based in Pasadena but created several private gardens in Montecito, including Il Brolino, where she demonstrated her skill at transposing Italian garden majesty to the California terrain.

Further afield were women such as **Kate Sessions**, whose nursery and landscape endeavors transformed dusty San Diego into the subtropical plant paradise we see today. Kate was a prolific importer of plants from around the world, which she studied in local conditions; she introduced many to the nursery trade, including the jacaranda, the “purple rain” that graces cities along southern California’s coast.

Many women were champions of plant habitat conservation by studying different species and educating others about them. **Minerva Hoyt**, a wealthy socialite in South Pasadena, lamented the transformation of the desert wrought by the automobile in...
the early decades of the 20th century. Her efforts, and her connections, led to the establishment of the Joshua Tree National Monument (later Park). Mary DeDecker, another self-taught botanist, became expert on plants of the eastern Sierra when her husband was transferred to Independence, below Mt. Whitney. Mary was influential in the agreements reached to mitigate environmental damage caused by taking water from the Owens Valley for use in Los Angeles.

Alice Eastwood was a Canadian by birth who taught herself to botanize in Colorado and became the Head of the Department of Botany at the California Academy of Sciences, a position she held for over 50 years. After the San Francisco earthquake in 1906, she clambered upstairs in the heavily damaged building to rescue herbarium specimens that were essential in documenting many species.

Mai Kitazawa Arbegast was born in San Jose, where her family ran a seed business. After internment during WWII, she attended college, ultimately receiving her MLA at UC Berkeley, where she served on the faculty for many years. Mai is credited with facilitating the donation of Filoli Gardens, a 654-acre estate in Woodside, California, to the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Of course, the very first women to shape California’s landscape were indigenous land managers, wise in the way of using fire to control brush and the diversion of water to enhance growth of important botanical resources. Unfortunately, we do not have documentation with the names of these women. Nor do we know much about the abuelas who tended kitchen gardens on Californio ranchos, serving as conduits of extensive knowledge of food and medicinal plants to later generations.

These women who came before us magnified what was possible, thanks to our natural climatic and seasonal horticultural gifts. Indeed, the shape of some of our most beloved landscapes is their legacy to us.

Peggy S. Perry, Ph.D., is professor emerita in the Huntley College of Agriculture at Cal Poly Pomona University, where she taught courses in the plant sciences for 42 years, including California native plant materials, history of garden art, culinary produce, and leadership development.

Plantswomen of Lotusland

MADAME GANNA WALSKA not only influenced the way we appreciate plants in the landscape, but also paved the way for many passionate women dedicated to botany and horticulture here at Lotusland. We want to acknowledge just a few of the women whose contributions and improvements to our beloved Garden have left a lasting impact. Terri Clay, Horticultural Supervisor of the Japanese Garden, was in Lotusland’s first horticulture internship program in 1986 and promptly became the first female member of the grounds staff at Lotusland. The talented women of the garden, from early stalwarts such as Chris Enright, Jennifer Wilbanks, Virginia Hayes, and Marge Kelly, to our modern-day crew of outstanding “plantswomen,” along with all the female interns, fellows, volunteers, and employees who have preceded them, have helped to make Lotusland the world-renowned Garden it is today.
Horticultural Happenings

CYCAD SANCTUARY

By Paul Mills, Director of Plant Conservation and Curator of Living Collections

AFTER YEARS OF PLANNING, construction is almost complete on Lotusland’s secure growing facility for our cycad assurance colony and other critically endangered cycads. This project is recognized and supported by the IUCN Cycad Specialist Group and BGCI’s Global Conservation Consortium for Cycads. We collaborated with Arroyo Seco Construction to build this fenced enclosure with four large raised planting beds as part of our contribution to global cycad conservation. The facility is behind the scenes, adjacent to the curatorial office and will house approximately 250 cycads in raised beds constructed of poured concrete for permanency. This area will also serve as an additional insectary planting, being surrounded by California native plants.

Cycads are the most threatened group of plants on the planet and this assurance colony focuses on a South African cycad considered extinct in the wild — Encephalartos heenanii. In 2011, we successfully produced seeds, and then plants, of E. heenanii for the first time in the United States and most likely the first time ever in a public garden. These cycads, along with others, will be planted in this sanctuary as we continue to produce and acquire additional genetic material. Our goal is to grow these to maturity quicker than in pots, thus producing more seed, more often. Ex situ assurance colonies, also referred to as field gene banks, have long been highly effective in assuring the survival of threatened cycad species, keeping them safe and secure as breeding colonies.

The role of botanic gardens in cycad conservation is invaluable, to the extent that the IUCN publication Cycads: Status Survey and Conservation Action Plan states that there is “a separate chapter on the role of botanical gardens because so many cycads are on the brink of extinction in the wild that botanical gardens may be the only place where some species will survive.” Professor John Donaldson, co-chair of the IUCN Cycad Specialist Group, added that this project at Lotusland, “will signify an initial action of a Species Survival Action Plan for Encephalartos heenanii which will enhance the management plan developed in South Africa by focusing on assurance colonies and setting the groundwork for future re-introductions.”

Lotusland’s cycad collection is recognized globally for its conservation importance

Did you know?

➔ Lotusland is a partner to national and international organizations charged with conserving species of plants from around the world.

➔ Many species cared for at Lotusland are restricted from wild collection and international trade.

➔ Lotusland is successfully engaged in the critical work of protecting threatened and endangered species of plants from around the world and saving them from extinction.
ECOSYSTEMS IN NATURE are made up of many parts, all of which work together to provide function and keep other parts in check. It is easy to forget this in the context of collections within gardens, with a lack of plant and habitat diversity leaving collections vulnerable to unmitigated attack by pests, native and exotic alike. When we exclude native habitats from our gardens, we reduce the beneficial organisms and leave collections more susceptible to pests and disease, both of which have access to an abundance of prey (your plant collections), and an absence of predators (beneficial insects, birds, vertebrates, etc.). This applies to everything from roses, to cacti, to cycads, and all plant life in between. We can spray pesticides, which negatively impacts our health and that of our ecosystem, or we can incorporate habitat.

At Lotusland, in addition to our Insectary Garden, we have abundant pockets of native habitat throughout the property, many of which are not visible to public tours. These are primarily composed of local California native plants, which create ecosystem complexity. Such habitats can be found near our nursery, behind the Cycad and Tropical gardens, in our Arboretum, and along much of our fence line. They are vital in maintaining the health of our collections, without the need for toxic insecticides. Common plants we use in perennial insectary plantings include native sages (Salvia spp.), hollyleaf cherry (Prunus ilicifolia), toyon (Heteromeles arbutifolia), California brittlebush (Encelia californica), gooseberry and currants (Ribes spp.), deergrass (Muhlenbergia rigens), and California lilacs (Ceanothus spp.). Native insectary habitats are great way to improve the overall health of gardens and are also water wise, low maintenance, beneficial to our environment, and even add seasonal interest and color. Plants don’t need to be native to serve as beneficial habitat to native insects. Start thinking about where you can incorporate habitat in your own yard!

LEFT: California native plants such as canyon sunflower (Venegasia carpesioides) and scarlet bugler (Perstemon centranthifolius) will add to perimeter insectary plantings. RIGHT: California lilac (Ceanothus spp.) is a charismatic Southern California native, with massive crops of blooms visible from afar in our local mountains. It grows in multiple places in Lotusland, including the Insectary Garden, Dunlap Cactus Garden, Deciduous Orchard, and near our staff parking lot.

LEFT: Black sage (Salvia mellifera) tucked behind the Cypress Allée in the Arboretum. RIGHT: Anise scented sage (Salvia guaranitica), from South America, grows well in our Cycad Garden and attracts many pollinators, especially butterflies and hummingbirds.

LEFT: Catalina currant (Ribes viburnifolium) is especially beautiful following winter rains and can be seen blooming in the Insectary Garden and in an insectary pocket behind the Deciduous Orchard, not visible by public tour. RIGHT: Pride of Madeira (Echium candicans) in bloom, peeking out at the water steps. Although it is an introduced species, Echium candicans grows extremely well in our climate with little to no upkeep and is attractive to bees and other pollinators. BELOW: Native white sage (Salvia apiana) behind the Japanese Garden Wisteria Pavilion.
COLLABORATION WITH OTHER BOTANIC GARDENS is a crucial way Lotusland’s curation staff work to increase the breadth of our living collection. This winter we received seed of *Euryale ferox*, or prickly waterlily, thanks to the Denver Botanic Garden (DBG) and a connection with Tamara Kilbane, DBG’s Curator of the Aquatic Collection.

*Euryale ferox* is closely related to the giant waterlilies (*Victoria* spp.) but hails from an entirely different continent. In habitat, it is found growing in still waters from northern India to Southern Russia, Japan, and south to Taiwan. While the small purple and white flowers seem diminutive compared to the stunning *Victoria*, they have a few interesting growth habits. *E. ferox* flowers will often open underwater where they self-pollinate and when grown in crowded areas, they can pierce directly through the large leaf blades to emerge at the surface. Leaves of *E. ferox* are round, usually three feet across, lack an upright lip, and have prickles on both the upper and lower surfaces. Their starchy seeds, called fox nut, are edible and can be fried, roasted, and popped like popcorn. The common name, Gorgon plant, references the snake-haired monster sisters, Euryale, Medusa, and Stheno, of Greek mythological fame.

The last time *Euryale ferox* was cultivated at Lotusland was in 2016. This February, after careful rearing at Lotusland’s nursery, we achieved 90% germination and are excited to reintroduce this taxon back into the collection. This season promises to be a banner year with a record-breaking number of plants waiting to go out into ponds across the Garden. We extend a special thanks to the Denver Botanic Garden for sharing their germplasm with us.

**LOTUSLAND X MUSIC ACADEMY**

**Cultivating a Sensory Experience in the Garden**

**AS A RENOWNED HOST AND PHILANTHROPIST,** Madame Walska was a patron of the Music Academy, opening Lotusland’s Theatre Garden to showcase student performances. Nearly 70 years later, we continue to showcase the Music Academy to provide additional visibility to the exceptional talent nurtured and developed through its programs. We are launching a unique way to discover both these aspiring artists and the natural wonders of the Garden with a new sensory experience that accompanies visitors as they stroll through Lotusland’s spectacular gardens. Each season, visitors will discover a new playlist inspired by the Garden and curated by the Academy’s Chief Artistic Officer, Nate Bachhuber, who joined the Academy last spring: “In addition to performances by Music Academy guest and teaching artists, I’ve consciously selected many works by California composers as well as a few works very directly linked to Ganna Walska, such as the Jewel Song from Faust.”

**Below:** Madame Walska receiving dignitaries and special guests for a performance by the Music Academy of the West in the Theatre Garden in the 1950s.

LOTUSLAND ARCHIVES

**Madame Ganna Walska and the Theatre des Champs-Élysées**

LOTUSLAND IS EXCITED TO ANNOUNCE the release of a new publication, *Madame Ganna Walska and the Theatre des Champs-Élysées*, a captivating and meticulously chronicled exploration of the intertwined histories of Madame Ganna Walska and the Theatre des Champs-Élysées in Paris. We extend our heartfelt thanks to the Theatre des Champs-Élysées for graciously sharing their story and preserving the legacy of this iconic institution and Madame Walska’s enduring impact as its proprietor from 1922 to 1970.

As an aspiring young opera singer, Madame Ganna Walska embraced Parisian life with fervor, immersing herself in the bustling streets, with their rich tapestry of art, music, and theater. Her ventures, from her involvement in the Theatre des Champs-Élysées to the establishment of a perfume boutique on Rue de la Paix, bore witness to her deep appreciation for French culture and her entrepreneurial spirit. Although she left France indefinitely for the sun-drenched hills of California in 1941, eventually she was able to entrust the theatre to the French state in 1970 and ensure its future.

It is against this backdrop of cultural inspiration that we can perhaps better understand the genesis of Lotusland, Madame Walska’s botanical masterpiece and second act in the United States. Lotusland emerges as a testament to Madame Walska’s profound connection to the theatre. Like a masterful symphony, the gardens of Lotusland unfold in a crescendo of color and form, with each plant taking center-stage in a breathtaking performance of botanical artistry.

*Madame Ganna Walska and the Theatre des Champs-Élysées* was unveiled at the Lotus Society event on June 1st, marking a momentous occasion for our Lotusland community. Copies of the book are now available in the Garden Shop, inviting you to embark on a journey into Madame Walska’s pivotal role in the history of the Theatre des Champs-Élysées and her indelible impact on French culture, for which she was awarded the prestigious honor of *Chevalier des arts et des lettres* in 1972. Through her visionary stewardship and dedication to the arts, Madame Walska continues to inspire generations with her enduring legacy.
THE GARDEN AS A CLASSROOM

Botanists Begin in 4th Grade

MORE THAN 20 YEARS AGO, Lotusland’s fourth grade Junior Botanist Program began in partnership with Santa Barbara County elementary schools, annually providing between 2,000-3,000 local students with the opportunity to visit and learn about botany at Lotusland. The program combines California’s educational life science standards with the magic of Lotusland, creating an awe-inspiring, hands-on experience for students. For their tours, students are split into small groups and led around the gardens by docents who teach key topics like adaptation, conservation, photosynthesis, and pollination through observational and interactive examples. All students who attend a field trip to Lotusland are gifted a succulent to care for, as well as a Junior Botanist Enrichment Guide that reinforces the scientific concepts they learned on their tour. The opportunity to attend this field trip is greatly appreciated by teachers and students, and we often receive drawings and notes from students, thanking us for their amazing visit. Be sure to give our Junior Botanists a wave or a smile when you see them in the garden!

Thank you to the donors who make our Education Programs possible:
The Manitou Fund and Nora McNeely Hurley
The John C. Mithun Foundation
with additional support from
Coeta and Donald Barker Foundation
Roy E. Crummer Foundation
Harold McAlister Charitable Foundation
Montecito Bank & Trust
LOTUSLAND CELEBRATES

THE WAY OF THE LOTUS

JULY 20, 2024  3:30 PM - SUNSET
JOIN US AS LOTUSLAND CELEBRATES

MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR SATURDAY, July 20th and prepare for the season’s most anticipated event, Lotusland Celebrates: The Way of the Lotus. Hosted by the incomparable Jane Lynch, this gala and auction promises an unforgettable night of entertainment and purpose.

Ganna Walska Lotusland continues to be recognized as one of the world’s top botanical gardens and is renowned as much for its outstanding landscaping design as for the diversity and scope of its plant collections. With one third of the living collections listed on the IUCN red list, the Garden plays a critical role in the preservation of biodiversity. One of the country’s first nonprofit organic botanical gardens, Lotusland is an international reference in plant conservation and sustainable horticulture.

Lotusland Celebrates is the Garden’s main fundraising initiative to support operational costs, collections conservation, as well as the Garden’s mission promoting sustainability, nature connection, and environmental stewardship.

Ensure your spot at Lotusland Celebrates by purchasing your ticket today and join us in celebrating and supporting the beauty of Lotusland.

Warm Regards,

Ashley Adelson, Merryl Brown, and Lisa Bjornson Wolf
Lotusland Trustees and Event Chairs

NEW! CABANA SPONSORSHIP

Experience the ultimate in luxury and exclusivity at The Way of the Lotus, with our premier table sponsorship for 12 guests.

Enjoy a private cabana offering an intimate setting within the gala, complete with personalized service and a fully stocked private minibar. Delight in a customizable snack menu, gourmet appetizers, and a lavish al fresco dinner by Duo with spectacular wine pairings from Antica Terra.

Your group will also have access to the exclusive Patron Party on July 18 at Rosewood Miramar Beach. Secure your cabana today for an unforgettable evening of elegance and indulgence at Lotusland. For reservations and more information, call 805.969.3767 x125 or email lotuslandcelebrates@lotusland.org.

PREMIERE PARTNERS

HOSPITALITY PARTNER

ROSEWOOD MIRAMAR BEACH MONTECITO
AUCTION HIGHLIGHTS
Don’t Miss Your Chance to Vie for Unforgettable Experiences and Stunning Collectibles!

Help preserve our magnificent garden by participating in Lotusland Celebrates’ extraordinary auction. Auction highlights include a private Edible Schoolyard tour with legendary Chef and Chez Pannise owner Alice Waters, a VIP Formula 1 experience, luxury retreats, and secret getaways.

Preview and bid on items online from July 10 to July 21. Proxy bids are available for the live auction on July 20. Access the auction at www.lotusland.org/celebrates2024

LOTUSLAND CELEBRATES ART EXHIBITION
Grounded: Works Inspired by, Connected to and Reclaimed from Lotusland

Celebrate the strength and renewal found in nature with “Grounded,” an exhibition featuring California artists who bring new life to salvaged wood from the fallen trees of Lotusland. Co-curated by Ashley Woods Hollister and Johanna Burton, the Maurice Marciano Director of the Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA), Los Angeles, this exhibition showcases stunning artworks crafted from the majestic trees of Lotusland.

Gala guests will have the exclusive opportunity to view these unique pieces in person. Starting July 10, preview the works online and place your bids for a chance to bring a part of Lotusland into your home. Proceeds support the care of the Garden, with artists receiving 40% of the sales.

PHOTOS: Jane Lynch © Jane Lynch; Johanna Burton by Erin Leland

2024 LOTUSLAND CELEBRATES EVENT COMMITTEE

EVENT CHAIRS
Ashley Adelson
Merryl Brown
Lisa Bjornson Wolf

GUEST EMCEE
Jane Lynch

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Maria Schmidt
Shamra Strange
Jill Taylor
Caroline Thompson
**Picnic on the Great Lawn**
**Summer Picnic:** Saturday, June 22  
**Fall Picnic:** Saturday, September 14  
2:00 – 4:30 p.m.

**SUMMER SHINES AT LOTUSLAND.** Bring friends and family for an outing to remember with live music on the Great Lawn, plenty of space to spread out your blanket, unpack your picnic and enjoy the Garden! 

$60 for Member Adults / Member’s Children $25 and $85 for Non-Members Adults / $30 Non-member Children. Space is limited and reservations are required. View more information and reserve online at Lotusland.org/events.

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**Saturdays, July 6 and August 31**  
**4:30 – 6:30 p.m.**  
**Twilight Tours**

**CELEBRATE SUMMER** as the sun begins to drop toward the horizon and the Garden transforms into a place of otherworldly beauty. These late afternoon self-guided garden walks are only offered a few times a year.

Admission is complimentary for Patron Circle Members, $30 for General Level Members, and $75 for Non-Members. Space is limited and reservations are required. View more information and reserve online at Lotusland.org/events.

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**Wellbeing Wednesdays**

**Listening to Flowers with Dina Saalisi**  
**Wednesday, July 10**  
**11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.**

**Tai Chi with Master Chao Pang**  
**Wednesday, August 21**  
**11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.**

**Forest Bathing with Elena Rios**  
**Wednesday, September 2**  
**11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.**

**BACK BY POPULAR DEMAND!**

**WELL-BEING WEDNESDAYS** are special garden experiences with skilled professionals providing doses of nature’s healing. You will be more whole and aligned after visiting the Garden with a new attention and awareness.

Tickets for Well-being Wednesdays are $50 for Members and $85 for Non-Members. Space is limited and reservations are required. View more information and reserve online at Lotusland.org/events.

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**Friday, August 16 • 4:30 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.**  
**Member’s Golden Hour Wine Walk**

**VIEW THE GARDEN** in the magical light of late afternoon, when the botanical colors and textures come alive. Wander at your leisure as you enjoy wine and light hors d’oeuvres. This chance to stroll in the Garden as the sun begins to set is a special opportunity for Lotusland Members and their guests only.

Admission is complimentary for Garden Lover Circle Members, $50 for General Level Members, and $75 for Member’s Guests. Space is limited and reservations are required. View more information and reserve online at Lotusland.org/events.

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**SAVE THE DATE** for Lotusland’s signature fundraising event

**Saturday, October 5**  
**Exceptional Plants Auction**
Friday, September 6, or Saturday, September 7
9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
Eco Printing Atelier

LEARN HOW TO CAPTURE BOTANICAL PRINTS on fabric with Santa Barbara fiber artist Linda Kollofski and Lotusland’s Assistant Curator Anna Bower. Together they will lead an interactive workshop using plant material gathered at Lotusland. Participants will receive instruction on the basics behind ecoprinting including: fabric selection and preparation, appropriate plants, and bundling tips. All materials are included in the workshop fee and participants will go home with one silk table runner and one silk scarf of their own design, each prepared using a different mordanting technique. The workshop will culminate with a discussion of the results from the day and a showcase of other ecoprinted works from the instructors.

View more information and reserve online at Lotusland.org/events. $175 for Members and $200 for Non-Members. Space is limited and reservations are required.
ED SOTO, Director of Visitor Services and Public Programs

Director of Visitor Services and Public Programs, Ed Soto, is a local graduate of Westmont College with ties to the Santa Barbara community that run deep. Ed has a robust background spanning three decades in the mortgage lending industry where he helped numerous families purchase their first homes. His leadership acumen was honed through overseeing retail divisions for industry giants such as Macy’s and Eddie Bauer, as well as a decade-long tenure with cherished local organizations including the iconic Santa Barbara Bowl and Old Spanish Days. A formidable force in orchestrating public-facing programs and fostering volunteer engagement with a profound dedication to his role, Ed brings a wealth of expertise to Lotusland’s visitor services.

KATHERINE COLIN, Director of Marketing and Communication

Director of Marketing and Communications since autumn of 2023, Katherine Colin has been meticulously crafting Lotusland’s profile through various public projects and collaborative partnerships, bringing greater exposure to the Garden and its many inspiring initiatives. With a master’s degree in museum studies from the Ecole du Louvre in Paris and over 20 years of experience in communications in the cultural sector, Katherine has embraced our botanical garden as a living artwork. Her vision for the Garden extends beyond traditional marketing; she sees it as a canvas to inspire and engage audiences, fostering a deeper connection with the natural world and its intrinsic beauty. Keenly aware of Lotusland’s vital role in the preservation of biodiversity and its potential to grow as a model for sustainability and environmental stewardship, she is eager to leverage her vast experience to elevate the garden’s reputation and amplify its impact.

STAFF HIGHLIGHTS
Lotusland Welcomes

STAFF ACHIEVEMENTS

Jorge Mendieta

LOTUSLAND APPLAUDS JORGE MENDIETA, a member of Lotusland’s horticultural staff since 2019, who has been awarded the 2023 – 2024 Outstanding Student of the Year Award from the Environmental Horticulture Department at Santa Barbara City College. This award honors students who have excelled scholastically and have provided exceptional service to the college.

“I am almost ready to receive my certificate in Environmental Horticulture from Santa Barbara City College. Having the opportunities to take classes, participate in labs in the Lifescape Gardens at SBCC, and work at Lotusland has provided me great hands-on experience. Out of the many classes I have taken, the one that I really enjoyed was the Soil and Nutrients class. This class gave me the knowledge to understand how important soil is for a successful garden. By understanding the science behind that, I have been able to put that knowledge in practice during my time here at Lotusland in different sections of the garden. I am originally from the Ibera Wetlands found in the province of Corrientes, Argentina. From my first time being here at Lotusland, certain garden sections reminded me of where I grew up, which has made my experience here even more special. Looking towards the future, I plan to expand my knowledge of cycads, which I find quite fascinating since I have the privilege to work with them here at Lotusland.” — JORGE MENDIETA
Thank You to Our Garden Volunteers

WE CELEBRATED THESE MILESTONE ANNIVERSARIES IN 2023

Your incredible dedication and enthusiasm light up our garden and make a world of difference—thank you for your service and inspiring volunteerism!

25+ YEARS OF SERVICE
Bruce Tiffney
Jeff Chemnick
Jayne M. Burton
Janet Hunter
JoAnn Mermis
Sharon Crawford
Marge Kelly
Kathe Klock

20+ YEARS
Dennis Whelan
Lori Meschler
Jennifer McCurry
Pat Sheppard
Curt Coughlin
Laurie Wolf
Carol Weingartner
Jim Foster
Shelley Gault
John Vasi
Sandra Russell
Kathy Hulick
Bernadine Oberst
Jean Parry
Christine Gress
Judith Chandler
Linda Burns
Katie Hatch
Marcia Keen
Kathy Snell

15+ YEARS OF SERVICE
David Heinz
Duane Sikorski
Dorinda Murry
Connie Campbell
Chantal Evrard
Marguerite Gamo
Gwen Guddal
Larry Disharoon
Valerie Halverson
Jo Ann Mermis
Murph Levy
Christine Nail
Claire Johnson
Hillary Tentler

5+ YEARS OF SERVICE
Max Acuna
Nancy Shutt
Nancy Dorey
Harry Linden
Nancy Vasi
Michael Seabaugh
Barb Kennedy
Janice Thomson
Becca Garbett
Gail Herson
Carol Prentice
Alicia Sorkin
Marie Tuohy-Mote
Lynn Johnson
Ernie Witham
Susan Braden
Sylvia Limon
Deborah Meade
Evie Savage
Peggy Koegler
Monica Koegler-Blaha
Bonnie Blakley
Susan Brunn
Pat Crotteau
Judith Finn
John Koegler
Liz Martin
Carol McHenry
Laurel Miller
Connie Wernet
Sandi Wilson
Lynn Lopez

As of April 21, 2024

5+ YEARS OF SERVICE
Max Acuna
Nancy Shutt
Nancy Dorey
Harry Linden
Nancy Vasi
Michael Seabaugh
Barb Kennedy
Janice Thomson
Becca Garbett
Gail Herson
Carol Prentice
Alicia Sorkin
Marie Tuohy-Mote
Lynn Johnson
Ernie Witham
Susan Braden
Sylvia Limon
Deborah Meade
Evie Savage
Peggy Koegler
Monica Koegler-Blaha
Bonnie Blakley
Susan Brunn
Pat Crotteau
Judith Finn
John Koegler
Liz Martin
Carol McHenry
Laurel Miller
Connie Wernet
Sandi Wilson
Lynn Lopez

As of April 21, 2024
The Lotusland Forever Campaign is underway and continues to receive tremendous support. We are pleased to share recent fundraising successes and progress on campaign funded projects below.

The campaign saw a bountiful winter and spring, as many generous new contributors stepped forward to support Lotusland’s needs. With recent commitments, we are thrilled to announce we have now raised more than $9 million in capital funding, and more than $5.7 million in new gifts to grow the endowment.

We would like to thank everyone who has generously given to the campaign and recognize several new donors who made recent contributions including Jeanne and Robbie Anderson, Marcie and Robert Musser, and Maureen and Ed Bousa. Special thanks to Julie and Peter Morley for their generous support of water security and related infrastructure improvements and for their subsequent gift to name the Water Garden Terrace.

We would also like to thank The Hutton Parker Foundation, The John C. Mithun Foundation for providing the funding for our future Outdoor Classroom in the Tropical Garden, The Alice Tweed Tuohy Foundation for funding improvements in the Visitor Center arrival area and Eric Nagelmann for his future bequest.

LOTUSLAND FOREVER PRIORITY PROJECTS:

Water Sustainability
One of the highest priorities in Lotusland’s new Master Plan is to secure future water resources and infrastructure. We have worked with experts in the field to create a multi-phased plan for water security that includes improving storage, building a new irrigation reservoir, reducing water use, and harvesting runoff that can be captured and reused for irrigation.

Over the past 30 years, with our successful sustainable horticulture program and healthy soils and inputs, Lotusland has accomplished a 25% reduction in water use due to its robust green gardening techniques. Now we have an opportunity to build our critical infrastructure and take more aggressive measures to reduce water use and harvest any water that can be captured via a holistic strategy to manage the entire water cycle.

As we experience drought cycles and water continues to be an increasingly scarce and precious resource, water infrastructure investments will allow us to effectively care for the living collections and use Lotusland as a demonstration garden to teach best practices in natural resource management for the community at large.

We are very pleased to announce that the first phase of our comprehensive Water Sustainability Plan has been nearly fully funded, with $1.2 million of the $1.5 million already secured! We are deeply grateful to two anonymous donors as well as Julie and Peter Morley for their support of this crucial work, which will begin as soon as the remaining funds are raised.

“The response of our community inspires us to safeguard Lotusland for future generations,” says Rebecca Anderson, Executive Director. We are grateful to have the trust and confidence of our family of supporters.”
CAMPAIGN FUNDED PROJECT:

School Bus Arrival and Reception
Lotusland is thrilled to announce the receipt of generous funding from the Alice Tweed Tuhoy Foundation to develop a dedicated area for school buses to park and unload students, along with an adjacent student assembly space. This contribution will facilitate the creation of a new bus pull-out area and Australian Garden assembly area, enhancing the educational experience for students and improving the overall visitor experience. The project is slated for installation in the winter of 2024/25.

To learn more about the campaign and to help preserve Lotusland Forever, visit the link below or call Patricia Sadeghian, Director of Development, at 805.324.8426 x125 or via email: psadeghian@lotusland.org.

www.lotusland.org/forever

Please join us in thanking our Honor Roll of donors to-date!

Lotusland gratefully acknowledges the generosity of the following donors who have contributed to the Lotusland Forever Campaign:

$1,000,000+
The Ann Jackson Family Foundation
Connie Flowers Pearcy
Eric and Wendy Schmidt
The Estate of Hania Tallmadge
The Wyatt Family

$500,000-$999,999
Anonymous
Julie and Roger Davis
The Estate of Harry Felder
The Manitou Fund / Nora McNeely Hurley
The John C. Mithun Foundation
Julie and Peter Morley

$100,000-$499,000
The Alice Tweed Tuhoy Foundation
Jeanne and Robert Anderson
Anonymous
Maureen and Edward Bousa
David Jones
Hutton Parker Foundation
Mimi Michaelis
Mari and Hank Mitchel
Stephen P. Schaible
Chris Toomey
Crystal and Clifford Wyatt

$25,000-$99,999
Anonymous
Laura and John Bridley
Lynn Cunningham Brown and Christopher C. Brown
Ron and Pat Caird
Douglas Clovis Hall
Lesley Cunningham and Cyndee Howard
Rachael Douglas
Sheri Fults
The Garden Conservancy
Dorothy H. and John R. Gardner
Virginia Castagnola-Hunter
Joseph Marek and John Bernatz
Marcie and Robert Musser
The Murphy-Sloyan Family
Jeffrey Romano and Stan Shayer
Cordelia and Peter Stearns
Nita and Henk van der Werff
John and Nancy Vasi
Rick and Sheila Vitelle
Tim Walsh and Mike Healy
Lisa and David Wolf

$10,000-$24,999
Merryl Brown
Geoff and Kimberly Crane
Giffin and Crane
Ginni Dreier
Ron and Andrea Hein
Mark and Maria Schmidt
George and Beth Wood

$1,000-$9,999
Allison Armour
Daniel Bifano and Allan Brostrom
Jack and Elizabeth Bunce
Harrison Design
Santa Barbara
Susan and Robert Lieff
Jill Taylor and Ray Link
Caroline R. Thompson

Lotusland gratefully acknowledges the generosity of the following donors who have made a planned gift to the Lotusland Forever Campaign:

Anonymous
A Friend
Laura and John Bridley
Lynn Cunningham Brown and Christopher C. Brown
Ron and Pat Caird
Dorothy H. and John R. Gardner
Mr. Kim L. Hunter
David Jones
Joseph Marek and John Bernatz
Eric Nagelmann
Patti Prairie and Alan Hochberg
Lisa and David Wolf

These Garden spaces and features have been generously sponsored by the following visionary donors:

Abalone Pond - The Manitou Fund and Nora McNeely Hurley
Cycad Garden Terrace - The Wyatt Family
George Washington Smith Pavilion - The Ann Jackson Family Foundation
Outdoor Classroom - The John C. Mithun Foundation
Pavilion Patio - Julie and Roger Davis
Rooster Grotto - Mari and Hank Mitchel
Sunken Drawing Room - David Jones
Triton Fountain - The Manitou Fund and Nora McNeely Hurley
Water Garden Terrace - Julie and Peter Morley

As of April 15, 2024
DONOR RECOGNITION
Virginia Castagnola-Hunter

VIRGINIA CASTAGNOLA – HUNTER first visited the magical Gardens of Lotusland 75 years ago, at age 14. She would visit her dear friend, Hania Tallmadge (Madame Walska’s niece), and they would explore the whimsical and inviting garden “rooms” of Lotusland, while Madame kept an eye on them from her terrace.

Ms. Castagnola-Hunter’s love for nature, horticulture, and plants is boundless. As one of Lotusland’s first members in 1995, she has been a long-time supporter and advocate of the Garden’s critical conservation work, while appreciating the captivating botanical beauty of the world-class collections.

Supporting Lotusland’s efforts to maintain a healthy and thriving cycad collection has been a priority for Ms. Castagnola-Hunter. Often called “living fossils” cycads are amongst the oldest surviving species of plants.

Ms. Castagnola-Hunter’s appreciation and dedication to keeping these threatened species thriving has motivated her support. She believes that Lotusland has the perfect “formula” to care for these plants — dedication to soil health, nourishment, specimen placement, and devoted garden staff.

Lotusland is grateful for Ms. Castagnola-Hunter’s continued passion and philanthropy in support of the maintenance and care for the Cycads.

“I find myself visualizing the magnificent essence and brilliance of the Cycad Garden, within the pink walls that encircle Lotusland. It has been a privilege and joy to help preserve this miracle of nature.”

— VIRGINIA CASTAGNOLA-HUNTER

To learn more about supporting Lotusland’s conservation efforts, please contact Patricia Sadeghian, Director of Development, 805.324.8426, psadeghian@lotusland.org.

ABOVE: Two newly acquired plants of Agave franzosinii.

WISHLIST
Donate to Lotusland’s Specimen Plant Fund

This Fund aims to drive plant conservation through the acquisition of documented collections of our most unique living plants for scientific research, conservation, display, and education. The Specimen Plant Fund enables our signature Lotusland collections, as well as rare and threatened plants in compliance with international policies, and sustainability and ethical initiatives.

This restricted account, funded entirely by donations, allows us to purchase plants for special projects that are not part of our annual budget. This fund recently funded six specimens of an iconic plant at Lotusland — Agave franzosinii — to replace plants that had flowered and died.

To learn more about this crucial fund, please contact Paul Mills, Director of Conservation and Curator of the Living Collections at pmills@lotusland.org.
Richard Ross moved to Santa Barbara from the Bay Area for cycads. Up north, he had an extensive collection of cycads and all manner of rare plants. Unfortunately, his collection suffered tremendous losses during a prolonged cold and rainy season in the Bay Area 30 years ago. So, Richard and family headed south for warmer weather where he could begin again, collecting and growing his beloved cycads and other plants of distinction. Soon after arriving in Santa Barbara, Richard began rebuilding his cycad collection and exotic garden in earnest. We were introduced by a fellow cycad collector from Australia. I quickly realized that he was a very serious collector...of not only plants, but stringed musical instruments, pythons, stingrays, pinball games, art, and classic cars. If something was rare and collectible, Richard had to have it!

A pediatrician by training, he retired years ago as a doctor and focused on pursuing his passions. I learned early in our business relationship (which soon morphed into a very long friendship) that he was uncommonly knowledgeable about everything in which he was involved — in short, he gave life his all. Richard Ross is known internationally as an expert in the care and breeding of pythons and fresh-water stingrays. And not only did he once have what was arguably one of the finest collections of vintage mandolins, guitars, and banjos in the world…but he was a pretty fair bluegrass picker as well.

When I first brought him to Lotusland it was clear he was enchanted. I remember telling him about training to be a docent and becoming a member of the Lotus Society. Almost immediately he signed up for both! His enthusiasm and storytelling were indefatigable. And his generosity with Lotusland through the years was noteworthy; he always donated wonderful plants for the annual Exceptional Plants auction and stepped up when asked to participate in projects for which he had a passion.

Richard Ross will be deeply missed by all who knew him, and he joins the legion of Lotusland royalty that has left us too soon.
CONSERVATION UPDATE
Accessibility Updates at Happy's Terrace

THANKS TO THE DEDICATED efforts of our talented volunteer Buildings and Grounds Committee, Happy’s Terrace has undergone remarkable recent enhancements.

The expansion of Happy’s Terrace includes a wheelchair-accessible entrance to the main living area of the Pavilion as well as a walkway and handrailing to access the front gallery, a former bedroom. This thoughtful addition ensures that everyone in our community will soon be able to enjoy the vibrant atmosphere of exhibitions and periodic events, fostering inclusivity and accessibility for all.

Among the signature living collections on Happy’s Terrace are the captivating presence of a variety of Tillandsia adorning a metal tree and the nearby exotic Upper Bromeliad Garden. These remarkable plants, with their unique ability to thrive without soil, capture the imagination of all who encounter them. Additionally, the majestic Southern magnolia (Magnolia grandiflora), artfully espaliered against the building, was nurtured during construction of the new walkway, to preserve the beauty of Happy’s Terrace. This special perch in the Upper Bromeliads is tended by Mike Furner, a gardener at Lotusland for 45 years. Mike replanted the Garden in the spirit of Madame Walska, who originally hired him when the estate was her home.
LOTUSLAND GRATEFULLY ACKNOWLEDGES DONORS

January, February, March, and April 2024

THE LOTUS SOCIETY

NEW LOTUS SOCIETY MEMBERS
Douglas Clovis Hall
John Margolis, AIA
in memory of Lillian Prince Margolis
Cordelia & Peter Stearns

LOTUS SOCIETY DONATIONS
The Estate of Barbara Dixon

GRANTS & SPECIAL PROJECTS

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ACTION FUND
Julie & Roger Davis

TAYLOR DUNN BIGFOOT ELECTRIC UTILITY VEHICLE
William Weiss Foundation, Inc.

MEDIA
Hutton Parker Foundation
   Media grant in partnership with Noozhawk

CYCAD ASSURANCE NURSERY
Comstock Landscape Architecture

EDUCATION & OUTREACH PROGRAMS

EDUCATION PROGRAMS
John C. Mithun Foundation

JUNIOR BOTANIST PROGRAM
Harold McAlister Charitable Foundation

GIFTS FOR THE GARDEN
Susan Allen & William Gadsby
Peggy Anderson
Donna R. Benaroya
Susan Boettner
   in memory of Hanne Pedersen
Susan Bowey

Amy Brakeman & Tom Henry
   in recognition of Corey Welles
Christine Bruce & John Hilliard
Tania & John Burke
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Noelle Claeyssens-Burkey
James Coleman
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   in honor of Jeff Chemrick and Paul Mills
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Gregory Annenken Weingarten,
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ROBIN WILLIAMSON
Victoria A. Williamson
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Christina Wolfenden Woods
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Rachael Douglas
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Stephen Schaible & Daron Builta
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Anthony Grumbine
Harrison Design
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Elisabeth & Tom Patterson
Prober Land Surveying
Mary Sadeghian
San Marcos Growers
SEPPS Land Use Planning & Permitting
Newell Stevens Estate
George B. Turpin

*Donations acknowledged above are gifts of $100.00 or more between January – April 2024.
Summer 2024

For more detailed information about upcoming events, please see page 16 or visit Lotusland.org/events.

Summer Picnic on the Great Lawn
Saturday June 22

Listening to Flowers with Dina Saalisi
Wednesday, July 10

Lotusland Celebrates
Saturday, July 20

Member’s Golden Hour Wine Walk
Friday, August 16

Tai Chi in the Garden
Wednesday, August 21

Eco Printing Atelier
Friday, September 6, or
Saturday, September 7

Forest Bathing with Elana Rios
Wednesday, September 25

Exceptional Plants Auction
Saturday, October 5

SAVE THE DATES:
The History of Cartier with
Worthy McCartney
Monday, October 21

Art Class in the Garden with
Santa Barbara Museum of Art
Saturday, October 26

Community Access Days
Wednesday, November 6
& Thursday, November 7

Gardens in Paradise
Wednesday, November 13

Lotusland Tour Schedule
We look forward to welcoming you to Lotusland! Lotusland is open for public visitation Wednesdays through Saturdays with a self-guided or docent-led tour by request. Visit lotusland.org/visit/ to check availability and reserve your space. Space is limited and advance reservations are required. We recommend making reservations one month in advance of your visit for best availability.

2024 Ticket Release Schedule:
Members receive access to reservations two weeks prior to the public release.

SEPTEMBER – NOVEMBER
7/23/24: Member Prerelease
8/6/24: Public Release

Ticket release dates are subject to change. Additional information is available at www.lotusland.org/visit.