



San Luis Obispo: City as Landscape

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San Luis Obispo, California. View from Terrace Hill showing the city, with Cerro San Luis Obispo and Bishop Peak beyond it. The San Luis Obispo railroad station is seen at bottom right. Public use photo: Ken Broomfield. www.wikipedia.sanluisobisповiew/

How can we understand a city better by thinking of its landscape? Any city as a cultural landscape offers clues to its origins in its waterways, the streets' arrangements (and often their names), the locations of gardens, and its use of building materials. All of them are closely related to the evolving landscape and its history. Modern culture easily forgets these site-responsive requirements, since deft engineering accomplishments usually hide the origins of a long-functioning city landscape.

Cities like San Luis Obispo began as settlements in landscapes that responded to the most pressing needs of their first human inhabitants. People must have potable

water, a food supply, and materials for making shelters, tools, and fire. They form paths and roads on which to travel for work, communicate, socialize and engage in trade. To sustain society, a practical way of life is followed, then modified as needed by future generations.

Regionalism, then, speaks initially to natural water supply. Regionalism asserts itself early in plant, animal, and earth materials that can be utilized. It is also seen in routes that humans create over time when passing over the land, across water—and now even through the air, since regionalism is evident in changes brought about by advancing technologies.

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This special issue of Eden provides background information about the history of San Luis Obispo County's landscapes and gardens. It should be of interest to our members—who, we hope, will plan to attend CGLHS's upcoming conference in San Luis Obispo County, September 9th–11th.

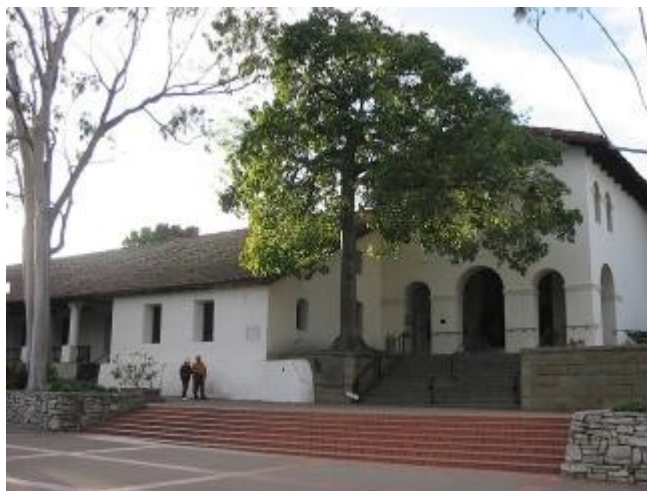
Please see more information about this event on pages 24–25 and on our website, www.cglhs.org.

City as Landscape (continued)

San Luis Obispo, often called by its initials, was recently praised in Dan Buettner's popular book *Thrive* as "the happiest place in America"—due to the city's "blue zone" lifestyle-improving and lifespan-extending ability to confer emotional health on its residents. This community of some 45,000 residents displays an ambience that is creative, productive, informal, convivial, focused, financially secure, and altruistic. Though older than the United States, it has a youthful aspect—doubtless partly because it has been a college town for over a century now.

Central San Luis Obispo contains many figurative footprints, starting when Native Americans first occupied the area, perhaps 12,000 years ago. Traces of subsequent time-layered occupancies are visible in numerous places if one knows where to look. Especially rich in the city's settlement history are sites connected with its creeks, buildings, and roads. All were greatly changed over the past two and a half centuries by the succession of people who displaced the area's first long-term inhabitants, the Chumash, whose hunter-gatherer culture did little to alter the natural setting. The region then experienced continuous and ever-accelerating technological introductions that pushed nature into the background of people's lives.

The thriving yet low-key city is located in the midst of a fast-growing county, with strong roots in agriculture and animal husbandry, as well as some long-established industries. It also benefits from tourism attracted to its many beautiful surrounding landscapes. As in cityscapes elsewhere, physical reminders of the past exist in the central city. Its history is visible in its aged mission's proximity to



*Mission San Luis Obispo today. Poorly maintained after being secularized in 1834s, then inappropriately remodeled, it was restored to its earlier appearance a century later.
Photo: <http://www.slocounty.com>.*

the main creek; in the purpose, design, and construction of old public and private buildings preserved or restored; in the arrangements of its thoroughfares; and in names given to a variety of geographic features in and around the city.

The city's history can also be viewed in concentrated forms. Next to its admirable Mission Plaza are both the old San Luis Obispo Mission, whose site dates back to 1772, and the San Luis Obispo County History Center and Museum, lodged in the former Carnegie Library building, built in 1905. Both have impressive collections that display artifacts, documents, artwork, and photographs—all supplying evidence of the city's past appearances and the everyday lives of the people who lived here at very different times. Both locations provide tour docents, but virtual tours and podcasts are also offered on up-to-date websites.

Visitors to San Luis Obispo will encounter a variety of viewsheds—both manmade and natural. Though little of the truly natural setting remains within its boundaries, the city is surrounded by hidden indicators of the prehistoric landscape, before Europeans invaded this region. In the city's outskirts, oak trees still abound in meadows, and sycamores and willows grow next to natural creeks that have yet to be walled in or covered over, or channeled through underground culverts. Most prominent in the northeast are the two cone-shaped volcanic *morros* (Spanish for "round hill" or "promontory")—Bishop Peak and Cerro San Luis Obispo. Looming up like realm protectors, they were formed some 20 million years ago, along with over a half-dozen other "sisters" in the county, with the one at Morro Bay best known.

The City as Creek

Between the 16th and the mid-18th centuries the coast of what is now San Luis Obispo County was occasionally



San Luis Obispo County History Center and Museum. It began as a Carnegie Library in 1905, and was built of brick, yellow sandstone, and blue granite. Photo: Jacqueline Williams.

seen, roughly mapped, and partly named by Spanish navigators, and a few times briefly visited by mariners while seeking fresh supplies. But the land itself wasn't explored until the start of colonizing Alta California in 1769. The first overland expedition, attempting to locate Monterey Bay, went northward from San Diego. Led by Gaspar de Portolá, the troop consisted of over 60 men (including two priests and several Native Americans) and about 200 supply-laden horses and mules. To avoid the steep coastline north of present-day San Simeon, in mid-September they went eastward through a steep canyon in the Santa Lucia Mountains that led to the Salinas River and its wide valley. Afterwards, travelers would use the 1,500-foot Cuesta Pass and cross through the hospitable Los Osos and San Luis Obispo valleys.

Three years later, on September 1, 1772, Fr. Junípero Serra founded Mission San Luis Obispo de Tolosa, naming it after the canonized 13th-century bishop of the French town of Toulouse. It was the fifth mission in the chain of those in Alta California that eventually would number 21. Serra was *Padre-Presidente* in the combined efforts of Spain's rulers and the Catholic Church's Franciscan Order to occupy the territory claimed by Spain several centuries earlier. The soldiers would impress and subdue the natives while the priests worked at converting them to Christianity and teaching them trades useful for the mission's purposes.

The site Serra chose for this new mission was next to a sizable creek that flowed through Cuesta Canyon in the Santa Lucia Mountains, eventually spilling into the Pacific Ocean at Avila. This creek acquired the mission's name: Arroyo de San Luis Obispo. (An *arroyo* is a stream that in a Mediterranean climate, such as prevails in much of California, usually ceases flowing during the dry season.) Due to its central location, the mission became a convenient stopping place for people traveling back and forth between settlements in the south and those established in the north. This route, known as El Camino Real, or the royal high-

way, would eventually connect the main Spanish settlements in California (finally to be part of US-101).

At times the San Luis Creek overflowed its banks, causing the mission quarters to be moved several times to higher ground. Its benefits, though, along with other positive environmental factors, were reported by Padre Francisco Palóu, Serra's successor:

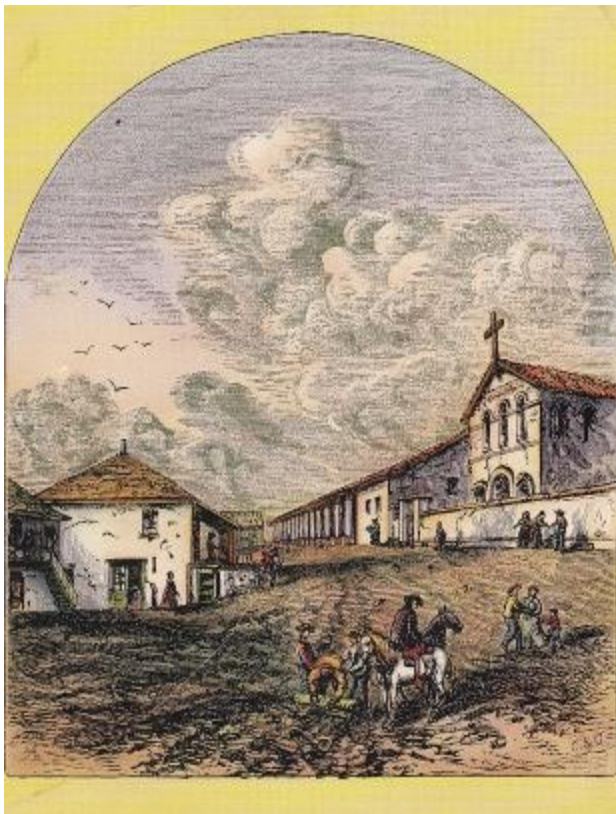
This Mission of San Luis Obispo de Tolosa is situated upon a slight eminence along the side of which runs a creek with sufficient water for domestic purposes, and for irrigating the land which lies within sight. This produces abundant crops, not only for the maintenance of all the Christian Indians,

but also for the subsistence of the presidios.... The fertility of the soil is such that, no matter what kind of seed is planted, an abundant harvest is secured....The climate of Mission San Luis Obispo is very healthy, the winter being cold, and the summer, warm, although not excessively so (*Missions and Missionaries of California*, Enghardt).

As the mission settlement's activities expanded, so did creek usage. Mission neophytes built reservoirs upstream on the San Luis and Stenner creeks and an aqueduct, to provide a reliable water supply. (*Neophytus* in Church Latin, or *neófito* in Spanish, means "new plant," or seedling.) Wells were dug across the creek, and a foot-bridge built to give the priests and workers quick access to clean water, and to the kitchen garden, orchard, grain field, and vineyard that supplied the mission's basic

foods along with grapes for making Communion wine.

During the period after 1822, when Mexico replaced Spain in governing California, civilians built homes in the pueblo close to the mission. The settlement kept growing after 1834, when the missions were secularized. San Luis Obispo mission's agricultural and craft activities were closed down, and its extensive land holdings were given out as land grants. In 1848 the Gold Rush began soon after the US took over Alta California, and some of the people who arrived with that great population influx later ended up in San Luis Obispo. When statehood was quickly achieved in 1850, San Luis Obispo, chosen as the county



Mission San Luis Obispo in the mid-1800s. The original lithograph appeared in Overland Monthly in 1871, and in hand-tinted form was on the cover of A Vast Pastoral Domain: San Luis Obispo in the 1870s (Santa Barbara: Library Associates, 1993).

(Continued on page 4.)

seat, gave its name to the county. In 1856 it was incorporated as a town, and 20 years later designated as a city.

San Luis Obispo's several creeks, bridged over in places, had provided a framework for the town's early housing and gardens. Many residents, disrespectful of the creeks and ignoring both sanitation and aesthetic considerations, used them as handy places for dumping garbage and even sewage, with outhouses emptying out their contents into them. Although the hospital, to keep diseases away, was located several blocks up Marsh Street from the heart of town, its effluents too were discharged into that very same San Luis Creek. The prevailing stench finally spurred protest articles in the local newspaper, motivating a campaign for better hygienic habits.

In 1890 San Luis Creek was lined for several blocks with high granite walls quarried from Bishop Peak. City developers, with an eye to commercial opportunity on the banks opposite the mission, soon bridged these walls, then built right over the creek itself. Increasingly, this and other naturally flowing systems got confined in underground passageways, or at least had their sometimes unruly behavior curbed within solid banks of stone or concrete. It's often difficult to know what the city's creeks once looked like—or even where they are—except by studying the evolution of a city through historic maps. The creation of the Mission Plaza area started in the 1960s restored at least some of El Arroyo de San Luis, making it easy to sit or walk alongside it.

***The City as Soil and Plants:
Made First from Its Natural Elements***

Like the mission-building padres elsewhere, the two stationed at the San Luis Obispo Mission worked at baptizing and converting the local, mostly amiable Chumash, who were fascinated with rituals and metal tools, and were both terrified and impressed by the soldiers' firearms and horses. The priests were equally set on teaching neophytes living at the mission the labors and crafts essential to a successful European-style settlement. They knew how to grow European plant foods from seeds or cuttings, soil, and water, and they conveniently could use materials from the surroundings to create the mission premises.

Initially the padres, along with the small group of soldiers assigned to protect and help them, built a temporary chapel and shelters. Like the neophyte natives whose labor

they enlisted, they used tree limbs and branches for structures that were thatched with the creekside's reeds and *tules* (bulrushes). Later more permanent buildings were erected by the local Chumash, who developed good construction skills and used iron tools supplied by the padres. Posts and roof beams were made by cutting down and trimming trees with axes, adzes, and saws. Large round arroyo stones, packed into a mud-filled trench, became wall foundations, with the walls themselves made with adobe bricks—a combination of local clay soil, sand, and plant material. The thatched roofs were eventually replaced with tiles made at the site. All the early building materials

therefore originated from local sources. As more natives came to live in the mission complex, the buildings—chapel, workshops, kitchen, dormitories—took permanent forms and were linked together in an L-shaped configuration around a central courtyard. (All other California missions had an enclosed one.)

What happened later, as a town slowly formed around the mission, expanded upon what those first colonists had done to change the natural environment. During the Rancho period, San Luis Obispo became a convenient place

to conduct business and socialize, so rancho families often kept second homes there. After 1850, when California became an American state, the fledgling town grew apace, spreading out farther from the mission to accommodate new settlers who sought their fortunes in a widening variety of commercial ventures—and often succeeded.

Adobe houses and stores, first built along Higuera Street, branched out from there. For several decades, walls made of adobe bricks were still the best and cheapest material for constructing a house. Support beams and rafters for these adobes were initially hand-hewn from local trees, but as trees became scarce, bringing lumber in on wagons from distant places was difficult and costly. The work was usually done by the local Chumash—until periodic epidemics killed many of them. That long-enduring local labor force was then replaced by Chinese immigrants, who worked diligently in the county in quarries and mines, and on



*San Luis Creek near Broad Street, before its beautification and incorporation into the new Mission Plaza area.
Courtesy, History Center of San Luis Obispo County.*

City as Landscape (continued)

building piers, creating tunnels and bridges, and laying down railroad tracks—the new transportation systems that enabled the importing of other building materials.

In a landscape history of San Luis Obispo evidence of long-expired occupancies, though seemingly hidden, can still be rewardingly revealed. Although the modern city bears little resemblance to the mid-19th century frontier settlement, fortunately a number of old buildings have been preserved, including some adobe-walled houses—along with the mission that launched this very cityscape.

Typical of most cities, many of San Luis Obispo's historic houses are still known by the family name of their first owners, such as the Shipsey and Righetti houses in the Mill Street Historic District.

Walter Murray, a prominent attorney and judge, in the mid-1850s bought an adobe house on a large parcel of land next to the creek, where he and his wife lived for many years. He used the front room as his office. A co-founder of the San Luis Obispo *Tribune*, he printed the newspaper's first editions on a printing press located in his front parlor. Only a small portion of the Murray Adobe remains.

The Dallidet Adobe, first constructed in 1856, was enlarged and improved by French immigrant Pierre Dallidet. Once the lumber industry and sawmill became established in town, Dallidet, a carpenter by trade, made wood frame and plank additions to the original adobe, using the newly available materials. The house has a wine cellar, possibly unique at the time—quite appropriate, of course, for a Frenchman. Almost immediately after purchasing his town lot, Dallidet had begun planting his vineyard, which abutted the old mission vineyard. After grafting cuttings from better *Vitis vinifera* varieties onto Mission grape rootstock, he became the region's first commercial winemaker.

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*The remnant of the historic Murray Adobe, next to Mission Plaza.
Photo: Christy O'Hara.*



*The Dallidet Adobe, owned by the History Center of San Luis Obispo County, is a period museum and a popular venue for social events.
Photo: Christy O'Hara.*

Adobe: California's First Basic Building Block

This craft originated some 10,000 years ago in the Near East. The Moors brought it to 8th-century Spain, where the Arabic word *atob* became *adobe*. At the missions, the no-cost, low-tech building material was made by neophytes, who dug a pit, filled it with chunks of clay soil that were softened with water, then trod upon to produce a smooth wet mud, to which sand and chopped straw or weeds were added. The moist conglomeration, set in wooden forms measuring about 4x11x22 inches, soon solidified enough to be removed and set out to bake in the hot sun; within a month the blocks could be stacked up to form a wall. (As many as 5,000 bricks might go into building a one-room, single-story structure; in a large mission chapel, over 40,000.) White lime plaster, made from pulverized, fire-roasted seashells and water, was spread over the inner and outer sides of the walls, giving a smooth and clean appearance while protecting them from moisture. The roofing material of woven plant materials, apt to leak during rainstorms, was flammable. After three disastrous fires—one ignited by a flaming arrow shot into the mission roof by hostile natives—the friars at Mission San Luis Obispo tried making clay tiles for permanent, fireproof roofs. This terra-cotta technique involved lining handmade semi-cylindrical molds with damp clay, which when hardened was removed and kiln-baked. After the trial experiment succeeded, the other California missions began this on-site manufacture of roof tiles, a key feature of Spanish-style architecture.

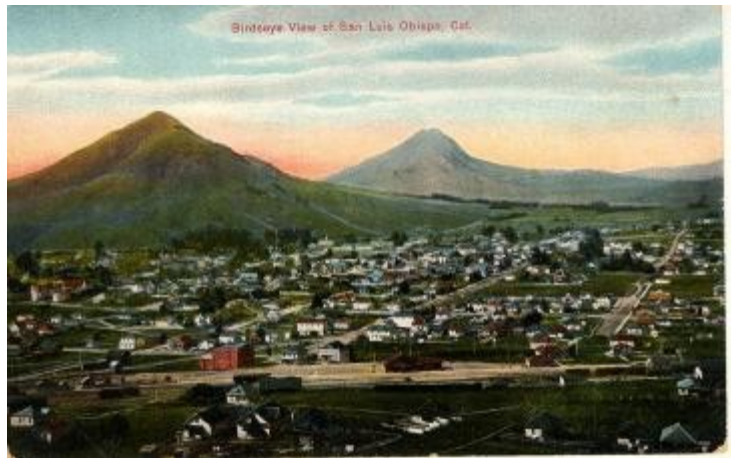
Adobes are high-maintenance structures, particularly in regions where rainfall and moist air prevail, even if only part of the year. Regularly applying plaster, particularly on the outside, is crucial in sealing the walls. As rainwater cascades down or even just moisture prevails, the adobe bricks soften and eventually crumble. After the California missions were secularized in the mid-1830s, they invariably suffered from neglect. The San Luis Obispo Mission fared better than many other missions because it was used as a parish church (with the priests paying rent to civil authorities). In the late 19th century, when returned to Church ownership, the building was covered with clapboard siding to protect its adobe walls, and a New England-style steeple surmounted the chapel. In the 1930s, when large-scale efforts began rescuing all 21 missions, this one in San Luis Obispo regained much of its former appearance.

City as Landscape (continued)

Dr. W.W. Hays, one of the town's first doctors, had come to improve his health after serving as an army surgeon. Eventually he established the San Luis Obispo County General Hospital. His 1850s adobe house on Monterey Street that he acquired in 1868 is still there. Though the outside is covered with wood siding, one can still see the original adobe bricks from the inside. Known today as the Hays, Latimer, Leitcher Adobe, this house has attractive landscaping. Ron Vargas, after marrying a Leitcher daughter, maintained the original luxurious gardens while adding new and unusual plants. The wisteria vine over the driveway is more than a hundred years old. The garden, which continues giving pleasure to those who walk by, is under the care of the current owner, a member of the Horticulture Department at Cal Poly San Luis Obispo.

Adobe-walled structures aren't the only buildings in the city to be cherished as historic sites, since numerous ones dating back to the late 19th and early 20th centuries have been well preserved and are still in use as businesses (stores, restaurants, offices) and as residences, as tours around the city's older parts well demonstrate.

When a long pier was built along the nearby coast at Port Harford (Avila), enabling steamships to dock there with cargoes, wood for building purposes could be transported inland by the Pacific Coast Railway, whose narrow-gauge tracks came into the city in 1876. Wood-framed Victorian-era houses and larger buildings became more common, and wood and even metal siding was often used to protect old adobe walls. Meanwhile, as more roads were



Colored postcard with view of San Luis Obispo, c. 1949, showing grid pattern of its streets. Courtesy, History Center of San Luis Obispo County.

cut into the Santa Lucia Mountains, timber there could be felled and transported to San Luis Obispo, which had finally acquired its own sawmill.

As the end of the 19th century approached, other construction materials became available and were increasingly used. A local brickyard was started by Chinese entrepreneur Ah Louis—job contractor for numerous mining, pier- and road-building, and other construction projects in and around the county. He was also storekeeper, banker, and counselor to the Chinese community of about 2,000 residents in San Luis Obispo. With a local source now available for bricks, brick buildings took the place of adobe ones. Granite, sandstone, and other rock materials, quarried at Bishop Peak and elsewhere (including Morro Rock) were all used for civic and commercial establishments, giving them a permanent and regional look. (Since the last major earthquake in 2002, all the city's masonry buildings must now be seismically retrofitted.)

Wood, much used as a construction material, was relatively lightweight, transportable, and adaptable, less costly and faster to build with than the more durable brick and rock. Around the turn of the century, the region's most significant wooden buildings were the large and luxurious hotels intended to impress both local residents and visitors, who first arrived in San Luis Obispo mostly by stagecoach, then after 1894 via the Southern Pacific train. But in an era when rooms were still heated by fireplaces and interior lighting was supplied by candles and oil lamps, later by gas lamps, the splendid hotels in town, such as the Andrews and Ramona ones, were doomed to burn down.

San Luis Obispo became the site of the nation's first hostelry to be called a motel: the Spanish Revival-style Milestone Motel Inn, opened in 1925 on Monterey Street. To alert road-weary motorists to its identity, a neon sign alternately flashed "Ho-tel" and "Mo-tel." The present motel owner, Apple Farm Inn, reportedly plans to remodel



Ah Louis built this multipurpose building in 1885, at 800 Palm St., to serve the Chinese community, using bricks from the brickyard he had started in town. The store is now a gift shop. The sketch is from *An Uncommon Guide to San Luis Obispo*, Padre Press, 1977.

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Enduring Names

Many geographic names in San Luis Obispo County have histories behind them. It's believed that Bishop (or Bishop's) Peak got its name because it resembled the pointed miter headdress of bishops. Cerro Romualdo, another *morro* near the city, was named after La Huerta de Romualdo (referring to the kitchen garden of Romualdo, the only Native American given a land grant within the county). Pismo Beach took its name from a rancho that used the Chumash word *pismu* for tar or asphalt. Once copious in the area, it had been used by the Chumash for caulking baskets and boats and later mined for paving streets, and was also mined to be used in spreading on streets and generating gas. (In Spanish, it's known as *brea*.)

A number of street and place names reflect either the original Spanish names (or their translations into English) given to natural features in the region; or the names of settlers, beginning with Hispanic ones. Some names too are derived from the natives' place names. For the most part San Luis Obispo place names have avoided the often ungrammatical and misspelled Spanish-appearing names that elsewhere in the state reflect the nostalgic romanticism for the Rancho period—a craze that began in the late 19th century, inspired in part by the highly popular novel *Ramona*, and is still perpetuated by real estate promoters.

The names of some streets and other places in the city itself allude to water. Marsh Street once ran beside a marsh. Reservoir Canyon is named for the town's first reservoir. Dairy Creek ran through two dairy farms, and Mill Street was the location of a water-powered grist mill. Some streets were visual landscape assessments. Terrace Hill was terraced to control erosion in a subdivision started for railroad employees. Tank Farm Road led to an early oil tank farm. Palm Street was named to honor the last of five originally planted palm trees to survive into the 20th century. But Bridge Street did not cross a bridge; it was named for the Bailey Bridge Company located on that street. Other street names were directional. Monterey—formerly Mission Street because it went past the mission as a small section of El Camino Real—was the road leading to Monterey. And Chorro Street was the route to the Chorro Valley, also the name of a rancho. (*Chorro* means stream.) Santa Rosa Street led to the Santa Rosa Valley. Garden Street originated as the path the friars took after crossing the “priests' bridge” to get to the area where their food crops and wine grapes were grown.

Many of the city's street names commemorate past residents. Higuera, the quintessential main street, is named for the Higuera family, whose founding father arrived in California in 1774 from Mexico with the De Anza Expedition and settled down in the new pueblo of San José. Third-generation Tomás B. Higuera came to San Luis Obispo in 1855 with his wife and 15 children; their descendants still live locally. Dana Street took its name from the Dana family, whose prolific *paterfamilias*, William, owned Rancho Nipomo and also built a big two-story adobe in town, La Casa Grande, that in later years served as store, hotel and saloon, and even a courthouse. Pacific Street was named after a local Chumash man, Don Pacifico—not the nearby ocean.

When fast-moving automobiles and trucks replaced oxen- and mule-pulled wagons and horse-drawn coaches, main roads sometimes became highways, as when US-101 was developed in the 1920s to connect the northern and southern ends of the state. Much of the time it conveniently used sections of the old El Camino Real, so within the city it followed Monterey Street, running right past the old mission. Elderly residents tell stories about trucks that lost control of their brakes coming down the steep Cuesta Grade at the north end of town. In the 1950s, to save people from calamities, the new 101 freeway was built *around* the city center, not through it.

And, of course, there's the mission whose name was extended first to the pueblo, then to a town, and finally to the city. It still occupies the settlement's very heart, honored there at Mission Plaza.

—Sharon Crawford



Left: The landscape around San Luis Obispo as it probably looked when only the local Chumash gave it names. Photo: www.slocity.org/photogallery.asp. Right: San Luis Obispo Creek flowing through the center of town, after being widened and beautified following the passage of the General Plan in the mid-1960s. Photo: <http://www.slocity.org/photogallery.asp>.

the remaining remnant because of its historic value.

Another famous California motel is also here—the Madonna Inn. Built near US-101 between 1958 and 1969 by Alex and Phyllis Madonna, it delights tourists with its flamboyant “Hansel-and-Gretel-style” architecture, novel fountains, and decorations sporting a shocking-pink décor.

The City as Roads

Because San Luis Obispo occupied a fairly wide valley area, its first roads and streets developed without much effort. As traffic with animals and wagons passed frequently over them, the dirt compacted in the out-of-town routes, particularly El Camino Real, and in streets within the settlement itself, which grew both wider and longer as more fields and buildings were extended well beyond the mission. The number of streets and the movement over them also expanded.

After 1850 a typical American grid pattern was implemented, set down parallel or perpendicular to the main thoroughfare, originally El Camino Real and now Monterey. Horse-drawn carriages and stagecoaches replaced the Hispanic period’s lumbering old *carretas*, whose two wheels were fashioned from thick, rounded tree-trunk slices. Asphalt mined in the county began to be set down as paving to reduce alternating problems with dust and mud. A horse-drawn streetcar line was even introduced in town. Then in the early years of the 20th century the first automobiles and trucks arrived with their gasoline-powered, internal-combustion engines.

The steam engine that had launched the Industrial Revolution in Europe and the US in the late 18th century didn’t arrive in California for almost a century. By the late 1850s, steamships began docking at San Luis Obispo County’s new piers. Steam-powered locomotives and the steel railroad tracks on which they ran finally came to California, which by 1869 was connected with the East

Coast. For a quarter-century more, though, San Luis Obispo had no direct railway route to the state’s major metropolitan areas, San Francisco and Los Angeles. In 1894, at last, the Southern Pacific came into town, connecting the city with the San Francisco Bay area. In 1901 the SP’s coastal link with LA was completed.

Other forms of modern technological innovation arrived in California in the latter part of the 19th century as the city’s roads and streets inevitably became passageways for various utilities. Telegraph poles were planted to hold wires relaying Morse code messages across great distances. Then came telephone wires transmitting voices and power lines carrying electrical current. Other utilities took underground routes below streets: fresh water flowing down in pipes from reservoirs, while other pipes took away sewage. Pipes also sent gas (first made from local coal and asphalt) to provide both lighting and fuel.

Early settlers if revisiting their former dwelling place might see that today’s highways, roads, and streets often follow the historic routes, but are much wider—no longer alternately muddy or dusty, and now traversed by amazing and swift machines. Here and there, too, the old-timers would spot buildings they once knew. Their walls and roof tiles were originally made long ago from the soil and trees of San Luis Obispo County—and have been carefully preserved, restored, or replicated in this evolution from nature’s environment into a robust and ever-growing 21st-century metropolis that definitely intends to thrive.

Creating Mission Plaza

From the days of the San Luis Obispo Mission onward, the wide expanse of land in front of it was the gathering place for the community—initially mostly neophytes in colorful garb who took part in holy day celebrations. Later, various secular celebrations took place there, such as horse racing, bull-and-bear contests, and fandangos.

After secularization, although the mission chapel remained as the parish church, the entire premises and its surroundings weren’t well maintained. Later in the 19th century protective wood paneling wholly covered the adobe walls. After the chapel’s tile roof collapsed, it was replaced by an architecturally inappropriate Protestant-style steeple, which housed the old bronze bells. The mission looked nothing at all like its former self, and though it was better shielded from the elements, fires often occurred from spontaneous combustion within the walls.

In the late 1920s efforts mounted to restore all 21 missions eventually to their former appearances at their prime, and William Randolph Hearst donated generously to restore Mission San Luis Obispo. By the mid-1930s it had reclaimed much of its earlier appearance, which included its unique 12 cylindrical colonnades with square bases.



Mission Plaza area in front of the San Luis Obispo Mission, with pool and fountain. Sculpture of bears and a young Chumash girl by Paula Zima. Photo: Jacquoline Williams.



*The paved Mission Plaza area in front of the San Luis Obispo Mission, facing eastward, occupying what was once part of Monterey Street.
Photo: Jacquoline Williams.*

During the 1940s some residents, distressed by the dilapidated area around the mission, joined the San Luis Obispo Soroptimist Club in an effort to start revamping the civic core. Another issue was a dangerous jog at Monterey and Chorro Streets. A City Council-appointed committee recommended acquiring the 1870s-built Mission Garage, which stood right at that uneven corner. In 1953 this key property was hit by an out-of-control egg truck racing down through town from the steep Cuesta Grade, finally coming to a halt inside the old building. Declared unsafe, it was demolished, and for the first time in nearly a century the city's main creek became visible in the downtown area, and the mountain range could again be seen from the corner—vistas that energized civic beautification aspirations.

The first known plan advanced on the long and contentious road to creating the city's much-praised Mission Plaza came about in 1950, when Margaret Maxwell, an art teacher at San Luis Obispo Jr. College, assigned her class a project on planned growth of the city—at the time with a population of about 14,000. Two students, Pete Colombo and Ray Juarez, after surveying the site, developed a plan

for a plaza in front of the mission—thereby linking the natural and historic features now so frequently enjoyed by local residents and visitors. George Hasslein, then head of the Architectural Engineering Department at Cal Poly, announced a plaza design contest. In March of 1955 James A. Zisch was awarded \$75 for his plan, which included closing Monterey Street from Chorro to Broad Streets, landscaping the creek's south side behind the business buildings, and adding a fountain in front of the mission. A month later, the City Council's Finance Committee voted to acquire the Mission Garage property as part of the newly proposed Mission Plaza project, with a provision that allowed its use for five years as a parking space, after which it would join the Mission Plaza project.

By the following year, retreating from this promise, the City Council declared its intention to pave over the creek to provide additional parking. The ensuing public furor caused the Council to lease the land for creating a new public park—the first important step toward establishing Mission Plaza. However, for five more years continu-

(Concluded on page 10.)



*The old "Priests' Bridge" that crossed the creek near the mission was replaced during the construction of Mission Plaza.
Photo above: Courtesy, History Center of San Luis Obispo County.
Photo below: Jacquolyn Williams.*



City as Landscape (concluded)

ous and contentious debates over the proposed plaza delayed a final decision. But citizen groups didn't give up, especially after the Council again proposed parking on a realigned Monterey Street. A month after a new Mission Gardens Association was formed in 1961, the City adopted the first comprehensive General Plan, as recommended by the Planning Commission. Its major objective was "To protect and preserve natural amenities: scenic hills, creeks, view areas, and other open space, by indicating areas which are to be withheld from private development." Since the creek system was to become a future park, its restoration was the first development phase of Mission Plaza.

As plans for developing the Plaza itself took shape, Richard B. Taylor was hired as landscape architect in 1968. Two blocks of Monterey Street were closed off between Chorro and Broad streets to create a pedestrians-only space. The mission premises were included, as well as a beautified section of the widened creek, where people could stroll on paths and cross over several new bridges to shops and restaurants on the other side.

This well-groomed public park, which almost didn't happen, opened in 1970 and quickly proved a boon to the business community. Lush trees, shrubs, and flowerbeds contribute year-round live color. A small amphitheater serves as an entertainment center. The Plaza is frequently occupied by community art projects, concerts, book fairs, bike races, and culinary and wine-tasting events. For over

40 years now it has been the joy of the townspeople of San Luis Obispo and a magnet for tourists.

San Luis Obispo's Cityscape Today

The historic site and environment-preserving movement activated in mid-20th century has been deeply rooted in the city, partly due to activism among the Cal Poly faculty members and students, who envisaged, insisted upon, and then took part in Mission Plaza's creation—making it a fine model for other cities to emulate.

Developing all the features of Mission Plaza was done in several stages over the years, dependent upon local fundraising efforts. (Though applied for, no grants were ever received.) Its naysayers were greatly surprised by the commercial success of this community enterprise that eliminated two blocks of the city's busiest street.

San Luis Creek areas long removed from people's full enjoyment are now open, with cafés along their edges and outdoor seating at a premium. An annual Creek Day is held every September to keep the waterway clean and beautiful. Nature-inspired artworks line the creek pathways, and at the right time of year you might even see a few young steelhead in the water. Green belts surrounding the city maintain a slow growth pattern. Viewsheds of the nearby mountains are maintained in policy. San Luis Obispo's ever-evolving landscape and cityscape continue to be sources of inspiration to residents and civic organizations—just as they were in the past.



Many community celebrations, art projects, and outdoor concerts take place at Mission Plaza throughout the year. Courtesy, San Luis Obispo Chamber of Commerce. Both photos: David E. Garth.

Acknowledgments: Thank you to Astrid Gallagher, Sharon Crawford, Jacqueline Williams, Betsy and Luther Bertrando, and Erin Newman for their research and contributions to this essay.

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The Dana Adobe in a Rancho Setting

Christy Edstrom O'Hara

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The eastward view from Casa de Dana that was once part of the vast Rancho Nipomo. These expanses of grassland provided sustenance for thousands of cattle and sheep, then was converted solely to agricultural use in the late 19th century. Photo: Christy O'Hara.

While California has many remaining adobes from its notable Rancho era, few maintain the historic viewsheds from that era as well as the site for the Dana Adobe in Nipomo. This old *casa* and its surrounds tell a story of past land use, while giving visitors a glimpse of the 19th-century landscape as seen by those who lived and worked on the ranch. Located in southern San Luis Obispo County, the modern setting's 45 acres are all that remain of the original rancho spread of some 38,000 acres. The large 1½-story adobe, begun in 1841 and enlarged over the following decade, sits high on a plateau and looks out onto 100 acres of grassland at the base of the Temattate Ridge's foothills and Nipomo Creek.

The Rancho Period in San Luis Obispo County

In 1822, after Mexico declared its independence from Spain and took Alta California as its own territory, the glory years of the Rancho period were about to begin. Prior to that time about 50 land grants of variable sizes had been given to Hispanic soldiers as a reward for their services and to induce them to settle the area. But many of the pasture and arable lands within a hundred miles of the coast and located between San Diego and the present Sonoma and Napa counties had already been appropriated by

the 21 Franciscan missions established between 1769 and 1823. For years, the colonists, many now of the second and third generations, had increasingly demanded the right to own and occupy these extensive lands.

In 1832 the missions began to be secularized, with their properties removed from Church control, and a succession of governors invited land ownership applications. Altogether, some 600 new land grants were given to resident-citizens of this Mexican outpost—including some Americans who had settled there, become Catholics, and married within prominent Hispanic families. A few grants were given to Native American converts who had lived and worked at the missions or on their outlying lands.

During the decade following secularization, in the area now within San Luis Obispo County, nearly 500,000 acres previously controlled by the two local missions, San Luis Obispo and San Miguel Arcángel in the northeast, were distributed to a number of citizens who gave their properties Native American or Spanish names, such as Pismo, Los Osos, Paso de Robles, and San Simeon. The *ranchero* families, often taking over mission fields and herds, began to profit from livestock and agricultural products, mostly shipped to other settlements and foreign ports. Particularly

(Continued on page 12)

valuable were the hides (used for leather products) and tallow (for making soaps and candles), rendered from the periodic *matanzas* (cattle slaughters), and also wool from sheep herds. This bonanza ushered in a period of unprecedented prosperity. Formerly outback ranchos invited extended social visits from relatives and friends, involving lavish hospitality, and profits from the cattle trade were often lavishly spent on stylish clothing, jewelry, and elegant household furnishings, or else gambled away.

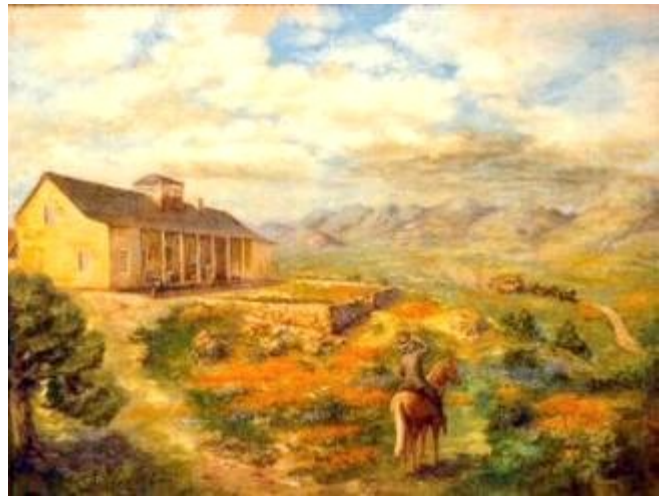
William G. Dana and Rancho Nipomo

A native of Boston, William Goodwin Dana (1797–1858) first came to Alta California as a crewman, then shipmaster, on American merchant ships sailing back and forth between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, exchanging cargos among ports in Massachusetts, the Orient, and California. In 1825 he settled in Santa Barbara as a merchant dealing in both imports and exports. He quickly became socially and politically active in the community. He also took charge of constructing the first ship in California, in nearby Goleta (the Spanish word for schooner). In 1828 Dana converted to Catholicism, applied for Mexican citizenship, and married Maria Josefa Carrillo, a member of a prominent Californio family. As they started their family they waited for William (“Don Guillermo”) to qualify to receive a land grant from the governor.



*Capt. William G. Dana. His cousin was Richard Henry Dana, whose Two Years Before the Mast portrayed Alta California's coastal settlements in the mid-1830s.
Courtesy, Dana Adobe Nipomo Amigos.*

In 1835 Dana applied for a grant giving him the allowable total of one square league, choosing a large piece of ranchland between the Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo Missions. His drawing of the site was a simple graphic explaining its relationship to the mountains and the creek.



*Romantic painting of the Dana Adobe by Frances Jennings, 1928.
Courtesy, Nipomo Women's Group.*

After a two-year wait, Dana was given some 38,000 acres on which he would establish his Rancho Nipomo—its name coming from the Chumash word *nee-poh-mah* for “foot of the hill.” At that time the area around the rancho mainly consisted of vast stretches of untamed land occupied by scattered Native American groups. More distant were a few pueblos with military garrisons, like San Luis Obispo. For a time Maria Josefa and the young Dana children stayed in Santa Barbara—as the new rancho “was practically in wild land with the *montes*, or thickets, harboring all sorts of wild animals,” William Dana’s son Juan Francisco recalled many years later.¹ But Dana wanted his growing family to join him as he developed the land’s potential, and was planning for all his sons to eventually help him. (Eventually his wife gave birth to 21 children; eight, however, died in childhood.)

Aided by Chumash workers—whom he paid fairly, unlike many other rancheros—William began building the adobe home that would become Casa de Dana. Since little lumber was available for rafters and other woodwork, Dana brought it in on two-wheeled ox-carts, sending his *carretas* to Cambria, some 50 miles away, or into the mountains near the Santa Inés Mission. Adobe bricks were made on site. “Our Casa was not all built at one time as homes are today but additions were made from time to time,” Juan Francisco said, describing it this way:

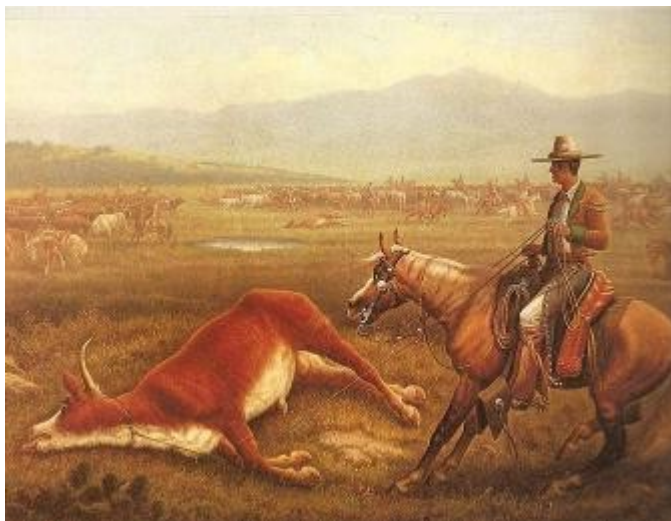
Originally, the house had only four rooms, all on one story but as the family grew in numbers, more rooms were added until the poor house was too long for its width.

So sidewings were added until the house took a shape of an open E facing the west, with a patio in the center. Finally, we had fourteen rooms.... Not a single nail was used in the building of our home. There was very little iron in California for building use then. Rawhide thongs and morticing were used instead. Many people have said that the original roof was tile but they are wrong. Brea, or tar as it is called now, was used by all the rancheros.

In the early 1850s Dana would add his casa's most distinctive architectural feature: a half-story cupola, similar to those on houses in his New England childhood, but also recalling the sailors' crow's nest. One of the many Danas could invariably be found in that cupola, looking out over the wide, unfenced lands. By then, attacks from hostile natives were no longer feared, but the post-Gold Rush era had plenty of livestock rustlers and gangs of murderous bandits. So Juan Francisco remembered how he had often seen his father go up into that cupola—"with his spyglass that he had used on his voyages to far lands—now he used it to look for cattle thieves!" (99).

Often, too, the Danas in the cupola would watch for people approaching this halfway spot between two distant towns. When relatives and friends arrived, the hospitality proffered at Casa de Dana might go on for days. And as for total strangers en route to the north or south, they too were welcomed, fed, and given a place to bed down if needed.

By then, California had become the 31st state. William Dana's original nationality and English-speaking ability proved advantageous, in contrast to the adverse experiences of many other rancheros who spoke only Spanish.



Period painting of a vaquero roping cattle on an 1830s rancho. From *The Old West—Cowboys*, a Time-Life Book. Public domain.

Dana's Manufacturing and Production

From the beginning of William Dana's ownership, Rancho Nipomo was a cattle ranch, producing hides and tallow as a major industry. Additionally, Dana, like other energetic and ambitious *Yanquis* who settled in different regions of Alta California, had various entrepreneurial and manufacturing skills that boosted his success and benefited his family as well as neighboring ranchos and communities. Expanding his rancho's range of activities, he added sheep and 14,000 acres of wheat and other grains to the cattle.

Dana supplied other ranchos with flour, soap, candles, brandy, lard, sugar, chocolate, and cornmeal. He stored and sold clothing and furniture, had looms for weaving cloth, and a blacksmith shop that produced farm tools. There was also a woodshop, and Dana knew carpentry. Since he had learned much about wood during his merchant days, much of the rancho's furniture was made of sandalwood, mahogany, and other precious woods. He obtained most of the raw materials he wanted from ships that dropped off goods at his warehouse at Cave Landing (now Port San Luis). With all of his products and resources, he started his own trading stores at both his Casa de Dana at his ranch and La Casa Grande, the two-story adobe he built in San Luis Obispo—for some years the largest building in town, where it served as both a hotel and courthouse, while William took an active role in certain civic duties until health problems sidelined him.

The Gold Rush and Its Aftermath

The Rancho period in California began to change soon after the 1847 takeover of the territory by the United States, when news spread rapidly of the discovery of gold along the American River and Argonauts from near and far headed for California. Many years later, William Dana's son Don Juan Francisco would vividly recall the Gold Rush days in 1849, when large numbers of Sonorans passed through Rancho Nipomo on their way to the mines, since for many years the main north-south road went right by Casa de Dana, eventually becoming a much-traveled stagecoach and mail route. (When US-101 was built, though, it bypassed it.) The Mexicans often asked for milk to cook with their supply of corn meal into a gruel. Camping at the creek's edge below the ranch house, they gathered around a campfire to sing their plaintive *canciones*.

Prior to 1848, cattles' value resided primarily in tallow and hides. (The fresh meat was eaten or preserved as jerky. Milk products weren't popular with the Hispanic population.) The Gold Rush, however, changed cattle ranching. It "marked the beginning of a spectacular cattle boom [and an] abrupt shift from the Hispanic pastoral to single-purpose American entrepreneurship."² The extreme population growth in 1849 created an enormous and ever-expanding demand for beef. Cattle prices responded, altering the entrenched culture of the Californios. The local newspaper described the effect on Rancho Nipomo:

[It] was not very heavily stocked and the continued drain on its cattle by demand from San Francisco and the mines, made it advisable to replenish its numbers...[I]n 1853 a band of five hundred yearling steer was bought. The cattle were allowed to run at large, and it was not imperative to keep them within bounds.

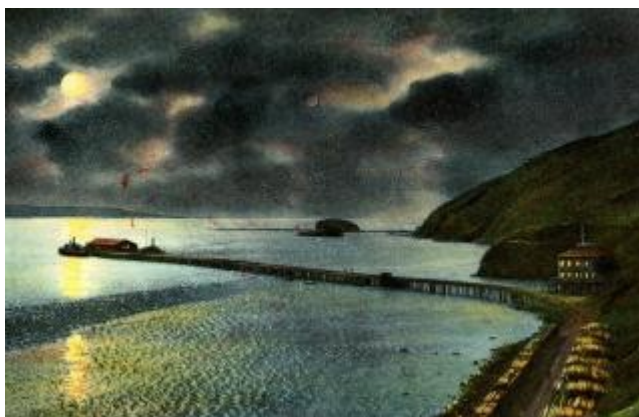
(Continued on page 14.)

Then the peak in the cattle business declined as abruptly as it had started. When the territory of California became a US state, all the rancheros had to supply acceptable proof of ownership when applying for patents from the Land Commission, a process that often took years and meant hiring lawyers. Many owners were stripped of their properties when their claims were dismissed, and even those fortunate in retaining title found themselves heavily in debt—particularly if they had borrowed a lot of money or mortgaged their property. Also, as the older generation died off, land holdings were split among heirs, who might then sell their portions of the former sizable rancho to real estate speculators and developers. The Hispanic identity of California diminished as the subdivided ranchos changed character, becoming predominately New England-style farmsteads. The Dana family was fortunate to still have the means to be able to hold onto their Rancho Nipomo.

In 1862 a series of climatic tragedies also began changing the land use. Torrential rains paralyzed business and travel and drowned thousands of head of cattle. The great floods were then followed by two years of unparalleled drought, causing widespread detrimental effects on the region's lifestyle and industry. In addition to losses caused directly by the drought, thousands of weakened cattle fell easy prey to mountain lions, bears, and coyotes. When the drought ended, the cattle business was no longer dominant in California; more satisfactory breeds, including dairy herds, had replaced the Spaniards' longhorn cattle. Having lost their herds, the Dana family concentrated on dry farming, developing thousands of acres of crops at the base of the foothills where rainwater could be best utilized.

The Arrival of Railroads

Beginning in 1874 the Pacific Coast Railway Company began constructing a narrow gauge railway from Port Harford (Avila), primarily to transport manufactured goods



Pacific Coast Railway's tracks leading to the shipping pier and warehouse. Courtesy, History Center of San Luis Obispo.

and milled wood to the town of San Luis Obispo for building uses, and to take away agricultural, dairy, and mining products from the region for sale elsewhere. The railroad line was then extended to South County. By 1887 it had a depot with a storage area within Rancho Nipomo itself.

The Pacific Coast Railway enabled the town of Nipomo, founded in 1887, to prosper. Laid out at the very center of the Rancho Nipomo property, the town had a railroad station, two hotels, a hardware store, three saloons, a telegraph office, a schoolhouse, blacksmith and wagon shops, a schoolhouse, a livery and feed stable, and a Wells Fargo bank. Railway timetables were printed when printing facilities became available after a newspaper, the *Nipomo News*, was established. Now news could travel much faster through the region.

The success of this small railroad and the rumors, then the reality, of the Southern Pacific Railroad coming southward down the Central Coast from the San Francisco Bay area sparked the start of a land boom. But then years of frustrating delays set in. When the standard gauge railroad finally reached San Luis Obispo in 1894, Nipomo residents anticipated that the SP would purchase the Pacific Coast Railway's rights-of-way and start laying down its own wider tracks toward Nipomo, making their town a station on the new coastal route heading for Los Angeles. Their hopes were dashed, though, when they learned that the SP route would veer toward the Pismo Beach area. The disappointed townspeople, ranchers, and farmers lost their big real estate dreams. However, the narrow gauge railway continued to serve many of their transportation needs and remained in service until 1941.

Rancho Nipomo Subdivision and Neglect

Disabled in his later years, William Dana died in 1858 and was given a handsome monument in San Luis Obispo's Catholic cemetery. His wife, Maria Josefa Dana, outlived him by 30 years. After her death, the Ranch Nipomo land was divided among her descendants. In 1900 the home itself fell out of Dana family ownership when it was seized by Herman C. Fry, in payment for an outstanding debt of Maria Dana, a daughter of William and Maria Josefa. Continuing subdivision of Rancho Nipomo lands ultimately resulted in today's 45-acre Casa de Dana site.

The home fell victim to ownership changes, financial hardships, and frequent abandonment. It was also often victimized by treasure hunters looking for remnant belongings or well-hidden lucre of the reputedly once-wealthy Dana family. In the early 1900s the house invaders tore doorways apart, destroyed the fireplace, and dug into the flooring.

The Dana Adobe (concluded)



HABS photo of Dana Adobe, 1936. Courtesy, Dana Adobe Nipomo Amigos.

During the Great Depression the Dana Adobe and the property around it suffered from further neglect. In 1936, the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS), assisted by the WPA (Works Progress Administration), took photographs and also did dimensioned drawings of the Dana Adobe. Around the same time other photographers recorded the building. Guy Giffens' work was displayed at the Southwest Museum in LA. Photographs taken by Charles C. Pierce are now in the C.C. Pierce Collection at USC's Regional History Center. Dorothea Lange's iconic picture "Migrant Mother" was shot very close to this regional landmark.

The Efforts to Restore the Adobe (1950 to present)

By the 1950s, the Dana Adobe, over a century old, had deteriorated even further. It had been abandoned for many years when in the 1950s the San Luis Obispo County Historical Society obtained the deed for both the *casa* and its remaining site.

Then in the 1960s descendent Alonzo Dana became very intent upon restoring his family's old home, so he provided an initial budget of \$10,000 for renovation. The San Luis Obispo County Historical Society and the Arroyo Grande Women's Club also raised funds. Other community organizations, such as the Arroyo Grande Rotary Club, removed dangerous and falling parts from the building and made other needed repairs.

The Dana Adobe, when placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1971, was noted for its significance as a site of important historic events. The statement

also recognized the Dana Adobe as an example of an early rancho dwelling, and remarked that the land surrounding the rancho had the ability to help the building "become a jewel."

In 1999 Dana Adobe Nipomo Amigos (DANA) was formed with a mission: to restore the Dana Adobe and its cultural landscape. Developers Rob Rossi, Dan Pace, and Karl and Cindy Wittstrom signed for a \$2.7 million loan to prevent the land from being developed and to keep the viewshed intact.

The 100 acres below the adobe was bought, with the Land Conservancy maintaining a 99-year lease. The pre-historic oak woodland is currently being restored, and eventually fenced paddocks will enclose cattle once more—offering visitors much the same view as the one that William and Maria Josefa Dana enjoyed from their porch in the middle of the 19th century, when the Californios' ranchos like Nipomo were at their prime.



"Migrant Mother" photograph by Dorothy Lange, taken in Nipomo, 1936. Farm Security Administration Collection. Public domain use. www.loc.gov/rr/print/list/128_migm.html

Acknowledgment and Endnotes:

I wish to thank my landscape architecture students who wrote a Cultural Landscape Report for the Dana Adobe in 2009, portions of which were excerpt for this essay.

1. In *The Blond Ranchero* (Los Angeles: Dawson's Book Shop, 1960), Dana family descendent Rocky Dana and co-writer Marie Harrington recorded the vivid memories of William's son, Juan Francisco Dana (1838–1936). The memoir provides abundant descriptions of the way of life at Rancho Nipomo and Casa de Dana from the mid to late 19th century.
2. Ryan, Maryellen and Gary S. Breschini in "The California Cattle Boom, 1849–1862," *A Cultural Resources Overview of the Central Coast and Overview of the Central Coast and Coast-Valley Study Areas*.



The roadway approach to the Dana Adobe today: a restoration work still in progress. Courtesy, Dana Adobe Nipomo Amigos.

Glimpses of Early Atascadero

Two Stories of Places over Time

Mike Lucas and Lon Allan

Atascadero is 14 miles northeast of San Luis Obispo. Located at the bottom of a V, one can drive northwest from San Luis Obispo along what is called the North Coast to cities such as Morro Bay, Cayucos, Cambria, and San Simeon. Alternatively, one can take the inland route to North County to cities such as Santa Margarita, Atascadero, and Paso Robles.

In 1913 E.G. Lewis began developing a utopian, planned community after purchasing the Rancho Atascadero's 23,000 acres. Initially he attracted hundreds of enthusiasts who were to take part in growing flowers and fruit, and in seed-producing and food-processing activities, which he visualized as the main supports of the settlement's economy. Thousands of acres of orchards and flowers were planted, and a road was constructed—now State Highway 41—through the Santa Lucia Mountains to provide motorists with access to beach properties that Lewis also promoted as part of the intended Atascadero communitarian lifestyle..

In these two excerpts from Atascadero: The Vision of One—The Work of Many, authors Mike Lucas and Lon Allan describe the early development of this garden city. Permission to reprint has been granted by Mike Lucas.

Atascadero's Flower Seed Industry

E.G. Lewis wanted to create parcels from which people could actually make a living. In fact, bearing testament to this idea is a quote from Abraham Lincoln that Lewis had etched into stone above the City Administration Building which reads: "The most valuable of all arts will be that of deriving a comfortable subsistence from the smallest area of soil."

To this end, Lewis established a flower seed industry and encouraged the planting of flowers and vegetables. He would later provide slightly larger parcels with the purchase of a portion of the Santa Margarita Ranch in 1919 where he created "Garden Farms." He also planted almost 4,000 acres of fruit trees within the Colony boundaries.

Along an area surrounding both sides of today's Morro Road, between US 101 and Atascadero Lake, Lewis focused on the flower seed business.

In the winter of 1916 Atascadero's founder announced that close to 1,000 acres would be planted to flowers for seed. Those seed farms on land without owners would be cultivated, planted and harvested by the newly-formed Atascadero Seed Company. Once the property was acquired by a buyer, the Seed Company would continue to provide free advice and guidance on maintaining the seed farm. The company did not plant nor maintain the Garden Farms parcels because they were considered too big.

In 1916 Lewis reported,

The peculiar advantages of Atascadero for the development of this industry are not only in the climatic and soil conditions, which are ideal, but also in the large number of individual small growers, each tending to his own little seed farm and specializing on some particular breed of flower, duplicating those conditions which have heretofore given the European seeds the command of the markets and caused this country to import millions of dollars of them each year."

He pointed out that roses and other breeds of flowers "reach perfection in Atascadero scarcely to be equaled." In an early advertising brochure, Lewis extolled the virtues of such a plan, writing, "Those seeking a home in the midst of hundreds of acres of flowers, where by patience and industry and without hard physical work they may derive a substantial income from a small area of ground, could hardly find a more ideal situation than a flower seed farm in Atascadero.

Under the Colony plan flower and vegetable seed farms ranged in size from one-half to one and one-half acres and in price from \$300 to \$2,500, including the availability of water under pressure and surfaced streets. Most of these lots were in the valley that opened up in front of the Civic Center and stretched into the Santa Lucia Mountains.

The Atascadero Seed Company was set up to provide the seeds for planting, supervise the growing and help with the harvesting at the end. Much like a cooperative, the property owners were to receive cash for their seeds (at the wholesale price) from the Colony's Seed Company along with a pro-rata share of stocks in that company.

Lewis' Seed Company was to do the marketing, advertising and packaging of the seeds grown on the small individual parcels and provide the business savvy needed. The company told property owners, for example, that \$5,000 in seeds paid them at the wholesale prices, when packed in small five and ten-cent packages, would sell on the open market for \$60,000 to \$70,000. The Atascadero Seed Company in the end owned the brands and trademarks of the Colony's flower and vegetable seeds. The first catalog was published in 1917.

The reality of it was that you really couldn't make a living doing it. Most property owners, many of them who moved here from cities throughout the nation, gave up.

In her book *The Birth of Atascadero*, Marguerite A. Travis tells of her own attempt at growing flowers and vegetables. Her home was located on Atascadero Avenue just around the corner from Atascadero High School. It still stands there today in what was considered the flower seed valley.

Here is what Mrs. Travis wrote about raising flowers:

I, myself, was one of the many attracted by that proposition (living off the land with a small flower seed business). As a widow with a small income, and my mother and my baby son to look out for, I thought growing flowers for seed and reaping a harvest of gold dollars (all they used in California then), would be just the right solution to my problem. To be sure, I didn't know anything about raising flowers. I had never grown so much as a geranium in a tin can, but what of that? In common with Mr. Lewis and his business advisers, I cherished the idea that anyone fairly healthy with good sense and a little muscle and backbone could grow a garden.

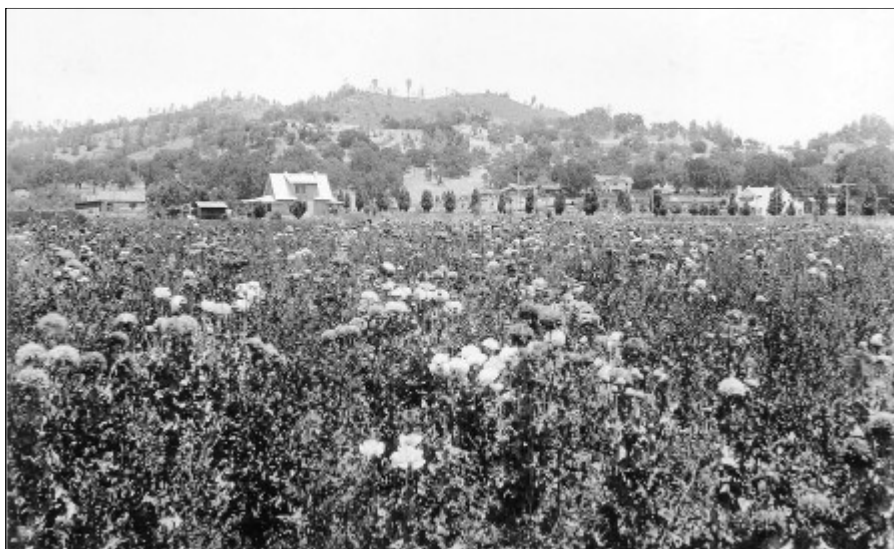
Yes, I worked hard and long. I had my ground properly ploughed and harrowed and watered. I put in vegetables as well as flowers, and I took the freely proffered advice of every passerby who stopped to tell me how wrong I was in planting something that way. If I was planting corn in rows, it ought to be in hills, and vice versa. My beans, an expert gardener told me, should have been soaked in water overnight and then placed carefully in a hole in the ground for another day, then taken out and planted and they'd 'grow like crazy.'

...So, sadder and wiser, I resolved to take no one's advice after that.

Of the flower seed lots, Travis wrote:

The first summer of the flower seed plantations...in 1916 the whole flower seed valley, including the lots along Santa Ynez, Atascadero, Navajoa, San Andres and Curbaril avenues and Moro Road, was a blaze of color in sweet peas of every hue and shade. The seeds were planted in solid blocks of all white, all pink, all purple, all red, and so on, with rows of phlox or other flowers between to prevent cross-pollination. The next summer, the valley was planted to big, double poppies which were even more colorful and presented a gorgeous sight stretching away for scores of acres. For sheer beauty and color, the flower seed plantings were a great success, but as a commercial project, the story was not so good.

The Routzahn brothers of Arroyo Grande were in charge of all planting and care. All the residents were encouraged to attend their lectures. The problem is the Routzahn brothers were accustomed to growing flowers at sea level, with much fog and moisture in the air, making irrigation unnecessary in Arroyo Grande.



A flower and seed farm in the Atascadero colony. Courtesy, Atascadero Historical Society.

As Mrs. Travis explained it,

But in high and dry Atascadero, while the plants held out valiantly, with frequent cultivation through the growing season, they could not bring their seed to full maturity without water. This meant an extensive system of irrigation which cut into profits of the industry, making the company unable to compete successfully with the companies operating on the coast, using Japanese labor and no irrigation.

The flower and seed industry went the way of some of the other small farming ideas tried in the Colony such as poultry, bees, raising rabbits for furs and more. It just simply didn't work out for one reason or another.

For example, Lewis had secured a contract with the U.S. Government to produce dehydrated fruit for the war effort to feed the troops "over there." An experimental dehydration plant was built and just about the time it was proven to be successful, World War I ended and the government cancelled its contract with the Atascadero dehydration plant. Thus, the market for home-grown fruit from the more than 4,000 acres of trees planted by the Colony Holding Corporation just sort of dried up (no pun intended).

The Caldero Products Company of Atascadero and the Atascadero Fruit Exchange did market peaches, pears, apples and more for a few years. And one very successful product for a short time period was pumpkin flour that required only the addition of water to make a pumpkin pie.

A cannery was also built on the campus at Atascadero High School where women volunteers would gather to can fruit each season and then share it or sell it to those who couldn't participate in the community project.

(Continued on page 18.)

Highway to the Sea and The Cloisters

Many of the photos of Atascadero that appeared in E.G. Lewis' early advertising brochures, newspaper and magazine stories featured people frolicking on the beach of the Pacific Ocean. He made numerous references to "ocean breezes" and beach cottages.

So it became necessary very early on that Lewis build a road to get to the ocean, which in reality is about 17 miles away from Atascadero itself.

Today the road, State Highway 41, is officially known as the "E.G. Lewis Highway" beginning near the Charles Paddock Zoo and going west all the way to Highway 1 at Morro Bay.

Work on the new road got underway in 1915, in many cases following cow trails over the hills and generally sticking pretty close to the alignment of Atascadero and Morro Creeks.

Lewis described the building of the road this way: "The road begins at the civic center (City Administration Building) and goes through the Central Valley (which is the area known as the "Morro Flats" region, or the lowlands between US 101 and Atascadero Lake), along Atascadero Creek, and up through the mountain passes to the divide (Devil's Gap) and thence down Morro Creek through the beautiful mountain scenery to the beach."

The original road was built at a cost of approximately \$60,000 and in Lewis' words, "makes all parts of the Atascadero Colony Estates easily and quickly accessible to the sea beach by auto."

In a 1922 promotion brochure Lewis described the road trip to the beach this way:

...take Morro Road which leads down between a row of poplars a mile or so across the plain (earlier described as Morro Flats), past Atascadero Lake and the Poultry Demonstration Farm, where those interested in the eternal question of the hen and the egg find inspiration. From here on for twelve miles you will be treated to a real California mountain road. This road is testimony to the vision of the builders, who spent great sums for the Estates in cooperation with the County, to make the Beach available for Atascadero. After crossing the divide over the high hills, you descend into Morro Canyon, where a trout stream tumbles down into the Pacific. The canyon opens out into a plain where the climate is so mild, that oranges and lemons grow, which cannot stand the bracing air of the uplands. Atascadero Beach is ahead.

Lewis' reference to 'quick and easy' are relative terms. The original old road was built for the Model T Ford and it took close to two hours to get from Atascadero to the beach. Today you can drive it in 15 minutes. Pat Bissell told of a trip to the beach with her parents in 1917. "At one point you went up one rise and down another and some were so steep dad made mom and I get out of the car

and walk. And because of the gravity flow gas system the car would die about halfway up if you tried to go forward, so you had to back up some hills." Because the road was so narrow in many spots, you could only go west up until noon and then east from noon until dark. Pat Bissell's father, Ralph Holmes, a Chicago artist, was named manager of the Cloisters, an inn built on Atascadero Beach. Mrs. Bissell would later serve as Colony Days Queen in 1987.

There are some locations where the original road to the ocean still exists. And in three places the original road is still passable by car—Old Morro Road West, Old Morro Road and Old Moro Road East. Very near the Three Bridges area, the original alignment remains protected by barbed wire on each end. This is the one piece of the original "Boulevard to the Sea" that remains untouched by the 21st century. A trip along Old Morro Road is the very best way to sample what the original road was like. If you remove the asphalt paving, it is the original old road. It probably looks now about how it did close to 90 years ago.

Building the road was no easy task at the turn of the century. Mules pulling Fresno scrapers, muscle power, dynamite and steam-driven shovels were all used to build the scenic highway through the Santa Lucia Mountains. The popular Fresno scraper was a simple device that consisted of a steel "scoop" pulled by a single mule or, in some cases, two together for extra "power." A long iron handle stuck out from behind the "bucket" which a man controlled. If you lifted up on the handle it caused the device to "scoop" up dirt. Pushing the handle down caused the scoop to tip backward and slide on metal runners. When it came time to dump, the man simply pushed the handle up and the dirt "spilled out."

In the 1920s the State of California took over ownership of the road to provide a way for the tourists that were coming to the coast to get to the beach. In fact, many of the cities on the Central Coast petitioned the State to get a route established between the coast and the San Joaquin Valley as quickly as possible. Coastal businessmen could smell those tourist dollars even back then.

At the summit at Devil's Gap the elevation is 1,438 feet. The waters that run off the mountain separate at this point and flow westward into Morro Creek and eastward into Atascadero Creek. A large waterfall known as "Mistletoe Falls" was a favorite stopping place at the top of the grade before you started down the other side of the mountains toward the coast.

The Colony Holding Corporation acquired beachfront property that was divided into hundreds of tiny lots that went from near Morro Rock three miles north toward Caucos. The land was actually owned by a subsidiary corpo-

Glimpses of Early Atascadero (concluded)



The Cloisters, with Morro Rock in the distance. Photo from Atascadero: The Vision of One—the Work of Many. Courtesy, Mike Lucas.

ration called Atascadero Beach Land and Improvement Company. Lots sold for anywhere from \$450 to \$1,000. The building restrictions provided that no cottage or bungalow could cost less than \$250 to build.

This area became known as Atascadero Beach and held that name until the State of California ordered a name change in the mid-1980s.

Tall eucalyptus trees still stand which mark the entrance to the Cloisters at Morro Bay. A new housing development on the site of the original Atascadero Beach took the name “Cloisters.” With Morro Rock as a backdrop, the Cloisters Inn and Cottages served as Atascadero’s playground. The facility offered swimming, fishing and a nine-hole golf course for the amusement of guests. You could also purchase beachfront lots from the Corporation.

The Cloisters at the beach fell onto hard times and remained unused and vacant for many years. Soldiers staying in the building in the early 1960s set the old hotel on fire, leveling it to its concrete foundation.

Shortly after the original road was completed the *Atascadero News* published a photo of one portion of the “Boulevard” and the marble statue. Beneath the photo was written:

Morro Rock is at one end and the Three Water Nymphs (another name for the statue) is at the other. One beauty was created by nature; the other by an artist. Another person has said, from nature’s scenic creation to man’s cultural contribution. How these two, nature’s scenic values and man’s culture combine and to what end effects what the scenic highway is all about.

In another periodical, Lewis called Atascadero Beach, “a highly-restricted seaside resort for nice people.” Continuing, Lewis made it clear that Atascadero Beach “is not an advantageous place for dives and questionable resorts

and every possible provision has been made to assure that it will be free from such undesirable features.” His beach properties were restricted to those of the Caucasian race, just as were the lots in Atascadero.

He told prospective visitors that “surf bathing may be indulged in during the mid-winter months as freely as in the summer.” Those natives who have dipped a toe into the Pacific in January know just how cold ocean water can get. Lewis didn’t shy from stretching the truth a bit. In fact, in the very first promotion Bulletin No. 1, he published a photo of Morro Rock and the adjacent harbor. Under the photo it reads: “The famous Morrow Rock [*sic*] just off the coast below the Henry Ranch.”

Today Morro Road is just another state highway to most motorists who use it. But it is a highway steeped in history and holds countless memories for many long-time residents of the Colony.



Edward Gardner Lewis (1869–1950), born in Connecticut, arrived in Missouri in his 20s as a patent medicine salesman. As publisher of Woman’s Magazine he built its circulation into the nation’s largest and became very wealthy. After buying 85 acres near the future site of the St. Louis World’s Fair (1904), he founded Universal City, created a university, started two banks and two daily newspapers, and launched the American Woman’s League. Impressed with the City Beautiful movement, when he visited Atascadero in California in 1912 he bought land on which to start a non-sectarian, agrarian cooperative that would be made up of idealists eager to work there. Starting in 1914, they arrived and lived in a “Tent City” until their houses were built. The community ultimately failed, and Lewis declared bankruptcy in 1924. The town’s handsome Administration Building is now the Atascadero City Hall. Photo: Lewis Photograph Collection, University City Public Library, MO.

Landscapes and Gardens on Hearst's Enchanted Hill

It is well known that architect Julia Morgan (1872–1957), the first female graduate of the prestigious Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris—and an American—worked closely with William Randolph Hearst for almost 30 years in designing and meticulously overseeing both the construction and overall maintenance of all the buildings on *La Cuesta Encantada*—his “enchanted hill.” She also served as architect on various other Hearst projects, including some undertaken by his mother, to whom Hearst dedicated his Castle; she had taught him early in life to appreciate Europe’s fine arts and crafts, which he later obsessively bought.

It isn’t well known, however, that Julia Morgan from the very start in 1919 served as primary landscape designer for Hearst’s San Simeon property. The fascinating story of her dedicated attentions over the same lengthy time period in developing its many garden areas—including ones distant from buildings, such as orchards and the mile-long pergola far above the main site—is provided, accompanied by splendid photographs and other illustrations, in the longtime Hearst Castle historian Victoria Kastner’s book, *Hearst’s San Simeon: The Gardens and the Land* (Abrams, 2009).

W.R. Hearst had loved this vast hillside property since boyhood, having often camped there with his father, who after earning a fortune from mining investments bought up rancho lands in North County to gain control of local enterprises. Upon his death, George’s wealth and land holdings upon his death went to his philanthropist wife. After leaving Harvard, William had begun making his own fortune, first as publisher of the *San Francisco Examiner*, then as a virtual emperor of a nationwide newspaper chain. Eventually he also inherited whatever wealth Phoebe hadn’t given away, and it included the San Simeon ranch, where he was beginning to erect a huge palatial estate.

Victoria Kastner’s admirably researched book provides insights into the complexities of the Hearst–Morgan relationship, and quotes frequently from the correspondence between the co-creators of the Hearst Castle, such as terse telegrams and scribbled notes. Though trained as an architect, Morgan had a fine knowledge of and liking for plants, along with an acute visual sense crucial in garden design. She was inexhaustible when devising the large-scale landscaping Hearst demanded for his “Ranch.” Both loved trees, and oaks in particular, going to extraordinary efforts

and expense in moving mature ones for improved placement. From 1926 on, the Bay Area garden designer Isabella Worn, renowned for her work at Filoli, sometimes contributed her own ideas for using color schemes in the flower beds. Hearst, genuinely enchanted with his gardens, expressed decidedly passionate opinions in his communications, as this letter to Julia Morgan:

I agree with Miss Worn that it is desirable to have a certain amount of mass color, but I think you will lose a great deal of charm and homeliness of a garden if you go too far in this direction and confine yourself to any degree to these masses of color. The garden plan then becomes a little too stiff and formal and we lose entirely the delightful character of [the] English garden, with its mixed color in what they call the herbaceous border. I think therefore that we

should limit ourselves to the general color schemes of our various houses and to certain masses of color for different effects and otherwise have a garden of sufficient variety (Kastner, 140).

Hearst then explicitly expressed which flowering plants he wanted featured in his gardens—and, after all, he paid for them. He ended his instructions this way:

Finally, I have a mania for hollyhocks and I would like to see them especially against the walls of the houses. They begin early and last until

late and are a very useful as well as a beautiful flower. They also have the home like character, of which I think it is necessary to retain some part (140).

It seems contradictory and ironic that Hearst’s outsize ego, which with great enthusiasm and at tremendous costs, had willed his castle into a fabulous existence on that San Simeon hilltop, wanted at least some of its gardens to present a “home like” character. But, after all, he also kept catsup bottles on his baronial dining table.

After Hearst’s death in 1951, the property was given to California State Parks. Highly popular, it annually receives about a million visitors. Landscaping around the main buildings has been carefully maintained. Trees planted during his lifetime grew bigger, and some inevitably died. Overgrown shrubs got trimmed, then replaced. Perennial beds have come, gone, and been renewed. In recent years more attention has gone into restoration efforts, following original planting plans that Morgan and tycoon Hearst worked on together, fixatedly and usually companionably.

Tours of the abundant garden areas are now a constant among those offered to visitors during the more hospitable spring and summer months.

—Barbara Marinacci



The Esplanade gardens at the Hearst Castle, below the main building. Photo

Winegrowing in SLO County

The landscape in parts of San Luis Obispo County has been changed dramatically in recent years by the astounding proliferation of winegrape-producing vineyards and the wineries and tasting rooms that usually accompany them. Long lines of trellised grapevines march across both flatland and hills in areas near Paso Robles and in the Edna and Arroyo Grande valleys. Although most of these viewsapes are fairly new, there is ample history here.

One of the first agricultural projects undertaken by the Spanish padres at the San Luis Obispo Mission in 1773, the year after its founding, would have been creating a vineyard. Canes cut from other missions' vines would be quickly rooted and within several years produce grapes for Communion wine. But the widely shared red Mission grape variety got a bad reputation. Oversweet and low in tannin, it also tended to become acetic, so priests devised equipment for fermenting their vinegary wine into a very potent and popular 150-proof brandy, or *aguardiente*.

The San Miguel and San Luis Obispo missions' large vineyards were abandoned after the mid-1830s secularization. Local winegrowing interest was revived three decades later when Pierre Dallidet, an enterprising Frenchman, settled down in an adobe house close to the San Luis Obispo Mission's old vineyard. After planting his own vines, he built a wine cellar where he aged the wines he produced and sold at the county's first bonded winery. When the grapevine-killing phylloxera hit France, he brought many cuttings of *Vitis vinifera* varieties to the New World for preservation. His wine business ceased in the 1890s. His well-preserved home on Pacific Street, now owned by the San Luis Obispo County History Center, is a period museum, with its beautifully tended garden, a popular venue for events.

By the latter part of the 19th century other viticultural properties with wineries had started up in the county. The fine wines proved so good that a wine-knowledgeable columnist made a prophecy in the October 3, 1889, edition of the city's *Daily Republic* newspaper. Because soil and climate were of great importance in winemaking,

... the western slopes of the Santa Lucia Mountains are peculiarly adapted to the production of wine. The wine of this region will become famous in no distant day. We believe this because the wine made here is much superior to that of Napa, Sonoma or Los Angeles, the chief winegrowing regions of the state.

It took close to a century, though, for the full potential of the county's vineyards and wineries to be widely recognized. The Wine Revolution launched in the late 1960s and early '70s started a demand for premium varietal wines, with people willing to pay dearly for them. As prices increased for scarce land in regions with terroir and climates optimal for superior winegrowing, both expanding wineries and idealistic vintners took chances and settled down in areas historically proven as also capable of producing fine wines of distinctively different varietals. Lands previously used for growing crops like beans, almonds, and barley or as pastures for livestock were converted into vineyards, and old Zinfandel vineyards were resurrected. Since then, winegrowing has become a major

economic boon in the county, which is classified within the Central Coast AVA (American Viticultural Area), with Paso Robles, Edna Valley, York Mountain, and Arroyo Grande sub-AVAs. Statistics are telling: In 1975 only about 2,500 acres were in vineyards; now there are over 35,000. Concurrently, the number of bonded wineries has grown from a handful to several hundred.

It's scarcely surprising, then, that Cal Poly SLO now has a highly successful Wine and Viticulture Program in the Horticulture

and Crop Science Department, within its College of Agriculture, Food, and Environmental Sciences. It now competes favorably with UC Davis as an excellent training ground for students aiming for careers in viticulture and in producing or marketing wine.

Photos and articles in publications and on websites show that the county's winegrowers are attentive not just to vineyard landscaping, but also to architecture and garden design. Tasting rooms and wineries are often remodeled houses, some of them historic. But winegrowing poses risks—overexpansion and too much competition, especially in economic downturns. Another drawback is environmental: grape-growing and winemaking consume lots of water, causing formerly high water tables to drop precipitously; chemical fertilizers and insecticides, fungicides, and herbicides contaminate air and groundwater. Thus the wine industry locally is trending toward sustainability, dry farming, and organic/biodynamic agriculture.

—Barbara Marinacci

Franks, Janet Penn. *San Luis Obispo Wineries*. San Luis Obispo: Central Coast Press, 2005.

Historical Winegrape Production Statistics.

<http://cesanluisobispo.ucdavis.edu/Viticulture/Historical>.



The Paragon winery's vineyard in Edna Valley, with two volcanic "morros" in the distance. Photo © Nik Wheeler.

California Polytechnic State University and Its Landscape Architecture Department

Christy Edstrom O'Hara

Assistant Professor, Landscape Architecture Department,
California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo

California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo was founded in 1901 when the State Legislature established a vocational high school in San Luis Obispo. The institution served as a forerunner in vocational education for agriculture and industry. On July 1, 1961 the administration of the college was passed to the Trustees of the California State University and Colleges, making Cal Poly ultimately one of 23 California State University campuses. (Cal Poly Pomona began in 1938 as a satellite campus and became independent in 1966.)

Cal Poly SLO enrolls approximately 17,000 students and geographically is one of the largest campuses in the nation. Its 400-acre central campus adjoins an additional 5,651 acres devoted to student farming, experimental architecture, and other outdoor laboratory studies. Nearly two-thirds of all students pursue a technical or professional program in one of four colleges: Agriculture (3,500 majors), Architecture and Environmental Design (1,500 majors), Business (2,400 majors), and Engineering (4,000 majors). The College of Architecture and Environmental Design includes majors in architecture, landscape architecture, regional and city planning, architectural engineering, and construction management. The program in Landscape Architecture enrolled its first class of students in 1972 (junior transfers from the Architecture Department) and received initial accreditation in 1975. Its five-year Bachelor of Landscape Architecture degree began in 1992.

The current Landscape Architecture Department includes approximately 200 students and 15 faculty members. With a university philosophy of "Learn by Doing," this pragmatic program often looks to service learning projects for studio design. Nonprofit groups requiring landscape design help—from campus designs and community planning, to healing gardens and writing cultural



*A view towards the palm and aloe garden in the Arboretum; a landscape architecture review in session.
Photos: Christy O'Hara.*

landscape reports—are embedded into the curriculum, providing real-world projects. The students' design work is not only seen as professional quality, but is often built as well. This win-win process marries faculty expertise with creative problem-solving from its students.

In 2011 Cal Poly's Landscape Architecture Department program was ranked eighth in the nation by *DesignIntelligence* journal, and tied for first place in the West. This voting by academics and practitioners considered a program's strengths of preparing graduates in sustainable design practices and principles, as well as the department's balance of technology, sustainability, and design.

Resources available to students include an on-campus arboretum. Leaning Pine Arboretum is located on five acres on the north end of campus. A premier horticultural display garden, it is designed to showcase plants from all Mediterranean climates. The gardens deftly transition through California, Chile, South Africa, Western Australia, and the Mediterranean basin. The arboretum teaches students and visitors alike about plant ecology and planting design, with nearby plots for horticulture students in the Agriculture College to test adaptability and water use such as alternative lawns. Open from 8am to 5pm, Monday through Saturday, the year-round botanical garden offers an opportunity to see the amazing range of plants in Mediterranean climes.

Poised to celebrate its 40th anniversary next year (the date isn't set yet), Cal Poly's Landscape Architecture program takes pride in having graduated thousands of students over the years. The event will include emeritus faculty as well as an active alumni group, the Landscape Architecture Advisory Council. Currently made up of 30 professionals, they provide valuable outside resources and practical guidance to students in the changing scenes of office practice and theory.

Dreaming of Landscape: Morro Bay on California's Central Coast

Paula Panich

Editor's Note: *At our request, the author—an eloquent writer and a writing teacher, as well as a CGLHS member, has contributed this personal essay to express the magic that she always finds on visits to the Central Coast ... and believes you'll find it too, in your own special ways.*

Photo: Ilana Panich-Linsman.



I slipped into a rented kayak and pushed off into the wet dark blue of Morro Bay. Rock to my right, sand spit to my left. Fog in grey-white strips like flying silk scarves, which suited me fine. The town of Morro Bay and the 21st century were out of sight, almost. That big granite rock—slate-colored, thrusting close to 600 feet in the air, an interloper in the sea, roofed by a private cloud—looks to have been towed out there, anchored, and left to its own lonely devices.



The rock is a message written on the landscape by the great hand of geologic time. It is sacred to the Central Coast's native peoples, the Chumash and the Salinan. It is about 20 million years old.

Morro Rock is the northernmost bump of the Nine Morros, or the Nine Sisters, take your pick, of the Central Valley, volcanic plugs of ancient seafloor volcanoes. The tallest, at 1,559 feet, is Bishop Peak—so named, it seems, for its three-sharp-points, its shape reminiscent of long-forgotten clerical headgear. "A volcanic plug," writes Kim Stafford, "is the stopper in the genie bottle of volcanic extrusion, left as a record of gravity reversed from below."

The business of geologic terms in the Spanish Americas, though, belongs to the intruded and then extruded language of the great expansionist power of 16th century, Spain. We are gifted in California with the melodic terms

embudo, ciénega, chaparral, chaco, caldera, cañon, bajada, acequia, arroyo, cuesta—and morro, which means, usually, a promontory overlooking a harbor.

In our Eurocentric view of history, this particular *morro* was first spotted in 1542 and so named by Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo, who had set out to take a look at coastal California on orders from the governor of Guatemala, Pedro de Alvarado. Cabrillo departed on June 24. (Cabrillo was a bit of a journalist, having sent a rousing report to the Spanish Crown on the 1540 destruction, by earthquake, of the Guatemalan city of Santiago.)

By September 24, he and his men pulled into what would become known as San Diego Bay, which he thought a "very good enclosed port."

On October 9, they reached Santa Monica, but whether or not it happened to be a Farmers' Market day is unrecorded.

At some point, Cabrillo turned around or was blown backward to return to Catalina Island, which he called something else, and he broke his arm or perhaps his leg there. It didn't heal, and he died on the island or nearby, on January 3, 1543.

But I wasn't thinking about Cabrillo in that kayak. I was full of gratitude for that moon-silver slippery fog, and the joy of gliding through that water in an untroubling wind, and for the lovely rich emptiness of the sand dunes, protected now as the Morro Dunes Natural Preserve, and the company of sandpipers.



Morro Rock and kayaking in Morro Bay. Photos: Paula Panich.

Ranchos to Castles:

A Tour of San Luis Obispo County

September 9th–11th, 2011, San Luis Obispo, California

Annual Conference of the California Garden & Landscape History Society



Lectures and Tours feature:

- Santa Margarita Ranch
- Bus tour from San Luis Obispo to Nipomo through the historic cities of Halcyon and Oceano
- Dana Adobe
- Bus tour from Nipomo to San Luis Obispo through Edna Valley vineyards
- Downtown San Luis Obispo
- Dallidet Adobe and Gardens
- Hearst Castle
- North County vineyards

Our 2011 conference will celebrate the wonderful variety of SLO County's contrasting sites – from 19th-century Californio *ranchos* to the Hearst Castle to a local winery and its vineyards. This still semi-rural landscape has a long history of compelling landscape development, beginning in 1772, when Padre Junípero Serra founded Mission San Luis Obispo de Tolosa – the fifth established in Alta California by the Franciscan Order. The city that grew up around the mission became the economic, social, and administrative center of numerous large Spanish and Mexican land-grant cattle ranches. Some of the Hispanic *ranchero* families' adobe casas are still extant, in town or out in the countryside, either well-preserved or lovingly restored, with their historic landscapes still on view.

Join us and see for yourself why William Randolph Hearst chose to build his dream castle in the San Luis Obispo area.

Registration:

Use enclosed form or visit www.cglhs.org.

Conference Hotel:

La Cuesta Inn, 2074 Monterey Street, San Luis Obispo, <http://www.lacuestainn.com/>, (800) 543-2777. Reserve by August 12th and mention CGLHS for our discounted rate of \$89/night during the week (if you come early, and stay over on Sunday), but it's \$129/night for the Friday & Saturday rate. The price includes a continental breakfast + tea & cookies in the afternoon. The hotel has a hot tub and pool; request eastside rooms (away from Highway 101) and towards the view.

Conference Schedule:

Friday, September 9th: Historic Santa Margarita Ranch, 9000 Yerba Buena Avenue, Santa Margarita

3pm–5:30pm: Owner Rob Rossi will provide a tour of this property and vineyards with the recently added historic steam locomotive. This site was formally recognized in 1787 as an *asistencia*, or assistant mission, that supported Mission San Luis de Tolosa. A lecture will be given in the adobe-walled Asistencia on the storied cultural history of the site.

Reception to follow. At sunset, enjoy hors d'oeuvres and Ancient Creek wine, made with grapes harvested from Santa Margarita Ranch vines, as you take in the dramatic views all around the site.

Saturday, September 10th: San Luis Obispo and South County

9am–4pm: Catch the bus outside of La Cuesta Inn at 9am. No ordinary bus ride, while we ride to the Dana Adobe, this docent-led history tour begins as we travel from San Luis Obispo along the coast. Dr. Herb Kandel will lecture on the local history of Pismo Beach, Halcyon, Oceano, and Nipomo.

Dana Adobe: Landscape architecture professor and historian Christy O'Hara will lecture on the cultural landscape of the this original Rancho-era adobe *casa* with its preserved 1850s building and viewshed. A tour of the site will follow.

Lunch through Edna Valley. Box lunches on the bus will be our picnic as we travel a different route back to San Luis Obispo through Edna Valley vineyards. All the while, Dr. Herb Kandel will provide historic background to the many players in the county's early development.

(Saturday program continued on next page)

(Saturday conference schedule, continued)

Walking tour of San Luis Obispo (in afternoon, after arrival in the city from the bus tour of South County)

Beginning at the historic Dallidet Adobe and Gardens, a walking tour will highlight SLO's cityscape development. We'll look for the various landscape and architectural elements that defined a growing city, such as its creek as primary water source; archeological clues to its first inhabitants, the Chumash; the 1772 Mission and 19th-century adobes; the Chinese influence in the community; architectural standouts like Victorian-era homes, a Frank Lloyd Wright building, and the 1905-built Carnegie Library, now the county's history museum; and that innovative, triumphant public space, Mission Plaza.

6:30pm – 8:30pm: Dinner, with a talk by keynote speaker Victoria Kastner on "The History and Restoration of the Gardens at Hearst Castle"

Dinner will be served at a private home overlooking the garden and Edna Valley with its *morros*. Victoria Kastner, the Hearst Castle's historian, will tell the fascinating story of the landscape changes over time, including architect Julia Morgan's 30-year collaboration with William Randolph Hearst in creating and then maintaining the garden areas, which in recent years are undergoing restoration. (See also the Speaker bio below.) Her two books may be purchased afterwards at a book signing.

Sunday, September 11th: North Coast and North County

10am – 2:30pm: Hearst Castle

Travel by your own vehicle to San Simeon for a specialized Garden Tour of Hearst Castle, starting at 10am. While Saturday offered tours of South County and downtown San Luis Obispo, the conference will move up the North Coast and into North County, exploring a different set of landscapes. A docent-led tour of the gardens at Hearst Castle will be a wonderful follow-up to Victoria Kastner's Saturday evening lecture. View the actual gardens themselves and take in the panoramic ocean views from this high hillside site. You'll understand why even as a boy Hearst dreamed of creating a palace here.

12:30 – 1:30pm: William Randolph Hearst Memorial Beach

We'll have a picnic lunch amidst the Julia Morgan-designed buildings and sit by the dock at the base of the vast Hearst Ranch property. Visitors would land here when arriving by boat. It's also where Hearst's innumerable purchases of antique furnishings and art pieces were unloaded from ships coming from Europe – many to be stored in a nearby warehouse.

2:30 – 4:30pm: A North County Winery. The site is to be announced later.

Speakers (partial list)

Victoria Kastner (keynote speaker on 9/10). The historian at Hearst Castle, where she has worked for over 30 years, she has master's degrees in architectural history from UC Santa Barbara and in museum management from George Washington University. She is the author of *Hearst Castle: The Biography of a Country House* (2000) and *Hearst's San Simeon: The Gardens and the Land* (2009) – both large, beautiful, and lavishly illustrated books. Acknowledged as the authority on the Hearst Castle, Ms. Kastner often lectures across the nation, writes articles for periodicals, and appears on radio and TV programs.

Christy Edstrom O'Hara (conference convener). A Cal Poly professor with an MA in Landscape Architecture and Preservation Planning from the Univ. of Washington, she also has a private practice in landscape architecture and historic landscape preservation. She lectures widely on landscape preservation and how it applies to sustainable landscape design and construction, is researching the Olmsted's California work, serves as advisor on the Dana Adobe restoration, and is also CGLHS's treasurer.

Herb Kandel, a lifetime student of the Central Coast's natural and cultural history, is VP of the Land Conservancy of San Luis Obispo County. He authored the State-funded grant recently received by Rancho Nipomo Dana Adobe for *Stories of the Rancho: Ecology, Culture and Stewardship* – a program telling of human impact over time on this former land-grant's landscape. With a BA in Cultural Anthropology and master's and doctorate degrees in Chinese Medicine, he is a practicing acupuncturist.

>> More coverage of the conference, including descriptions of the sites to be visited, can be found on the CGLHS website: www.cglhs.org.

>> For questions, please e-mail conference@cglhs.org or call Christy O'Hara, 805-440-6320.

Recommended Reading

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Book Reviews & News

Alice Eastwood's Wonderland: The Adventures of a Botanist

Carol Green Wilson. SF: California Academy of Sciences, 1955, 222 pp.

Alice Eastwood (1859-1953) retired in 1949 from her position as Director of Botany at the California Academy of Sciences in San Francisco. She was a remarkable woman who left a remarkable legacy in San Francisco and throughout California, and she was recognized worldwide. Her name is on a campground, a trail on Mount Tamalpais, and a redwood grove. The Alice Eastwood Herbarium celebrates her work at the Academy of Sciences. She went to Sweden as honorary president of the VIIth International Botanical Congress when she was in her 90s, and she was named Sweetheart of the San Francisco Business Men's Garden Club at the age of 79. The list of honors goes on and on.

Eastwood was born in rural Ontario, Canada, but much of her childhood was spent in Colorado. Her career was remarkable for both her scientific achievements and her ability to share her enthusiasm with a wide audience. Her friendships spanned generations and included the most eminent European botanists as well as civic leaders and professional and amateur gardeners in San Francisco and elsewhere. She was close to John McLaren, the gruff director of Golden Gate Park, and gave plant lectures to his staff. Her vision of the park included the establishment of the Strybing Arboretum and the Shakespeare Garden. She was instrumental in founding the San Francisco Garden Club and numerous plant societies—most notably the Fuchsia Society. Stories of her western plant-collecting escapades are energizing. One other special interest was the history of botanical exploration of the Pacific Coast, work published by the California Historical Society in 1939.

This 1955 biography is a gem. The author, Carol Green Wilson (1892–1981), was a local historian, and the biography is based on extensive interviews with Miss Eastwood, her colleagues, family, and friends, records at the California Academy of Sciences, correspondence, and Eastwood's publications. It is the story of a special person, largely self-educated and undaunted by her lack of university training. It is part of the generation of biographies which celebrate their subjects and capture the aspects of their personalities which led to their renown. It does not attempt to record Eastwood's endless scientific achievements. The lack of an index can be frustrating, and bibliographies of Eastwood's numerous scientific papers have been published separately.

Alice Eastwood's Wonderland was printed in an edition of 2,000 for the Academy of Sciences, designed by Lawton Kennedy, well-known San Francisco printers, and illustrated with line drawings by Toshio Asaeda, an Academy staff member. The cover is embellished with Gertraud Duell's drawing of *Eastwoodia elegans*, a rare California shrub named for Alice Eastwood. This is a book for all interested in the world of plant collectors.

—Margaretta J. Darnall

Book News:

The Library of American Landscape History (LALH) announced the forthcoming publication of a new book: *Frederick Law Olmsted, Calvert Vaux, and the Buffalo Park and Parkway System*, by Francis R. Kowsky. This will be the first book in the new LALH series *Designing the American Park*, edited by Ethan Carr. "The series will explore the events and themes that motivated the creation of parks—the reform of the city, the roots of environmentalism, and the changing meaning of nature in American art." LALH subscribers receive their annual newsmagazine, *View*, and periodic e-mail notifications of "What's New." With regard to the Santa Barbara Botanic Garden, they passed along new executive director Steve Windhager's report on the outdoor plaza known as the Meadow Terrace: "The demolition of the meadow terrace walls and restoration of the former grade and replacement of the paved path in its 2006 alignment will occur in early June 2011." Website: http://www.lalh.org/new_spring2011.html#1.

The *Old Bulbs Gazette*, the online newsletter from antique bulb supplier Old House Gardens, advises that authors Bill Welch and Greg Grant have produced a revised and enlarged edition of their 1995 book, *The Southern Heirloom Garden*, retitled *Heirloom Gardening in the South* (TAMU Press, April 2011, 537 pages, \$29.95). The plant encyclopedia comprises approximately two-thirds of the book, but the rest includes sections on the influences of various ethnic groups (Native Americans, Africans, and Germans, etc.) and new material on naturalizing daffodils, growing heirloom fruit, propagation, and more. Though the obvious focus is on the Southern states, many heirloom plants that do well in the South will also thrive in California, making this book a valuable resource for Californians others interested in our garden history.



Alice Eastwood.

http://img1.browsebiography.com/bio-alice_eastwood.html



Coming Events

July 31: Submission deadline for National HALS Challenge 2011: at least one HALS short format history to increase awareness of the role of cultural groups in shaping the American landscape. Visit <http://halsca.org/index.htm>. Challenge results will be announced at ASLA's annual meeting (see Oct. 30–Nov. 2 below), of HALS subcommittee, Historic Preservation Professional Practice Network.

August 11: Laura Ackley on the 1915 World's Fair at San Francisco. This is the 2nd lecture given in the 2011 Mission San Rafael Arcángel Preservation Foundation lecture series. Weeknight lectures given at the Mission, 6:30-7:30pm, 1104-5th Ave., San Rafael. The \$50 tax-deductible donation supports restoration and entitles you to attend all lectures. (See Sept. 15, Oct. 13, and Nov. 17 below.) Contact Theresa Brunner: Ph. 415.454.8141 x 12 or tbrunner@saintraphael.com.

August 16: Next NorCal HALS meeting at Lake Chalet, 1520 Lakeside Drive, Oakland, 4-6pm. Visit <http://halsca.org>.

August 25: 6:30-8pm, at the Art & Design Center, 95 3rd St., SF. Free session about the Certificate Program in Landscape Architecture and the Professional Program in Cultural Landscape Preservation and Management at UC Berkeley Extension. (See *ad on next page*.)

September 9-11: The CGLHS annual conference in San Luis Obispo County.
Please see pages 24–25 and the registration form accompanying this Summer 2011 issue,
and visit our website: www.cglhs.org.

September 15: John Clements, Spanish Colonial Archaeologist on mapping out Mission San Rafael. Given in the Mission San Rafael Arcángel Preservation Foundation lecture series. For contact information, see entry for August 11, above.

September 17–18: “What’s Out There Weekend” in San Francisco. The Cultural Landscape Foundation’s interpretive tours highlighting the SF Bay Area’s heritage of Modernist-designed landscapes. People can visit all 25 publicly accessible sites and participate in free tours given by guides giving stories behind each place, such as Kaiser Center Roof Garden in Oakland, SF’s Levi’s Plaza, and Santa Clara’s Central Park. This weekend connects with “What’s Out There,” TCLF’s searchable database of designed US landscapes.: www.tclf.org.

October 11–14: The Association for Preservation Technology (APT) will hold its annual conference in Victoria, BC, with cultural landscapes one of its theme tracks. A 2-day workshop will be held afterwards. Contact Hugh C. Miller: hcmfaia@comcast.net.

October 13: Historian Betty Goerke on Chief Marin. Given in the Mission San Rafael Arcángel Preservation Foundation lecture series. For contact information, see entry for August 11, above.

October 30–November 2: Annual meeting of ASLA (American Society of Landscape Architects) and Expo, at the San Diego Convention Center. HALS will hold a subcommittee meeting there of the Historic Preservation Professional Practice Network. Visit www.asla.org.

November 17: Cassidy DeBaker and Dr. Adrian Praetzelis (Sonoma State U.) on the Archaeology of Mission San Rafael Arcángel. Given in the Mission San Rafael Arcángel Preservation Foundation lecture series. For contact information, see entry for August 11, above.

November 18–19: “Second Wave of Modernism II: Landscape Complexity and Transformation” at MoMA in New York. 2nd program in series. Three groups of thematic presentations will explore designers’ return to modernist sites with new motivations: to balance complex values of cultural and cultural systems on residential, urban, and metropolitan scales. For information or to register: www.tclf.org.

* * * * *

“Gardens for Peace” exhibit, now through September: A display of various materials plus rotating digital images of over 900 designs submitted in 1987 for a proposed National Peace Garden for Washington DC, approved by Congress but not yet realized. At Environmental Design Library, Volkmann Reading Room, 210 Wurster Hall UC Berkeley.

Submissions due by August 1 for the 65th Society of Architectural Historians Annual Meeting, April 18–22, 2012, in Detroit. The Landscape Chapter’s pre-conference symposium, “Landscapes in Time” will be held on the 18th. If you are interested in making a presentation, papers can address but are not limited to the following topics: Physical time, Representations of time, Perception of time, Time travel, Topology of time - for further descriptions see <http://www.sahlandscape.org/>. One cited example is Ruth Shelhorn’s 1950s work at Disneyland, taking visitors back to small-town America. An abstract and a one-page curriculum vita must be submitted by August 1 to both susan.herrington@ubc.ca and sduempel@umd.edu. Speakers must fund their own travel and other expenses, and must be members of the SAH by 1 October 2011, but need not register for the main conference.

Submissions due by September 30 for “Islamic and Renaissance Gardens: A Case for Mutual Influence?” 2012 European Architectural History Network (EAHN), Brussels, Belgium (May 31, 2012–June 3 2012). Paper proposals and short CVs due by 30 September 2011 to Mohammad Gharipour: mohammad@gatech.edu and to Stephen Caffey, scaffey@arch.tamu.edu.

Websites/Archives to Visit

In past issues, I've mentioned the indices available through the auspices of the California State Library: the California Information File (1845-1985); the San Francisco Newspapers Index (1904-1949); the San Francisco Chronicle Index (1950-1980); the Biographical Files; and the Pioneer Card File. A recent revisit to the Library's online "California History Section" reveals an additional database that may prove of value to the landscape historian, the **Gladding, McBean & Company Archives Index**.

Gladding, McBean & Company began on 1 May 1875 in Northern California. A description of the archives on UC's Melyvl website states that Chicagoan Charles Gladding was visiting San Francisco in 1874 when "he read a newspaper account mentioning the discovery of an unusually fine kaolin clay deposit near the town of Lincoln in Placer County. Seeing an opportunity to supply building products for the rapidly growing West Coast cities, he convinced fellow Chicagoans, Peter McBean and George Chambers to invest in the development of the Lincoln clay pit into a manufacturing concern." Initially specializing in vitreous sewer pipe, by 1884 "the company began to diversify into the manufacture of architectural terra-cotta ornamentation.... The company had also developed other product lines over the years including roof tile [Stanford University], decorative tile [Oakland's Paramount Theater], even dinnerware under the Franciscan label." (Who does *not* recall the ubiquitous 'Desert Rose' pattern?) They created a line of ornamental garden pottery that included huge decorative urns, statuary, drinking and decorative fountains, birdbaths, benches, and tables. In October 1925, *Pacific Coast Architect* noted Gladding, McBean & Co. was moving their San Francisco warehouse and display rooms to a new location, which "gives far greater space for the storage, handling, and display of their various lines of clay products ... there is a miniature garden with lawn and shrubbery, designed for the display of garden pottery and furniture in a natural setting." The display garden was among featured illustrations in Edward F. O'Day's "Garden Pottery for the California Home," in *Architect & Engineer* 85, no. 1 (April 1926): 107-112.

In 1890 the company began using photographs as a communication aid between company craftsmen and site architects. "The photograph was sent to the architect who would indicate approval by signing the photograph verso. When the photograph was returned to the company, it would be placed in the folder with the rest of the documentation for that job order." Some 6,500 of these job files (ranging from 1888 to 1966) were acquired by the State Library. The online database allows you to search from your home by city or country, building name, client name, or architect's name to find a desired job. The job files may include drawings, photographs, estimates, and correspondence. A search for "MacRorie-McLaren" produced a citation for job number 1359, Yolo County Court House Garden Work in Woodland, project start date 1918. The record indicates that there are correspondence and photos filed in the manuscript box. Now it only remains to make another trip up to Sacramento to see the contents of the file.

For further reading, see Gary F. Kurutz's *Architectural Terra Cotta of Gladding, McBean* (1989). The Lincoln pottery is still in business, though under new ownership (Pacific Coast Building Products). In 1990 they began to reproduce their line of garden ware using the original molds and methods; the glazes have been reformulated to adhere to new environmental regulations, yet closely match those made in the past. Today the company is also involved in restoration projects around the country, such as the California Museum of Science and Industry in Los Angeles.

—Marlea Graham, Editor Emerita

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POSTINGS

A Message from the CGLHS President

In September, I will be joining many of you in San Luis Obispo for our annual conference. I have been attending CGLHS conferences for more than a decade; “Ranchos to Castles: A Tour of San Luis Obispo County” will be my 13th. Each conference has broadened my knowledge of the history of California, its cultural landscapes, and its gardens.

Every conference is a celebration of a specific place—an opportunity to see and understand how the larger landscape influences the agricultural, industrial, architectural, and political history of the area, and also ideas behind the place-making there, from city layout to private gardens.

I feel lucky to have delved into a bit of the essence of places and topics through CGLHS conferences: Pasadena, 1997; Los Alamitos, 1999; Monterey, 2000; San Juan Capistrano, 2002; San Francisco Peninsula, 2003; Riverside, 2004; Napa, 2005; Saratoga, 2006; Japanese-style gardens in Los Angeles, 2007; Lone Pine and the Eastern Sierra, 2008; Modernism in the San Francisco Bay Area, 2009; and Santa Cruz, 2010.

As with most things, the more I learn, the more I find to explore, and the more I look forward to future discoveries. Each year I eagerly await the next topic in our continuing series. It takes imagination, planning, and lots of hard work to compress the numerous site options to visit, the topics to explore, and the speakers to hear into a single weekend. Christy O'Hara, our conference convener, along with her committee, has worked for many months to distill the essence of the San Luis Obispo landscape to be presented over the weekend of September 9–11.

In this issue of *Eden*, our guest editor Christy, along with *Eden* editor Barbara Marinacci, offers a bouquet of articles—a glimpse at some of the sites to be visited, an in-depth exploration of how landscape crafted the city of San Luis Obispo, and a reading list to take you further. We hope you will enjoy this preview.

Please join us. For those who can't make it to San Luis Obispo, this issue will give you some idea of how its landscape history is both unique, and in many ways alike, other California landscapes.

—Judy Horton

CGLHS Board of Directors meeting: Friday, September 9, 9am-3pm, Santa Margarita Ranch, 9000 Yerba Buena Ave., Santa Margarita. Members are welcome, but space is limited. If you'd like to attend, please notify Board Secretary Ann Scheid at scheid@usc.edu or 626-577-7620.

Annual CGLHS Membership Meeting: Saturday, September 10, 10am, at the Dana Adobe, 671 S. Oakglen Ave., Nipomo.

Member News

Christy Edstrom O'Hara, Cal Poly SLO assistant professor and CGLHS Treasurer, published her article on the Olmsted Brothers and the Panama-California Exposition in the March *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*. She's to give a talk at the Garden Conservancy's seminar in Walnut Creek on July 15—on “The Rain in Spain: Moorish Lessons in Planting Design and Water Use.” The busy landscape architecture professor and garden designer is our 2011 conference convener and guest editor of this issue of *Eden*.

Marc Treib, CGLHS member and UC Berkeley professor emeritus, is editor of the new book *Meaning in Landscape Architecture and Gardens* (T & F Books UK, 2011), which has essays by Treib, Jane Gillette, Susan Herrington, and Laurie Olin.

Tom Brown, CGLHS's immediate past president, invites you to join him and landscape architect and watercolorist **Lisa Guthrie** from Sept. 19 to Oct. 3, 2012, “as we explore, sketch, and photograph the greatest gardens of central Italy. These gardens, full of fantasy, wit, and sensory delight, offer experiences out of the ordinary and have inspired artists and designers for over four centuries. These direct ancestors of today's theme parks have stories to tell, and landscape historian Tom Brown will relate their history, meaning, and features in illustrated orientation talks the evenings before we see the gardens.” The group will be based at La Romita School of Art, in a 16th-century monastery in Umbria, about 60 miles north of Rome. For more information or a brochure, contact lisaguth1@comcast.net.



On April 15 CGLHS co-sponsored The Cultural Landscape Foundation's program, held at the Southern California Institute of Architecture in LA, on “Landscapes for Living: Post War Landscapes for Architecture in Los Angeles.” It was arranged by Charles Birnbaum. CGLHS members Carol D. Bennett, Kelly Comras, David Streetfield, and Noel D. Vernon all were speakers. Photo of CGLHS board members attending the conference: Ann Scheid, Kathy Rudnyk, Libby Simon, and Kelly Comras.

Please send us news of your own recent accomplishments and future ones, as well as notices of coming events that other CGLHS members will want to know about. Write to eden@cglhs.org. Or see other contact information on page 30.



EDEN

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Eden: Call for Content

Eden solicits your submissions of scholarly papers, short articles, book reviews, information about coming events, news about members' activities and honors, and interesting archives or websites you have discovered. In short, send us anything pertaining to California's landscape history that may be of interest to CGLHS members. Also, more regional correspondents reporting on local landscape preservation concerns, efforts, and accomplishments will be welcomed, along with other relevant issues.

For book reviews, notices of interesting magazine articles, museum exhibits, and the like, please write to Associate Editor Margaretta J. Darnall, 1154 Sunnyhills Road, Oakland, CA 94610.

All other submissions should be sent to *Eden* editor Barbara Marinacci (see above contact information) Deadlines for submissions are the first days of January, April, July, and October.

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As a matter of policy, CGLHS does not share its membership lists with other organizations, and that policy extends to e-mail addresses as well.

California Garden and Landscape History Society (CGLHS) is a private nonprofit 501(c)(3) membership organization devoted to: celebrating the beauty and diversity of California's historic gardens and landscapes; promoting wider knowledge, preservation, and restoration of California's historic gardens and landscapes; organizing study visits to historic gardens and landscapes as well as to relevant archives and libraries; and offering opportunities for a lively interchange among members at meetings, garden visits, and other events.

The Society organizes annual conferences and publishes EDEN, a quarterly journal.

For more information, visit www.cglhs.org.

Locations & Years of CGLHS's Conferences:

- 1995 – Santa Cruz (founding)
- 1996 – Santa Barbara (Spring)
San Diego (Fall)
- 1997 – UC Berkeley (Spring)
Huntington Gardens, San Marino (Fall)
- 1998 – Sacramento
- 1999 – Long Beach (Rancho Los Alamitos)
- 2000 – Monterey
- 2001 – Sonoma
- 2002 – San Juan Capistrano
- 2003 – Stanford University (SF Peninsula)
- 2004 – Riverside
- 2005 – Napa Valley (10th anniversary)
- 2006 – Saratoga (Westside of Silicon Valley)
- 2007 – Los Angeles (for Japanese-style gardens)
- 2008 – Lone Pine and Owens Valley
- 2009 – UC Berkeley (SF Bay Area)
- 2010 – Santa Cruz (15th anniversary)
- 2011 – San Luis Obispo

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Beach along the Central Coast, below the Santa Lucia Range, north of San Simeon. Photo: Barbara Marinacci.