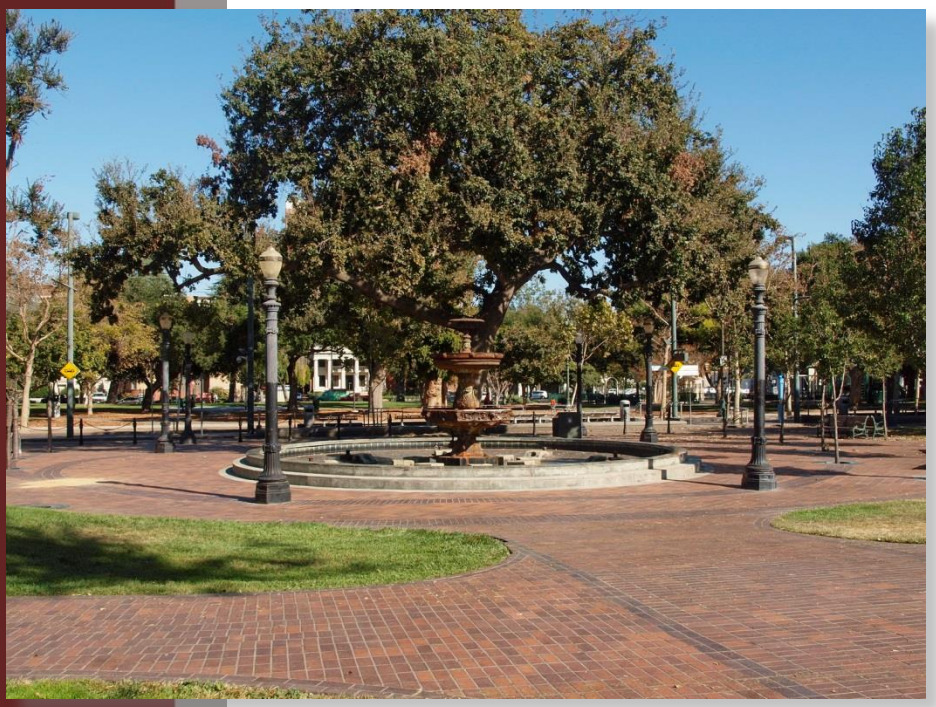
HISTORICAL EVALUATION

St. James Park Fountain
141-199 North Second Street
San José, Santa Clara County, California
(APN #467-21-014)



Prepared for:

David J. Powers & Associates, Inc.
Attn: Jodi Starbird, Principal
1871 The Alameda, Suite 200
San José, CA 95126

11.02.2015 (revised 01.16.2016)

ARCHIVES & ARCHITECTURE, LLC
PO Box 1332
San José, CA 95109-1332
http://www.archivesandarchitecture.com

Table of Contents

Cover image: 2015
(ARCHIVES & ARCHITECTURE photo)

Introduction

St. James Park, known before the 1880s as St. James Square, is a two city-block public park in downtown San José. Located between North First and Third Streets and East St. John and St. James Streets, it was mapped in 1847 and first developed with a park-like setting in the late 1860s under the design and guidance of horticulturist William O'Donnell. O'Donnell, who operated O'Donnell Gardens in San José, landscaped the Square under contract with the City of San José. One of the earliest parks in California, the site has evolved over time, and today continues to be an important landmark that conveys historic and community value to the downtown's sense of place.

Public controversy regarding park development has historically been a part of the public policy process involving St. James Park. Prior to the recent master planning that began in the 1980s under the mayoral leadership of Tom McEnery, the park has undergone four significant transformations since coming under public ownership, and has been the subject of numerous master planning studies.

The original fountain, centered in the park, was built in 1885 at the beginning of a Victorian-era makeover, and lasted around 50 years. It was demolished in the 1930s as a part of a Works Progress Administration project that involved other park improvements.

Photo of the original St. James Park fountain ca. 1900-1905, courtesy of San José Public Library digital collections.

In 1955, North Second Street bisected the park after a controversial public vote that passed with a slim margin. The street covered the area where the fountain had originally stood.

After more than 50 years without a water feature, the current fountain was installed between 1988 and 1990. The fountain was designed to recall, but not replicate, the 1885 fountain. It was intended to be a two-part water feature with a mirrored fountain to its east across North Second Street, but was never fully realized. Only one fountain was built.

Preservation of the park and its surroundings has always been a focus of the local history-minded community. The San José City Council first instigated a design review process for adjacent private development in 1961 as a means of protecting the park setting. During the 1970s, the advocacy group El Camino Trust for Historic Preservation,

in concert with a nationwide movement associated with the nation's Bicentennial, sought to gain historical status for the park and adjacent private properties. Park advocates unsuccessfully argued for removal of the North Second Street intrusion across the park and a return of the fountain. In 1979, St. James Square was listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

In 1982, with the adoption of the Horizon 2000 General Plan, the properties surrounding the park were designated an area of Historic Sensitivity. Two years later, the San José City Council designated St. James Square, centered around the park, a San José Historic Landmark District.

Project Description

The current project consists of removal of the existing fountain element within the water basin that is located near the center of the park west of North Second Street. The fountain is presently non-operational and is in a deteriorated condition. No further work is planned at this time other than filling the vacated basin cavity with decomposed granite. The project proponent is the Department of Parks, Recreation, and Neighborhood Services, City of San José.

Purpose and Methodology of this Study

This report, prepared for the City's use in conducting environmental review of the project to remove the extant fountain at St. James Park, seeks to clarify the historic context of this feature, determine if the fountain is historically significant and contributes to the historical status of the park, and determine whether or not the demolition could be considered to have a significant effect on the environment.

The report also addresses this action within the parameters of the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties and Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes*. Because the park is a historic resource under CEQA, any substantive changes to the site must be considered within the framework of the Standards and Guidelines, and is subject to review by the Director of Planning, Building and Code Enforcement under the Historic Preservation Ordinance. The changes must be consistent with the Standards and Guidelines to consider the changes to have no impact on the environment.

Previous Surveys and Historical Status

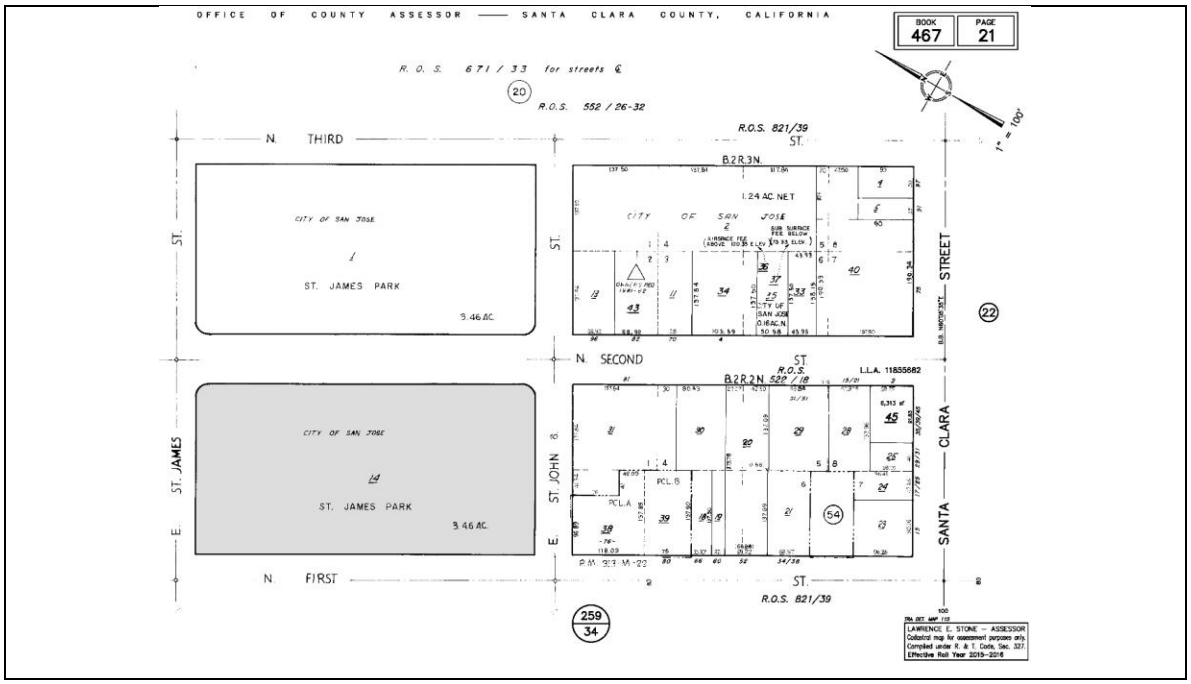
St. James Park, the focus of St. James Square, was first identified as a potential historic resource as a part of the 1961 *Preliminary Inventory of Historical Landmarks in Santa Clara County*. The County included the Square in its 1962, 1975, and 1979 Inventory listings.

The City of San José first identified St. James Park as a historic resource as a part of the 1973 "King" survey, the City's first citywide historic resources survey, and it was formally recorded in 1978 by Urban/Rural Conservation for the City as a part of the 1977-1979 survey that was the precursor to the City's Historic Resources Inventory.

On August 20, 1978, William N. Zavlaris and Patricia Dixon of Urban/Rural Conservation prepared an application for listing St. James Square on the National Register of Historic Places on behalf of the San José Historical Museum (a program of the Parks & Recreation Department of the City of San José). St. James Square was subsequently nominated to the National Register by State Historic Preservation Officer Knox Mellon on September 13, 1979 and listed by the Keeper on November 27, 1979 (#79000546). The areas of significance for the National Register St. James Square Historic District are Architecture, Community Planning, Exploration/Settlement, and Landscape Architecture, and the periods of significance are within the ranges of 1800-1899 and 1900-.[1]

In 1984, the San José City Council designated St. James Square Historic District (individually, as many of the adjacent historic resources had been previously designated as landmarks in the 1970s) as City Landmark District (HD84-36) under Resolution #57147 under the theme of *Social, Arts, and Recreation*. The period of significance for this designation is *Early American (1846-1870).*[2]

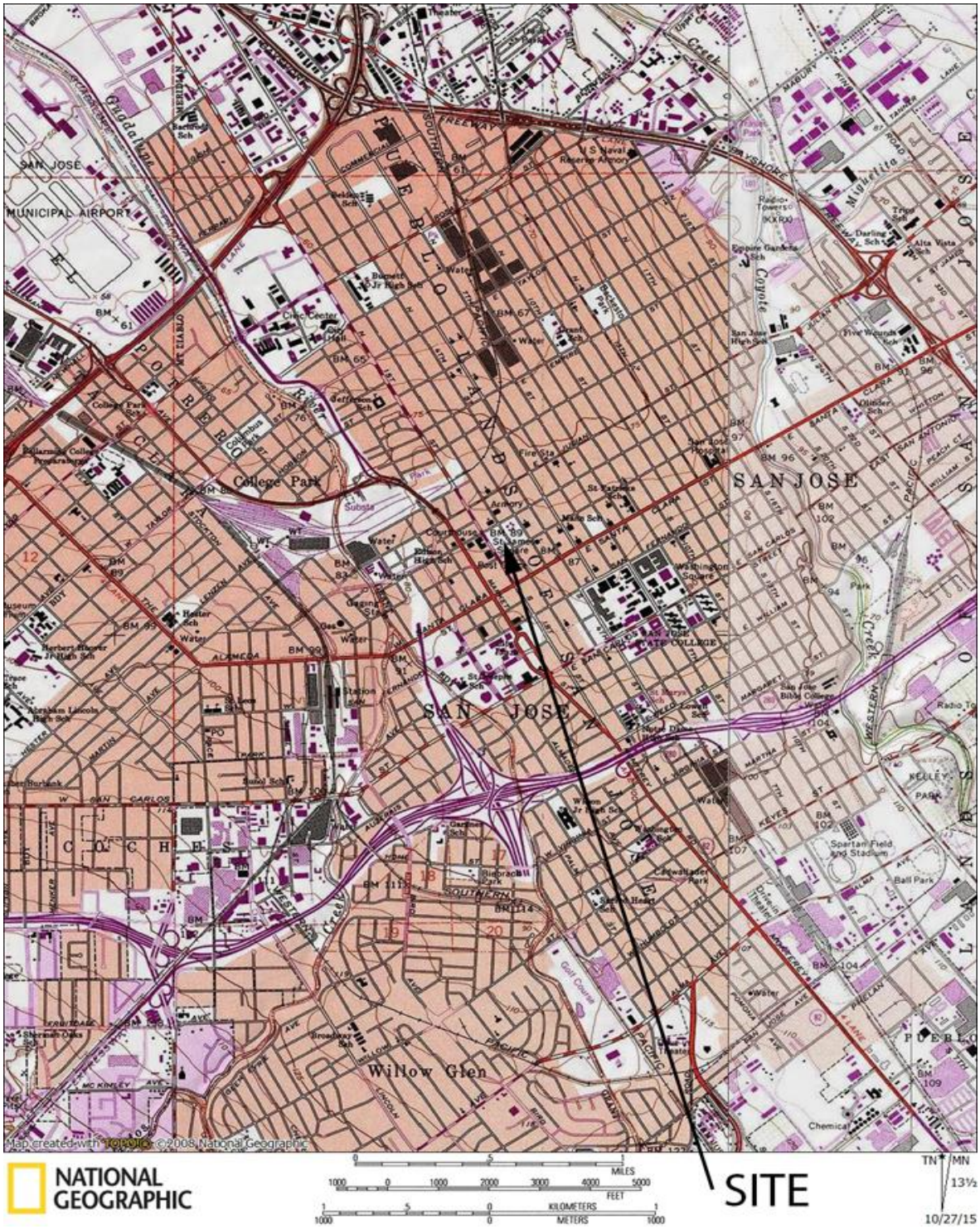
Assessor's Map



Assessor's map, courtesy Santa Clara County Assessor (shaded area contains fountain)

[1] The National Register nomination form in the late-1970s identified Period of Significance within century groups, with the last being the twentieth century (1900-).
[2] The St. James Square Landmark District period of significance is based on the date of the first plantings. The 2001 evaluation by ARG of the Master Plan Update did not revisit the period of significance. The Historic Resources Inventory narrative identifies the District's significant period as 1860s to 1930s. Further refinement of the Park's period of significance should be undertaken as a part of future park planning.

Location Map



East and West 7.5-Minute Quadrangles (composite), 1980 photorevised
UTM: 10S 598223mE/ 4133042mN

Summary of Findings

St. James Park is a historic resource under the California Environmental Quality Act. The fountain, however, is not a contributing historic feature to the park and historic district. The fountain, included as a proposed project in the 1985 Master Plan for the park and constructed during the park renovation from 1988-1990, was intended to be a part of a two-fountain water feature to recall but not replicate the earlier 1885 fountain that was demolished in the 1930s. The 1985 plan was not fully implemented, and only one fountain was constructed. The fountain was activated about 25 years ago and is no longer operational. It is suffering from corrosion, and the cast-iron fish with water jets have been removed.

An analysis prepared by Architectural Resources Group in 2001 identified seven major character-defining features of St. James Park. The fountain was not included among these major features. The 2002 Master Plan Update by Royston, Hanamoto, Alley & Abey for the San José Redevelopment Agency restated these seven character-defining features under the Existing Conditions and Analysis section as the features that must be retained in the Plan.

The 2002 Master Plan Update noted that the water fountain feature, consisting of a round basin, three central tiered bowls with spouts, and a number of cast iron fish with jets that spray toward the center (no longer extant), although only 12 years old, was deteriorating. The Plan states that an interactive water feature would encourage more activation of the park. The Plan recommends that the existing water feature (fountain) be retained in its current location and be repaired or replaced, and that an additional water feature be added across North Second Street.

The San José Historic Landmarks Commission reviewed the Draft Master Plan Update and its design elements, and recommended that the new interactive water feature on the east side of the park be circular in shape to reinforce the symmetry of the park, mirroring the existing fountain as had been planned in 1985. The fountain rehabilitation/replacement project and construction of a second water feature were funded however as a part of the later project implementation.

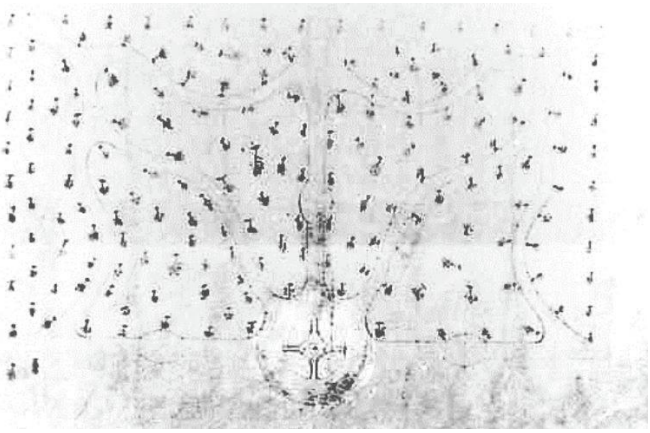
Current plans for this area of the park, if the fountain feature is to be removed, have not yet been developed. Although the 1990 water feature is not an historic element of the park, the historic context of this feature and its role in the evolving park design since 1885 imply that any substantive change involving the fountain should be reviewed under the Historic Preservation Ordinance prior to any action taken.

Plans for site work beyond temporary resurfacing with fill material must be reviewed for consistency with the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties and the Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes* prior to implementation. The review is not included in this report as no plans have yet been prepared.

Background and Historic Context

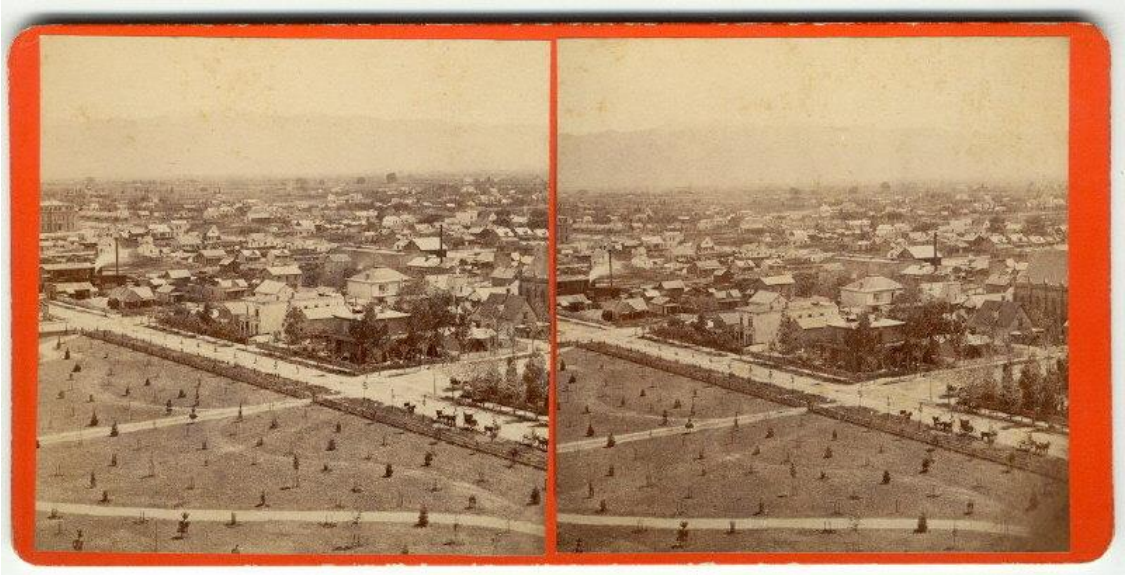
In 1885, when the City of San José had the original central fountain in St. James Square constructed, the region was experiencing a period of strong economic growth driven by the expansive horticultural industry that provided jobs in the new orchards and the areas first canning and packing plants. The three public squares that had been laid out in San José in the 1840s had matured into important urban places. In 1881, a new California State Normal School Building was constructed in Washington Square, and in 1887, San Jose's 1889 City Hall building was under construction in Market Plaza. With a growing sense of community, in 1887, the City Council began the planning to refurbish St. James Square, a 40-year-old community asset that had been first landscaped for public use in the late 1860s. In 1887, the responsibility for re-landscaping for all three of these early Squares was given to Rudolph Ulrich, a prominent landscape gardener (*San Jose Evening News* 06/15/1887).

The 7.7-acre St. James Square had been home to the City's second public school (St. James School) during San Jose's *Early American Period*. Shown on Chester Lyman's survey of the Town of St. Joseph in 1847, St. James Square had been under-utilized until the mid-1860s when Trinity Episcopal Church located adjacent to the Square and residential uses began to frame the boundaries.



William O'Donnell Plan for St. James Park in 1867. Image on file at the Smith-Layton Archives, Sourisseau Academy for State and Local History. This appears to be half of the park, and orientation is not known. A central feature of unknown characteristics is shown at the bottom.

City efforts to fully utilize the site began in earnest in 1866 with an unsuccessful proposal to locate the State Normal School within the square, and in 1867 the building that became the Santa Clara County Courthouse was constructed facing the Square, in hope of luring the California State Capitol back to San José. The Square was fenced in 1866 (remaining so until 1886), and in 1867, a park was laid out by William O'Donnell, a landscape artist and proprietor of the local nursery O'Donnell Gardens. Little is known about William O'Donnell. He reputedly also laid out Portsmouth Square in San Francisco during this time period, although historical documents indicate he was not properly recognized for this work. He also provided the first urban landscaping for San Jose's Market Plaza.



Early photo of St. James Park after landscaping (around 1869) showing tree planting, main crosswalks, and the beginnings of the perimeter wandering walkway. (Laffey Archives)

It is commonly thought that Frederick Law Olmstead designed St. James Square. In 1917, local historian Cora Older, author of the *San Jose Evening News* occasional column "When San Jose Was Young," stated that *Judge Richards is authority for the statement that Frederick Olmstead, the distinguished landscape gardener who laid out Central Park, New York, was brought here while a young unknown man, and he outlined St James square. Grass was planted, walks were laid out in 1868.* This story, although plausible, is not corroborated with any primary records from the time period or later. Most recent histories appear to be derivative of this 1917 Cora Older article; contemporary historians probably assume the association of Olmsted is correct because it has been repeated so often. In 2001, Architectural Resources Group of San Francisco contacted the Olmsted Archives and found no record of his involvement.

Olmstead's career as a landscape designer was launched in 1858 when he and Calvert Vaux won the commission for New York's Central Park. The design embodied Olmsted's social consciousness and commitment to egalitarian ideals, which marked his work throughout his career. He believed that common green space must always be equally accessible to all citizens, a concept fundamental to the idea of a "public park" that was innovative at the time. He briefly was in the West from 1863 to 1865, and when returning to New York, formed the firm of Olmstead, Vaux & Co. and embarked on a prolific career to become America's foremost landscape designer. Although headquartered in the East Coast, his firm was involved in many West Coast commissions. It is possible that while in California, Olmstead visited San José and suggested a park design concept to O'Donnell or local civic leaders.

Mostly trees were installed in the Square during the late 1860s as a part of implementation of O'Donnell's first landscape plan. Cora Older mentions Blue Gums (Eucalyptus) and Sycamores as the only trees within the park by the 1870s, but also

states that early photos showed evidence of larger "coniperous" (sic) trees. She also mentions that Australian rye grass was on the ground. By 1870, the Common Council awarded a competitive contract to O'Donnell to fully develop the Square, which included a botanical style garden layout of 250 trees. It appears that the original O'Donnell design was intended to create a natural setting with the thick canopy of shade trees. The downtown at this time was mostly barren of trees. In another article, Cora Older mentions that the first trees planted in the central part of San Jose during this period were Black Locust trees that were located along North First Street near present day. One of those trees appears to still exist in the parking strip near Taylor Street.

Stereo photo card of the new Courthouse with park plantings in foreground. (Laffey Archives)

By the 1880s, the park was dense with maturing trees. A *Mercury* newspaper article on February 19, 1885 states that "work has commenced on the fountain in the centre [sic] of St. James Park," and a month later, on March 18, the "jottings" column mentions that the fountain was being built by Lawrence Ryan. Ryan was a local bricklayer. These news articles are the first that refer to St. James Square as St. James Park, and by 1888, Common Council minutes had begun to formally refer to the site as a park.

Plans for a refinement of the park occurred around 1887 following a failed attempt to bisect the Square with North Second Street. The street extension had been advocated by a merchants group who sought to establish Second Street as the main north/south thoroughfare through the city. The Common Council hired Rudolph Ulrich, who had been working on the gardens at Del Monte Hotel on the Monterey Peninsula, to design and implement the improvements (*San Jose Evening News* 6/15/1987). As a part of this project, many of the trees were moved to other parks such as Alum Rock to break up the canopy that had quickly covered the Square in the preceding twenty years. The design maintained much of the original landscaping, but likely added at this time a more formal perimeter along North First and Third Streets where rows of palms were installed in the parking strip, funded by a nearby hotel owner. It is possible that the

Chinese Elms, the last remaining ones removed in 1990, were installed around this time, as well as the lush garden that surrounded the fountain. The design included metal park benches and raised beds.

Early twentieth century colorized photo postcard of the fountain.

Rudolph Ulrich (1840-1906) was a landscape gardener and designer who was living in Monterey at the time he was commissioned to renovate St. James Park in the 1880s. Born in Weimar, Thuringia, Germany, Ulrich immigrated to the United States in the mid-1860s and came to California in 1873. Hired to create a number of major estate gardens within the Peninsula during the 1870s, he was commissioned to lay out the grounds for the Hotel Del Monte in Monterey for the Southern Pacific Railroad Company[3]. The Del Monte (Park) features were said to have been modeled after several European gardens, including the gardens at Hampton Court Palace in London, England.

Ulrich is now recognized as one of the most prolific High Victorian landscape designers in California during this period. He *created exuberant, almost outrageous horticultural extravagances for three of the state's major resort hotels…he was an extremely competent horticulturist, capable of orchestrating complex arrangements of shrubs and trees that had bright flowers and highly varied textures* (Streatfield, 1994). Most known for his "Arizona

[3] The Southern Pacific Railroad Company's property division was Pacific Improvement Company. Ulrich's obituary states that he laid out the Del Monte Park, but may include other aspects of what is now Pebble Beach. Ulrich designed the acclaimed Arizona Gardens at the Del Monte in 1885, which are now within the Naval Post Graduate School.

Garden" designs, his California projects involved hotels, public parks, and private residential gardens. As described by Julie Cain in Pacific Horticulture:

> *Ulrich was particularly known for creating extravagant formal landscapes, comprising both native and exotic plants. He utilized a gardenesque style for many of his estate and hotel designs, displaying diverse botanical specimens in large areas of velvety turf. He used fountains, urns, and statuary as focal points in his landscapes, and often included artificial lakes and hedge mazes as additional design elements. - See more at: http://www.pacifichorticulture.org/articles/rudolph-ulrichs-arizona-gardens/*

Educated in Saxony, Italy, Belgium, and England, Rudolph Ulrich worked on several European estates before coming to America. By the early 1870s, he was working in the Bay Area on estates in the Peninsula and elsewhere. During this period and lasting to about 1900, the evolution of the California "tropical" gardens celebrating the inclusion of diverse plants from the subtropical and temperate regions were a result of advocates such as John McLaren. Large California gardens during this period were defined as "natural" but were based on Gardenesque and Pictureseque settings, often formal in layout. Ulrich's 1878 design for James C. Flood's Linden Towers in Menlo Park is a lavish example from this era, considered *an extravagant and flamboyant example, with a large cast-iron fountain and carpet bedding, beyond which were extensive groves of oak trees lavishly underplanted with ornamental trees and plants, flowers and beds of mosaiculture, and flanked by lawns containing exotic specimen trees. Ulrich was one of the first designers in California to use color in a consciously organized way* (Streatfield 1994).

By the 1880s, Ulrich's work on the Peninsula, including a high-profile commission for Leland Stanford's estate, had extended southward to the Santa Clara Valley, where he was commissioned for the landscaping surrounding the 1881 rebuilt Normal School. During this time, he was also commissioned to establish the gardens around Casa Grande in New Almaden. In San Jose he was hired for both St. James Park and the Plaza layout around the new City Hall. By 1890, he had designed the Hayes Estate south of San Jose, and in the 1890s and later after his well-publicized work on Del Monte, Ulrich's reputation had grown to the point that he was identified as a landscape architect rather than landscape gardener. He was commissioned for a wide range of major installations, including the Kearney Mansion in Fresno (1892) now in the 225-acre "Chateau Fresno Park." Ulrich laid out the design for this park and the 11-mile boulevard lined with alternating eucalyptus and palms interspersed with 18,000 white and pink oleanders leading to it. It was said that "at the turn of the century the park may have contained more species of trees, vines, shrubs, and roses than any equal area in the United States," and the *San Francisco Chronicle* called it the "most beautiful park on the West Coast."

Ulrich is also known for his work with Frederick Law Olmstead. During the 1890s, he worked at Olmstead's request as the Superintendent of Landscape for the 1893 World's Fair: Columbian Exposition in Chicago, and also was involved in the Trans-Mississippi in Omaha in 1898 and the Pan-American in Buffalo in 1901. Following the Columbian

Exposition, Ulrich returned to New York to become General Superintendent of Prospect Park in New York, later returning to California where he died near San Diego in 1906.

There is little evidence of Ulrich's work remaining at St. James Park, but photographs and postcards from the decades around the turn of the century hint at a robust Victorian garden centered in the park around the fountain.

By the end of the century, St. James Park had matured into a memorable Victorian-style urban landscape setting promoted in San José marketing literature and postcards. Major commercial and institutional uses began to develop at the perimeter, including additional churches, lodge halls, and hotels.

Early twentieth century image, sourced from San Jose City Historian Paul Bernal's Pinterest collection (accessed Oct. 29, 2015).

The original park layout by horticulturist William O'Donnell had been a response to naturalistic design types prevalent in the United States at the time. These Romanticist landscapes were characterized by curvilinear paths, picturesque views, and horticultural specimens that invited visitors to enjoy the space as a pleasure ground and as a stimulus for intellectual and artistic thought. The O'Donnell design attests to the influence of Romanticism of this era, with its perimeter walkways and dense plantings, but by the last decade of the nineteenth century, the City Beautiful Movement had led to a more formal landscape design vocabulary in urban centers. The straightened diagonal walkways and central fountain reflect this changing aesthetic, although the park, due to its dense plantings and curved perimeter walkways retained its more natural setting for many years. As the park evolved from an urban garden to a formal center of civic life, it

became home to a number of memorials and was often the site of public gatherings and important community events. A second attempt to bisect the park in 1929 was foiled by the Outdoor Art League, which rallied local women's groups in protest.

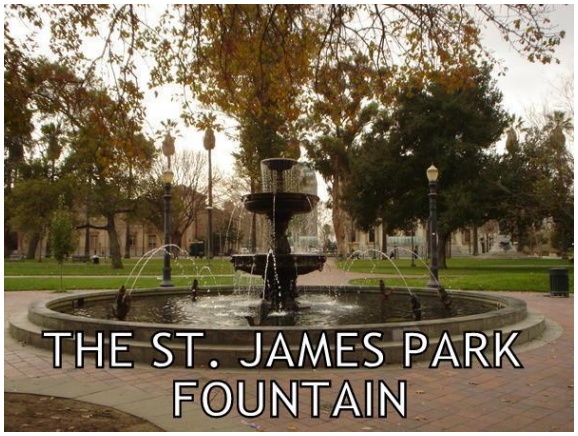
By the 1930s, due to the impacts of the Depression, the park began to be a draw to the indigent. The grounds were also the site of union rallies and other events of community importance. The concept of a new Civic Center was explored for the surrounding properties in 1931, but only a new WPA-sponsored post office was built. Another project of the federal Works Progress Administration brought men's and women's restrooms to the north and south ends of the park during this period, and the 1885 fountain was removed. The restrooms were removed in the 1950s.

Aerial photos in 1931 (prior to fountain removal and after), and 1948. (Excerpt from Fairchild maps at the California Room of the San José Public Library)

After World War II, local merchants again advocated for the extension of North Second Street through the park and construction of an underground parking garage to attract new development around the perimeter. The street proposal was controversial, but in 1954, the street extension was taken to a public vote and narrowly passed, setting the stage for the construction of the street extension in 1955.

Events in 1961 led to new interest in historic preservation, as the County of Santa Clara first initiated a survey of important historic resources throughout the region. The San José City Council responded with newfound interest in preserving the City's history, and expressed concern about the impact of new development on the historic qualities of the park. That year, the Council passed an emergency ordinance enacting design review over new development around the park frame (*San Jose Resident*, March 9, 1961). But by the late 1960s, after much controversy, the St. James Community Center, designed by the local architectural firm of Higgins and Root, was constructed in the park as an interim use, and added to the disruption of the original layout of the 1860s St. James Square.

By mid-century, the Victorian-era landscape designed by Rudolph Ulrich was gone. Community advocacy resurfaced in 1976 in an attempt to remove North Second Street and to re-introduce the central fountain in an attempt to resurrect the 1880s St. James Square design. In response to this advocacy, and to reinforce the City's concern about the adjacent buildings, the City initiated the listing of St. James Square on the National Register of Historic Places in 1978, in concert with a city-wide survey of historic resources undertaken by the Parks and Recreation Department.



Contemporary photo of existing fountain in operation, from san jose blog: http://www.thesanjoseblog.com/2010/04/from-sj21-all-about-kiosks-pt-ii.html (accessed Oct. 29, 2015).

The 1985 Master Plan proposed to unify the park by reducing the impact of Second Street. This plan was not fully implemented due to the introduction of the light rail, although a new fountain was constructed on the west side of Second Street reminiscent of the earlier fountain as a part of a two-fountain project that was never fully realized due to budget constraints. Other recent changes included diagonal curving walkways on the west half of the park, the controversial removal of the Elm trees in 1990, and the installation of a new children's playground in the southeast quadrant of the park.

Technical Description of Feature

The existing fountain consists of three tiered cast-iron basins set upon a tiled pedestal within a tiled pool.

The small top basin has a rolled lip with egg-and-dart pattern and a shell pattern beneath. This rests on a lotus blossom and fluted pedestal, with a narrow base that includes floral swags. The water originally flowed from all directions at this level.

The middle basin is ringed by a classical cornice, formed of flat fascia bands in varying sizes. The top rim is punctuated by eight lions' head fountains that once poured water from their mouths beyond the rim of the basin below. The underbelly of this middle basin is accented by a fluted shell pattern. It rests on a small band of egg and dart at the top of its pedestal. Immediately below this band is a ring of small vertical acanthus leaves that rest on a narrow cornice ring. Four large, vertical, acanthus leaves encircle the base of this pedestal.

The bottom basin is rimmed with a floral design that includes lions' head fountains, and fleur-de-lis, connected by vines of trumpet flowers of some kind and elongated flower buds. The lions' heads help form an octagonal design. The underneath of this basin is horizontal and rusted, so hard to recognize, but appears to be a series of huge acanthus leaves reaching outward to support the lowest basin. These features extend from a pedestal of much smaller vertical acanthus leaves.

At the base of the fountain is an octagon that was once ringed by lights and three-dimensional jumping fish, tails up and mouths facing outward. The fish element has been removed and the lights are inactive. The fountain is raised on an octagonal tile base that was designed to be fully submerged underwater. The large saucer-shaped main pool is tiled with ceramic or porcelain tiles in dark blue and black. Immediately surrounding the base of the fountain are concrete risers that once housed lights. At the outer reaches of the pool is another ring of concrete risers that provided a base for the former jumping fish fountains. The mouths once emitted streams of water that almost reached the base of the main fountain. The outer rim of the main pool is constructed of two granite steps and a granite cap that has a nosing over the tile basin.

The fountain is rusted, in a deteriorated state and inactive. Some of the ornate surface elements are separating from the substrate due to rust and the ornament is bubbling and flaking apart. Some elements are covered in dried minerals from the hard water that once flowed. Piping and fixtures are missing or damaged along with the architectural elements that once housed them. The fountain is in poor physical condition.

Character defining features of the Park

The historic character defining features of St. James Park were first generalized in the National Register nomination form prepared in 1978, and itemized by Architectural Resources Group as a part of their 2001 Historical Analysis. The seven character defining features are:

North /south, east/west axis paths.
Diagonal cross axis paths.
Circular features at the four corners.
An undulating path around the perimeter connecting the circular features.
Random placement of statuary and monuments.
Flat ground plane with a lack of topographical variation.
An informal planting scheme.

Evaluation for Significance

Policy and Regulatory Context

California Environmental Quality Act

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requires regulatory compliance in regard to projects involving historic resources throughout the state. Under CEQA, public agencies must consider the effects of their actions on historic resources — a project that may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an historical resource is a project that may have a significant effect on the environment (Public Resources Code, Section 21084.1).

The CEQA Guidelines define a significant resource as any resource listed in or determined to be eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources (California Register) (see Public Resources Code, Section 21084.1 and CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5 (a) and (b)).

The California Register was created to identify resources deemed worthy of preservation and was modeled closely after the National Register of Historic Places (National Register). The criteria are nearly identical to those of the National Register, which includes resources of local, state, and regional and/or national levels of significance. The California Register automatically includes properties listed in the National Register, determined eligible for the National Register either by the Keeper of the National Register or through a consensus determination, State Historical Landmarks from number 770 onward, and California Points of Interest nominated from January 1998 onward. Properties are also listed by application and acceptance by the California Historical Resources Commission.

City of San José Council Policy on Preservation of Historic Landmarks

The San José City Council's Preservation of Historic Landmarks Policy (adopted December 8, 1998, revised May 23, 2006) states *that landmark structures, sites and districts should be preserved wherever possible. Landmark structures, sites and districts are defined as any designated City Landmark or Landmark Site, any building and/or structure designated as a Contributing Structure within a City Landmark Historic District, any building, structure and/or site listed on the California Register of Historic Places or the National Register of Historic Places, any building or structure designated as a Contributing Structure in a National Register Historic District, or any building, structure and/or site that qualifies for any of these designations based on the applicable City, state, or national criteria.*

The policy requires that *proposals to alter such buildings, structures and/or sites must include a thorough and comprehensive evaluation of the historic and architectural significance of the property and the economic and structural feasibility of preservation and/or adaptive reuse. Every effort should be made to incorporate existing landmark structures, sites and districts into future development plans.*

Final decisions to alter or demolish a historic landmark or impact the integrity of a landmark site and/or district must be accompanied by findings which document that it is not feasible to retain the resource. The financial profile and/or preferences of a particular developer should not, by themselves, be considered a sufficient rationale for making irreversible decisions regarding the survival of the City's historic resources.

Historic Preservation Permit (Section 13.48.210 of the San Jose Municipal Code)

A Historic Preservation Permit is required for any work on a city landmark or in a city historic district according to the provisions of the applicable section of the Municipal Code. Work includes *any and all of the following: construction, reconstruction, alteration, basic color change, repair, rehabilitation, restoration, remodeling, or any other change to the exterior of any structure or any other similar activity. Work shall also include installation of new or additional pavement or sidewalks or the erection of new or additional structures. Work shall also include demolition, removal, or relocation of any structure or portion thereof.*

In taking action the Director of Planning, Building and Code Enforcement, or the City Council on appeal *shall consider the comments and recommendations of the historic landmarks commission as well as hear and consider all evidence presented to him or it at the public hearings. The director or the council on appeal shall also consider, among other things, the purposes of this chapter, the historic architectural value and significance of the landmark or of the district, the texture and material of the building or structure in question or its appurtenant fixtures, including signs, fences, parking, site plan, landscaping, and the relationship of such features to similar features of other buildings within an historic district, and the position of such buildings within an historic district, and the position of such building or structure in relation to the street or public way and other buildings or structures.*

Evaluation

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties and the Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes (Standards) provide guidance to cultural landscape owners, stewards and managers, landscape architects, preservation planners, architects, contractors, and project reviewers prior to and during the planning and implementation of project work.

The Secretary of the Interior is responsible for establishing professional standards and providing advice on the preservation of cultural resources listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. In partial fulfillment of this responsibility, the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Historic Preservation Projects were developed in 1976. They consisted of seven sets of standards for the acquisition, protection, stabilization, preservation, rehabilitation, restoration, and reconstruction of historic buildings.

The *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*, revised in 1992, were codified as 36 CFR Part 68 in the 12 July 1995 Federal Register (Vol. 60, No. 133) with an "effective" date of 11 August 1995. The revision replaces the 1978 and 1983

versions of 36 CFR 68 entitled The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Historic Preservation Projects.

The Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes illustrate how to apply these four treatments to cultural landscapes in a way that meets the Standards.

Projects that alter historic features are considered to have a potential impact under CEQA. Projects that are reviewed to meet the Standards can be considered as having been mitigated to a less than significant impact.

No Standards review is included in this report, as no project plans or other design proposal has been provided beyond the proposal to demolish the fountain.

Potential Impacts and Recommendations

The demolition of the 1990 fountain does not in-and-of-itself represent an adverse impact to the historic fabric of the resource, as it does not specifically affect an historic character-defining element of the larger park design (as defined by Architectural Resources Group and confirmed by Royston, Hanamoto, Alley & Abey in the Plan Update). That element, however, acts as a central focal point in the park, and provides a modern illustration of (or "placeholder for") historic spatial relationships, including a central focus for the diagonal paths. The fountain has a role in the evolving historic design context of St. James Park since 1885. The loss of the fountain would create a void in the park's design, literally and figuratively. Because a resource is considered as the entire composition of the property, not as a series of individual elements that can be reviewed separately in a design vacuum, the loss of any element must be reviewed for its impact on the whole. Current plans for this area of the park, if the fountain feature is to be removed, have not yet been developed. The lack of a proposed replacement element, or even a proposed replacement groundcover, is problematic for those who value the historic design integrity of the park. Each original historic element and each approved new element of a significant resource provides a piece of a puzzle that forms a larger picture. The larger picture conveys the authenticity and integrity of the historic resource. The void that will be left after the removal of the fountain must be envisioned and designed within the context of the entire historic resource.

It is understood that the removal of the fountain may indicate initial preparation for possible future alterations to the park. Plans for site work beyond temporary resurfacing must be reviewed for consistency with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties and the Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes prior to implementation.

Recommendations

It is recommended that a design proposal be prepared for the fountain area within a reasonable amount of time and that the proposed design be reviewed for compatibility with the Standards. A project that meets the Secretary of the Interior's Standards can be

considered to be mitigated to less than significant impact. Any design proposal should include plans and details that indicate the replacement materials, form, and detailing of the fountain area, and cumulative design effects with relation to the park as a whole. It is recommended that this design submittal, its projected date of completion, and design review should be made a condition of approval for the demolition of the fountain.

It is also recommended that the approval process for any future park proposal, whether directly located on the site of the current fountain or nearby in the park, should be linked to the final design approvals for any replacement design for the central area of the park that has been historically linked to a fountain feature, and that the cumulative effects of the various recent alterations including the previous removal of the Community Center complex be identified and considered as part of this possible future review process. The review is not included in this report as no plans have yet been prepared.

Although the current fountain is not a historic feature of the park, the role of the fountain during the historic development of the park is important. The seven character-defining features identified by Architectural Resources Group in 2001 (largely based on the 1978 National Register nomination) omitted the fountain, as the original fountain was/is no longer extant. No fountain had existed at the time of the National Register nomination or at the time of the City Landmark District designation. Master Planning activities and adoption of guidelines have since reinforced the historic importance of the no longer extant original fountain, and the 1990 fountain construction addressed to some degree a desire to replicate this important but no longer extant feature.

The partial removal of the 1990 fountain is being presented as an interim solution to addressing blight in the park and will be subject to further review within park planning—to be undertaken in the near-term future. Any substantive change involving the permanent removal of the fountain should be reviewed by the Historic Landmarks Commission prior to any action taken on a future Historic Preservation Permit by the Director of Planning, Building and Code Enforcement.

Sources of Information

Architectural Resources Group. *St. James Park Historical Analysis*, prepared for Royston Hanamoto Alley & Abey, revised June 13, 2001.

Basin Research Associates, Inc. *A Cultural Resources Assessment of Saint James Park Master Plan*, prepared for the City of San José, 1986.

Barnard, Sue. *South San Jose SUN,* July 14, 1976.

Boston, Linda S. Larson. *Highlights of San Jose, California's Saint James Park and Environs*. San José: Preservation Action Council of San José, 1986.

Cain, Julie. “Ulrich’s Arizona Gardens.” http://www.pacifichorticulture.org/articles/rudolph-ulrichs-arizona-gardens/ Accessed Oct. 26, 2015.

Cain, Julie, and Marlea Graham. “Rudolph Ulrich on the San Francisco Peninsula.” *Eden, Journal of the California Garden Landscape History Society*, Vol. 6 No. 3, Fall 2003. (see attachment)

City of San José, Department of Planning and San José Historic Landmarks Commission. *St. James Square Historic District Design Guidelines*. June 1989.

City of San José. St. James Park Master Plan. Prepared by MPA Associates, 1985.

Cultural Landscape Foundation. “Rudolph Ulrich (1840-1906).” https://tclf.org/pioneer/research-query/rudolph-ulrich-1840-1906. Accessed October 29, 2015.

Dill Design Group.

Historical and Architectural Design Analysis for a Proposed Playground located in St. James Park, San José, California, prepared for The San José Redevelopment Agency, September 2000.

Historic Resources Assessment, Expansion of the Century Center Redevelopment Plan Area and Mixed-Use Project, Downtown San José. Prepared for Michael Brandman Associates. 2002.

Douglas, Jack. *Historical Highlights of Santa Clara Valley*. San Jose: History San Jose, 2005.

Early, David E. “The War for St. James Park.” *SV Magazine*. Sept. 24, 2000.

Farrell, Harry. “No One Feels Neutral About St. James Park.” *San Jose News*, 1950.

Hall, Frederick. *The History of San Jose and Surroundings*. San Francisco: H.L. Bancroft and Company, 1871.

Hare, Alice. *San Jose and The Santa Clara Valley*. Brooklyn, N.Y.: The Albertype Co., 1903.

Hazle, Maline. “Downtown Park to Get a Face Lift.” *San Jose Mercury News,* 1988.

Historic Fresno. Kearney Mansion (1903). http://historicfresno.org/nrhp/kearney.htm. Accessed October 29, 2015.

Loomis, Patricia. “St. James Park: 102 Years of Historic Milestones.” *San Jose News*, Oct. 26, 1950.

Massachusetts Horticultural Society, Walter T. Punch, General Editor. *Keeping Eden, A History of Gardening in America*. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1992.

Moreillon, Stan. “St. James Park to Get Old Look.” *San Jose Mercury News,* 1986.

National Park Service.

National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form for St. James Square, prepared by William Zavarlis and Patricia Dixon, August 20, 1978.

Preservation Brief #36. Protecting Cultural Landscapes: Planning, Treatment and Management of Historic Landscapes, by Charles A. Birnbaum. ASLA.

Noticias del Puerto de Monterey / Monterey History and Art Association Quarterly, Vol. 53, Issue 3. "Landscaping the Gilded Age: Rudolph Ulrich at Monterey's Hotel Del Monte, 18880-1890."

Preservation Action Council of San José. *St. James Square Open House.* Nov. 10, 1990.

Older, Cora. "When San Jose Was Young, No. 330, St. James Square." *San Jose Mercury,* Nov. 17, 1917.

Rybczynski, Witold. *A Clearing in the Distance: Frederick Law Olmstead and America in the 19th Century*. New York: Simon & Schuster Touchstone Press, 1999.

San Jose Evening News / *San Jose Mercury Herald* / *San Jose Daily Mercury:*

"Jottings About Town." February 19, 1885, and March 18, 1885.

"Good Bye Old Fence." Jan. 9, 1886.

"Blue Grass and a Light." June 3, 1886.

"Around The Park." March 17, 1887.

"The St. James Park. Ulrich, the Gardener, Will Prepare Plans for the Council." June 15, 1887.

"Park Improvements." June 21, 1887.

"St. James Park. Improvements Being Conducted b a Master-Hand." Nov. 5, 1887.

"Common Council: Trees Ordered for St. James Park." December 31, 1887.

"We Can't Enthuse." Jan. 31, 1888.

"Our Beautiful Park." May 9, 1888.

"Monterey. Rudolph Ulrich, Who Recently Died, Was Landscape Gardener who Laid Out Del Monte Grounds." Oct. 28, 1906.

San Jose Mercury. Sunshine, Fruit and Flowers: Santa Clara County and Its Resources. San José: Smith and Eaton, 1895.

San Jose Weekly Mercury. "Plan Accepted," Jan. 6, 1870.

San José Redevelopment Agency. Saint James Park Master Plan. Prepared by Royton, Hanamoto, Alley, & Abey, November 2002.

San Jose Resident. Emergency Ordinance for St. James Square. March 9, 1961.

SPUR. *A Roadmap for St. James Park, A strategy for bringing St. James Park to life through innovative governance and stewardship*; a SPUR White Paper. August 12, 2015.

Streatfield, David C. *California Gardens: Creating a New Eden*. New York: Abbevile Press, 1994.

Taylor, Judith M., and Harry M. Butterfield. *Tangible Memories: Californians and Their Gardens 1800-1950*. Bloomington, IN: Xlibris, 2003.

United States Department of the Interior.

Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes http://www.nps.gov/tps/standards/four-treatments/landscape-guidelines/preservation_planning.htm Accessed October 26, 2015.

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties, 1995.

Qualifications of the Consultants

The principal author of this report was Franklin Maggi, Architectural Historian, who consults in the field of historic architecture and urban development. Mr. Maggi has a professional degree in architecture with an area of concentration in architectural history from the University of California, Berkeley.

Leslie A.G. Dill, Historic Architect, provided the technical architectural description for this report, and helped assess the project for impacts and prepared the recommendations. Ms. Dill has a Master of Architecture with a Historic Preservation Program Certificate from the University of Virginia, Charlottesville.

Franklin Maggi and Leslie Dill meet the Secretary of the Interior's qualifications to perform identification, evaluation, registration, and treatment activities within the field of Architectural History and Historic Architecture respectively, in compliance with state and federal environmental laws. CHRIS utilizes the criteria of the National Park Service outlined in 36 CFR Part 61.

Attachments

1. Summary of Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes (National Park Service)

2. The 2003 article in Eden, the Journal of the California Garden & Landscape History Society is the most comprehensive article to date on Rudolph Ulrich, the primary designer of St. James Park following William O'Donnell's initial plan and planting. It is attached to this report as an appendix.

Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes

Preservation Planning and the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes

Acoma Pueblo, [opposite] located 60 miles west of Albuquerque, New Mexico, is one of the oldest, continuously inhabited villages in the United States, dating back over 1,000 years. Many of its historic uses are still evident in the village today as reflected by the traditional construction of adobe-masonry architecture, outside ovens and outhouses. (NPS, 1996)

Careful planning prior to treatment can help prevent irrevocable damage to a cultural landscape. Professional techniques for identifying, documenting, and treating cultural landscapes have advanced over the past twenty-five years and are continually being refined.

As described in the National Park Service publication, Preservation Brief #36: Protecting Cultural Landscapes, the preservation planning process for cultural landscapes should involve: historical research; inventory and documentation of existing conditions; site analysis and evaluation of integrity and significance; development of a cultural landscape preservation approach and treatment plan; development of a cultural landscape management plan and management philosophy; development of a strategy for ongoing maintenance; and, preparation of a record of treatment and future research recommendations.

In all treatments for cultural landscapes, the following general recommendations and comments apply:

Before undertaking project work, research of a cultural landscape is essential. Research findings help to identify a landscape's historic period(s) of ownership, occupancy and development, and bring greater understanding of the associations that make them significant. Research findings also provide a foundation to make educated decisions for project treatment, and can guide management, maintenance, and interpretation. In addition, research findings may be useful in satisfying compliance reviews (e.g. Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act as amended).

Although there is no single way to inventory a landscape, the goal of documentation is to provide a record of the landscape as it exists at the present time, thus providing a baseline from which to operate. All component landscapes and features (see definitions) that contribute to the landscape's historic character should be recorded. The level of documentation needed depends on the nature and the significance of the resource. For example, plant material documentation may ideally include botanical name or species, common name and size. To ensure full representation of existing herbaceous plants, care should be taken to document the landscape in different seasons. This level of research may most often be the ideal goal for smaller properties, but may prove impractical for large, vernacular landscapes.

Assessing a landscape as a continuum through history is critical in assessing cultural and historic value. By analyzing the landscape, change over time —the chronological and physical "layers" of the landscape—can be understood. Based on analysis, individual features may be attributed to a discrete period of introduction, their presence or absence substantiated to a given date, and therefore the landscape's significance and integrity evaluated. In addition, analysis allows the property to be viewed within the context of other cultural landscapes.

In order for the landscape to be considered significant, character-defining features that convey its significance in history must not only be present, but they also must possess

historic integrity. Location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling and association should be considered in determining whether a landscape and its character-defining features possess historic integrity.

Preservation planning for cultural landscapes involves a broad array of dynamic variables. Adopting comprehensive treatment and management plans, in concert with a preservation maintenance strategy, acknowledges a cultural landscape's ever-changing nature and the interrelationship of treatment, management and maintenance.

Landscape Guidelines Home

California Garden & Landscape History Society

EDEN

Journal of the California Garden & Landscape History Society
Vol. 6 No. 3 Fall 2003

RUDOLPH ULRICH ON THE SAN FRANCISCO PENINSULA

Julie Cain and Marlea Graham

[For the benefit of those who were unable to attend the 2003 annual CGLHS conference, "Earthly Paradise: Garden History of the San Francisco Peninsula," held at Stanford University near Palo Alto in July, we have provided the following article loosely based on the text of the slide presentation given by Julie Cain.. It covers Rudolph Ulrich's career during the years he worked on the S. F. Peninsula, with a particular focus on the early landscaping of Leland Stanford's Palo Alto Stock Farm, and the restoration and preservation of the Stanford Arizona Garden.]

From the 1860s onward, many well-to-do San Franciscans were building summer "cottages" along the San Francisco Peninsula to escape from the damp foggy weather of the City. As newly wealthy businessmen began following this practice, these estates became increasingly elaborate in all respects, including their landscaping. It was the beginning of the "Country Place Era," where properties were typically modeled after European estates, comprising vast amounts of acreage with extensive gardens (both formal and informal), botanical collections, arboretums, conservatories, artificial lakes, enclosed deer parks, large stables, dairies, vineyards and farms. Several of these estate owners hired noted landscape gardener Rudolph Ulrich to create the settings for their immense new mansions. His elaborate and formal designs were particularly suited to the horticultural extravagances typical of the Gilded Age.

Ulrich was born in Weimar, Germany in 1840, the youngest son of a cultured family; his father was a musician for the archduke's court in Weimar, and his mother was a court singer. Landscape architect Stephen Child described Ulrich as "one of the best-trained men of his day." He worked on the great estates of Saxony, Italy and England, even serving a stint at the Belgian nursery of Louis Van Houtte before immigrating to America in 1868.

Flood estate, 'Linden Towers' (Britton & Reyes)

Ulrich's extensive training was reflected in the wide range of his abilities. His work most often embodied the European style of compromise between formal and informal that evolved in the late 1700s. Geometric and linear designs immediately surrounding buildings most often gave way to the gardenesque style, defined by Loudon in 1832, though others argued that it was a planting style and not a design style. Single specimen plants were arranged to grow so that none touched another object and each displayed its character to the optimum. This was most often done in a setting of lawn, with rare and unusual plants, shrubs and trees of the day being featured.

If the client's grounds were large enough, this setting would, in turn, gradually meld into more natural compositions celebrating the irregularity and beauty of nature. The naturalistic or picturesque style of landscaping was gaining in popularity through the work of such men as Frederick Law Olmsted and on the West Coast, William Hammond Hall, and John McLaren. However, many of Ulrich's wealthy patrons had spent time traveling in France, Italy and Germany, where they saw and admired the more formal style of landscapes, and wanted that same type of landscape for their own newly acquired properties.

Ulrich placed a great deal of emphasis on texture and color. His plant

palette included the use of natives and exotics of the day. The California climate allowed him to juxtapose evergreen conifers with semi-tropical plants such as palms, dracenas, and yuccas. He employed fountains, urns, and statuary as focal points in his landscapes. In addition, Ulrich was a master of mosaiculture (a three-dimensional form of carpet bedding) and ribbon bedding (plants placed in uniformly straight or flowing lines which would ultimately grow close together and form bands of color and texture). While the most elaborate of these designs were employed on the grounds of the Hotel del Monte in Monterey, where Ulrich spent 10 years of his career as superintendent of landscape, he was not averse to creating such designs for private estate gardens when clients requested them.

Ulrich did both design and installation, according to the client's wishes; he worked with turf, trees, shrubs (including formal topiary) and flowers. Arboretum collections containing a tree from every country in the world and displayed individually in a setting of turf were a popular conceit of the day for the wealthy, and Ulrich installed such collections for many of his clients. Even for the smallest of his private commissions, one may find remnants of such collections, most often one or another of the giant araucarias. At Kearney Park in Fresno, two long driveways lined with araucarias and palms have been preserved to the present day. Ulrich had a particular fondness for roses, not only in formal beds, but also trained to ramble into trees and across structures. Artificial lakes were featured in many of his landscapes, and he designed several mazes or labyrinths for both public and private grounds.

He also had the ability to design and build greenhouses for propagation purposes, and encouraged the larger property owners to do this routinely. His argument was that it would be more practical and cost-saving in the long run for each estate to become self-sufficient instead of relying on the products of commercial nurseries. Ulrich's design for greenhouses done in 1882 for the Casa Grande at New Almaden Mines in San Jose was found in Stanford University's Special Collections. One of his first tasks as Superintendent of Landscape at the Columbian Exposition in Chicago was the design and construction of several buildings to be used for propagation and winter protection of the thousands of plants needed to landscape the fairgrounds. A perusal of various collections of letters and other documents reviewed in connection with his work at Denver University, the Columbian Exposition and at Kearney Park, make it clear that Ulrich was also skilled at land survey work.

Totally unique to Ulrich were his signature Arizona Gardens, collections of cacti, succulents and other plants arranged in formal beds outlined by rock or shells. He was fascinated with desert plants and used them to create such gardens of varying sizes and complexity for both hotel and private estate clients, as well as for the 1893 Exposition. Only two of these designs are known to have survived to the present day – the one in Monterey on what used to be the grounds of the Hotel del Monte (now the Naval Postgraduate School), and the one at Stanford University.

On coming to California, Ulrich found work on several Peninsula estates, possibly starting in the early 1870s. A newspaper clipping from the *San Mateo Times Gazette* of 29 December 1877 informs us that "Mr. Flood contemplates building a house on his Menlo Park property the coming summer. Rudolph Ulrich, at one time gardener at D. O. Mills' and later at Latham's, is now engaged in laying out the grounds." Professor Streatfield's brief biography of Ulrich (in *California Gardens, Creating A New Eden*) suggests Ulrich began working for Mills as early as 1873, then Latham in 1874 and Flood in 1876.

The Mills estate consisted of some 1,500 acres. Mills was head of the Bank of California, and built himself a three-story, gothic-style Peninsula retreat (four stories if one counts the basement, and a set of twin towers technically extended the height by yet another). The adjacent conservatory was constructed on an equally grand scale. Designed to provide strolling space for dinner guests, it was equipped with a large fountain, wide paved walkways, and many exotic plants, including a notable collection of orchids. Propagation of plants was carried out in more utilitarian greenhouses placed elsewhere on the property. Surrounding both structures were curvilinear pathways, botanical gardens, an arboretum planted in extensive lawns – a symbol of wealth and abundance in the Mediterranean climate of California. One photograph that

Gardener Joe Miller dressed in his Sunday best for a photograph in the Arizona Garden at Hotel del Monte, Monterey [California State Library]

Formal planting at Senator Latham's 'Thurlow Lodge' [California Historical Society]

was found at the Millbrae Historical Society shows evidence of carpet bedding positioned near the conservatory. Local garden writer Florence Atherton Eyre (*Reminiscences of Peninsula Gardens from 1860 to 1890*), refers to a photograph showing the first known instance of ribbon bedding employed on the Peninsula – at the Millbrae estate. Another local garden writer later mourned the loss of Millbrae's park (and its magnificent collection of trees) to encroaching modern development.

In 1871, William E. Barron, formerly co-owner of the New Almaden Mines in San Jose, died, and U. S. Senator Milton S. Latham acquired his 380-acre estate at Menlo Park, naming itThurlow Lodge. While the estate already boasted many large trees and other landscaping, Latham immediately made plans to improve the grounds. In the process of remodeling the old house, it caught fire and burned to the ground in February of 1872. In May of that same year, the local newspaper reported, "When Mr. Latham commenced his improvements he stated that he proposed to lay out on his grounds $100,000. From the appearance of his buildings and parks, the fences he is building and the surrounding roads he is grading, we conclude he will spoil $150,000 before he drives the last nail."

A set of photographs by Carleton Watkins in the form of a commemorative album dated circa 1874 is in the Stanford University Special Collections. These photos show the many good-sized plants and trees already in place on the grounds. Also readily apparent is the installation of exotic palms and agaves paired in formal design framing an axial view to an ornate fountain, a great expanse of lawn puncuated with botanical specimens, assorted carpet beds, curvilinear pathways winding under the shade of large oak trees, a trout pond, and urns and statuary set at frequent intervals within the landscape. A relatively small rockery behind the house appears to have been newly planted with yucca, cacti, and succulents. This rockery has also been described as a "cockleshell" mount, because of the spiral pathway that wound around and up towards a rustic gazebo perched on the top. Professor Streatfield has suggested that this rockery could be viewed as a precursor to Ulrich's later full-blown Arizona Gardens.

James C. Flood built Linden Towers, the 2,500-acre estate where Ulrich is said to have worked from 1876-1879. Flood made his money in the Comstock Lode, and was known as one of the Silver Kings. His was the largest private home built on the Peninsula at that time, and was disparagingly referred to by some as "Flood's Wedding Cake" because of its extremely ornate architecture and unrelentingly white exterior. Working in this instance from a relatively blank slate, Ulrich landscaped the grounds with cream and gold flowers and shrubs to match the ornate interior of the house. Streatfield states that, "Ulrich was one of the first designers in California to use color in a consciously organized way." (*Keeping Eden, A History of Gardening in America*, "Western Expansion.")

Letters in the collection at the California Historical Society in San Francisco show that Flood had first approached William Hammond Hall with this commission, but Hall proposed very expensive grading to improve the absolutely flat property per the dictates of the picturesque style. Flood rejected this expensive plan and hired Ulrich instead. Based on a Britton & Reyes engraving of the property which appeared in an 1879 issue of *Harper's Weekly* (page 1), what followed was a perfect example of a gardenesque

Victorian landscape, containing rare and unusual botanical specimens displayed individually in lawn. The magazine reported, "The grounds are superbly laid out and enriched with the most exquisite bronzes and statuary, terrace walks, drives, serpentine walks, labyrinths, conservatories, fountains, and ornamental waters reaching down to the great San Francisco Bay." Unfortunately, to date no photographs or plans showing either the labyrinths or the ornamental waters have come to light. Though there is also no indication that Ulrich planted any sort of Arizona Garden at Linden Towers, there are photographs showing the use of succulents in carpet bed designs lining at least two different pathways on the estate.

Sometime in the early 1880s, and possibly earlier, Ulrich began working for Leland Stanford at his Palo Alto estate. Stanford had made a multi-million dollar fortune as one of several investors and builders of the first successful transcontinental railroad, a feat many considered the finest technological achievement of the 19th century. The Stanfords were close neighbors and good friends of the Hopkins' (who acquired the Latham estate soon after his death in 1883, renaming it Sherwood Hall) and the Floods, and would have been familiar with the landscape work Ulrich had done on each estate. In 1886, Jane Stanford wrote a letter to May Hopkins, from Washington, D.C. "My thoughts have gone so often back to dear Menlo and traveled through your grounds, your sweet house, also through the lovely grounds of our friend and neighbor, Mrs. Flood, and through our own dear place. I am there in thought more often than anywhere else, for there is no dearer place here on earth to us...The birds sing more sweetly there, and the trees and flowers are so much more beautiful." It's significant that Ulrich was the landscape gardener for all three estates she was referring to in this letter; clearly his design style resonated with the Stanfords.

The Stanfords had moved from Sacramento to San Francisco in 1873, where they built a mansion on Nob Hill. Photographs show us that the landscaping surrounding this enormous house was fairly modest (just a few foundation shrubs and some botanical specimens set in a sloping lawn), but several years later, a beautifully ornate glasshouse was added, and this contained many exotic plants.

Grounds of Stanford's 'Palo Alto' residence [SU Special Collections]

However, Jane and Leland did not want to raise their active son in a completely urban environment; they began buying property on the San Francisco Peninsula in 1876 and ultimately acquired some 8,900 acres there. One of the first pieces of property they purchased was a 600-acre estate located between Menlo Park and the nearby village of Mayfield. The previous owner, San Francisco businessman George Gordon, had named it Mayfield Grange. The Stanfords used the relatively modest house built on San Francisquito Creek as a summer cottage, and Stanford commuted to the City by rail when business was pressing.

Stanford had been raised on a farm and felt an affinity for agricultural matters his entire life. On his new estate, he created the Palo Alto Stock Farm, including two full-sized racetracks, where he successfully bred trotting horses and thoroughbred racehorses, many of which broke world records. The farm was used to raise several crops, including hay and sixty acres of carrots for the horses. A large artificial lake near the racing stables provided the necessary irrigation. The property name was derived from a nearby ancient redwood tree that was growing along the side of the county road. This landmark tree was widely known by mission travelers as *El Palo Alto*, which literally means "high stick" but is more commonly translated today as "tall tree."

The Stanfords had plans to build a larger residence farther away from the creek, complete with extensive formal landscaping, an arboretum, and an ornamental lake. Although a survey of the Gordon estate done by civil engineer Alfred Poett shows existing elaborate gardens surrounded the Mayfield Grange house when the Stanfords bought the property in 1876, they soon set about improving and expanding the grounds to suit their own tastes..

In 1879 and 1880 the *San Francisco Chronicle* carried a story of Stanford's plans that was also picked up by the *New York Times*. Both newspapers reported a large purchase of trees and plants from an unnamed Flushing, Long Island nursery, likely either Prince's or Parsons'. One headline reads, "Ex-Governor Stanford's Arboretum – Elaborate Plans For The Embellishment Of The Grounds Around His Pro-

jected New Residence At Menlo Park." Mention was made of Stanford's intention "to go on purchasing until he obtains every tree, shrub and vine, fruit and ornamental, that can possibly be made to grow on the soil of California." On this first visit, Stanford filled several railroad box-cars with approximately 5,000 plants.

Stanford's Arizona Garden at Palo Alto [SU Special Collections]

The 1880 survey of the Stock Farm shows that many of the first trees may have been planted close to the existing residence, along San Francisquito Creek, as there are several areas labeled "native forest and Eastern trees." There is also a series of carpet beds lining the driveway, one spelling out the name of the property, "Palo Alto" in flowers, flanked by two others with the initials "L" and "S" also picked out in flowers. Photos of the house and grounds show the use of topiary hedging and a large carpet bed that sported one of many Stanford garden statues as its center accent. Exotic trees and shrubs were dotted about the lawn; floral collars three rings deep encircled some of them. Leland Senior had a miniature train and accompanying tracks installed for his son's use. The track ran through the gardens close by the house and ended out at the house stables. Perhaps this was the first train garden! A 1908 survey of the property indicates there was a maze near the creek, but nothing else has been found to tell us when this was built or by whom. The work of laying out and planting the park was expected to take up to three years. While the *Chronicle* article states that such a vast project "requires a perfect mastery" of the gardening arts, an "intuitive prescience of color and effect, a perfect acquaintance with the nature of the various shrubs and trees to carry out these plans to perfect success," it gives no name for this horticultural genius, possibly because he had not yet been hired. The Arizona Garden and arboretum are the only surviving remnants of these ambitious landscaping plans.

Regardless of exactly when Ulrich began working for the Stanfords, the Arizona Garden he designed and planted for them had to have been installed at some point between 1881 and 1883, possibly at the same time he was putting together the Del Monte garden. Ulrich's 1887 letter to F. L. Olmsted mentions a previous plant-hunting trip that entailed bringing back 15 railroad car-loads of plants "which were distributed partly amongst the Owners, Del Monte, Golden Gate Park & Normal School of San Jose." Unfortunately, he does not specify the year in which this trip took place. Documentation from Monterey newspapers make it clear there were several such trips made, beginning in the fall of 1881. Since 1881 is the year Ulrich is known to have been hired to landscape the Normal School, it seems likely this is also when work was begun on the Stanford Arizona Garden. The 1880 survey shows no evidence of an Arizona Garden, despite detailing every tree and shrub that had been planted on the property up to that point, but it *is* in place on an 1883 survey. The garden was sited directly behind the area laid out for the clearly labeled "proposed new residence," which

SUSTAINING MEMBERS

Our heartfelt thanks to those members who have helped to put us on solid financial ground by becoming Sustaining Members at $50 and up.

Bayard & Nancy Allmond, Jr.
Helen Babb
Marie Barnidge-McIntyre
Carolyn Bennett
John Blocker & Thea Gurns
Roberta Burke
Susan Chamberlin
Betsy Clebsch
Carol Coate
Kathleen Craig
Beverly Dobson
Anne M. Dwelley
Betsy G. Fryberger
Virginia Gardner
Cathy Garrett
Marlea Graham
Bill Grant
Frances Grate
Katherine Greenberg
Laurie Hannah
Jill Hoeksma
Mary Pat Hogan
Judy M. Horton
Marge Howard-Jones
Gail Jansen
Peggy Jenkinson
Glenda Jones
Carol McElwee
Margaret Mori
Denise Otis
Michael James Rendeau
Ann Scheid
Jill Singleton
Roy L. & Janet R. Taylor
Judth M. Taylor, MD
Lucy Tolmach
Marc Treib
Dick Turner
Christopher Van Dyke
Lucy Warren
Jacquoline Williams

would have eventually been completely surrounded by extensive gardens, the arboretum, and the nearby vineyards. Ellen Coit Elliot, wife the university's first registrar, wrote that this garden had been planted expressly for the Stanfords' precocious only child.

The Stanford Arizona Garden is of formal design, elliptical in shape, and displaying quadrilateral symmetry in the placement of its various beds. The multiple use of saguaros was a key design element in the original garden. Photographs show they were used to line the main axis and most likely the edges of the exterior beds as well. Unfortunately, saguaros do not have a long life expectancy in this climate and soil, so none of them survived to the present day. The garden occupies 17,750 square feet and contains 58 beds of varying sizes and shapes. These beds were edged with serpentinite rock that was probably quarried locally. The carriage road that encircles the garden was lined with sandstone.

Ulrich purposely used other plants in addition to cacti and succulents in his Arizona Gardens. The word "Arizona" means dry or arid; thus the Arizona Garden means a dry or arid garden, not a cactus garden per se, and calling it "the cactus garden," as was later done at Stanford University, was a modern habit. The use of such disparate plants as Italian cypresses, blue spruces, araucarias, a wide variety of palms, and the herbaceous borders that lined many of the planting beds may strike a modern viewer as eccentric and inappropriate for a cactus garden. Ulrich was merely following Victorian design principals in using as many rare and unusual plants as possible. He was not concerned with modern issues such as xeriscaping or low maintenance. He was working in an environment where water and labor were limitless due to the wealth and resources available to his clients, and he took full advantage of those conditions.

The Stock Farm letterbook for 1884 has entries that show Ulrich traveling back and forth between Monterey and the Palo Alto Stock Farm. This was a period of major planting for the Stanford arboretum. Several newspaper articles indicate that some 12,000 trees were planted in this year. Survey maps show the position of these plantings, and the newspaper articles of 1879-80 tell how the planting was to be done, using eucalyptus as nurse trees to protect the tender exotics. Unfortunately, the intended eventual removal of the eucalyptus was not carried out accordingly to plan, so that they and the many seedling oak trees that sprouted over the years eventually smothered most of the rarer types. A few of the hardier ones still remain today.

The Stanfords took Leland Junior on a European tour some months before he was to enter Harvard University. He contracted typhoid fever and died in Florence, Italy

Working copy of the 1930 Arizona Garden Map [SU Maps & Records]

shortly before his 16th birthday, in March of 1884. All the plans for a grand new mansion and matching grounds came to an end because there no longer seemed to be any purpose to them. Instead, the boy's parents decided to build a university in his memory.

At this time, Ulrich's primary employment was as the superintendent of grounds at the Hotel del Monte. It isn't clear whether Ulrich did any more work for the Stanfords after 1884, though in his 1887 letter to FLO, he mentions another forthcoming plant-gathering expedition, and indicates his willingness to make a "collection for the University Grounds at Palo Alto" should that be thought desirable. In 1890 Ulrich received a commission to design and lay out the campus and adjacent residential grounds for Denver University. He resigned his job at Del Monte and prepared to move his family to Denver, anticipating that this would be a task of several years' duration, similar to what Olmsted was doing at Stanford University. However, changes in the financial climate resulted in the majority of the job never being implemented. Instead, Ulrich re-

ceived and accepted an invitation to work under Olmsted's direction as superintendent of landscape for the 1893 World's Fair.

Stanford University opened on October 1, 1891, and over the years, the Arizona Garden assumed its place in university cultural life and history. It provided many of the plants used for the first campus landscaping in and around the central quadrangle. The garden appeared in photographs published in pioneer biographies and accounts of the early university days. Writing about the arboretum in *Stanford University and Thereabouts* (1896), university registrar Orrin Elliot mentions in passing, "Near one corner is the Arizona Garden, with its bristling cacti and other uncompromising specimens of Nature's pessimistic moods." Student scrapbooks often included a snapshot of the garden, and local professional photographers produced souvenir postcards of it to sell at local bookstores and gift shops. The garden's most enduring role was as a popular courting spot for generations of Stanford students.

The last personal attention the garden received ended in 1925 when the two remaining Chinese caretakers (Chung Wah and Ah Wah) who were responsible for the upkeep of the original estate grounds retired and returned to China. Gardens are always ephemeral by nature and over its lifetime of 120-plus years, things inevitably changed in the Arizona Garden. It gradually ceased to be a focal point of everyday campus life and ultimately fell on hard times. Weeds were the least of its problems. It became a dumping spot for every manner of human debris. Numerous seedling oak trees sprouted in the garden, shading out the sun-loving plants, and eventually leading to their demise. The definition of rock-lined beds and pathways was buried deeply under leaf litter and wind-blown soil. The lack of proper drainage and occasional severely cold or wet winters led to more plant losses. The garden was no longer an attractive sight.

Fortunately, in 1997 Director of Facilities Chris Christofferson became concerned with the overall state of the area which includes the garden, the Stanford Mausoleum and the Angel of Grief (a large statue which Jane Stanford had erected in memory of her youngest brother). Restoration work on the Mausoleum and the Angel of Grief has now been completed, and the Arizona Garden is in the fifth year of an ongoing restoration and preservation project.

When the garden project was first begun, few records were readily at hand to provide guidance. Perhaps the most important of these was a 1930s plan of the garden which delineated the positions of the original planting beds. This plan had been done by someone in the University Grounds Department, and has proved invaluable to the overall integrity of the garden restoration. While the existence of a similar garden at Monterey was known of, there was no data about Ulrich and his involvement, or that the proper designation was "Arizona Garden." A visit to Monterey showed that a properly maintained Arizona Garden could be very attractive indeed, and inspired Stanford workers for the long task ahead. Historic records, maps, and photographs were uncovered in the Stanford archives. Excavation was undertaken to reveal the original rock that had lined the beds and pathways. Thirteen full-sized oak trees that had sprouted in these beds needed to be removed in order to restore the sunlight necessary to the survival of desert plants.

A plant survey was conducted. Of the original garden plants, there remained two tree-sized *Yucca filifera*, the palm of the center bed and two flanking palms at one entrance, several opuntias and agaves, and many yuccas, plus one or two evergreens and an araucaria that edge the perimeters of the garden. Since they have such a short life span in this soil and climate, it was not thought practical to attempt a restoration of the many sagauros used in the first garden. Because no original planting plan was found, land-

Conference members explore the Arizona Garden [Bill Grant]

scape architect Nancy Hardesty was hired to help devise a plan and plant list that would allow flexibility as to what and how plants are employed in the present garden. Many new species of cacti and succulents have been added over the past five years, as well as a few of the other types of ornamental plants Ulrich liked to employ. Sources such as the Ruth Bancroft Garden in Walnut Creek, Lotusland in Montecito, and the Huntington in San Marino have been tapped for donations of needed plants. Private collectors have also made valuable contributions. Two interesting recent acquisitions are the boojum tree and the spiral aloe.

Capably led by Christy Smith, a group of volunteers meets every third Saturday of the month to work on the garden. Tasks range from planting, pruning, transplanting, weeding, and plant removal, leveling of paths, winterization to ensure survival of tender or moisture-sensitive varieties, and continued excavation of rockwork for the more intrepid assistants. There is still work to be done, but at this point, much of the garden's former opulence has been restored. Because a portion of the Monterey garden was lost when a road was cut through it in the 1950s, the Stanford Arizona Garden is now particularly significant as the only complete remaining example of Rudolph Ulrich's work today. Long may it continue to flourish.

[The Stanford Arizona Garden is located in the arboretum to the west of the Mausoleum. Campus parking is readily available on weekends. On weekdays, there is limited metered parking at the Cantor Center for the Arts. The garden is a five-minute walk from there, heading due north (towards the Bay). It is open to the public daily from dawn to dusk. Some of the plants still needed to complete restoration of the garden are Aloe broomii, Brachychiton rupestris, Dudleya, Echeveria, Euphorbia royleana, Sedum, and Senecio. *If you have plants to donate (tax-deductible) or wish to join the volunteer work party, contact Arizona Garden Coordinator Christy Smith at christy.smith@stanford.edu or 650.965.3989. Two articles by Julie Cain on the history of the Stanford Arizona Garden and the Stanford arboretum (the latter co-authored by journal editor Roxanne Nilan) appear in the Spring/Summer 2003 issue (Vol.27 No. 2) of the Stanford Historical Society's journal,* Sandstone & Tile. *Subscriptions are $40. SHS, PO Box 20028, Stanford University, Stanford CA 94309.]*

REPORT: CGLHS 2003 CONFERENCE and ANNUAL MEETING

Our 2003 Conference and Annual Meeting were held at the Cantor Center for the Arts on Stanford University campus near Palo Alto in July. Despite some glitches along the way – like forgetting to put the address of the Center on most of the conference literature and in the newsletter! – this conference was a success, and that is largely due to all the members who helped out along the way. Anyone who thinks that good conferences just "happen" needs to know about all the hard work that went on behind the scenes. Particular thanks are owed to the following people:

Betsy Fryberger and the Cantor Center, for sponsoring us in this wonderful venue and providing the added perk of their display on "The Changing Garden;" Betsy F. again, for hosting our Friday evening cocktail party, and as our first speaker of the day; Jacki Williams, Susan Chamberlin and Laurie Hannah - publicity; Susan's husband, Joel - website; Laurie also made the name tags; Bill Grant - fielding enquiries; Glenda Jones - all details of registration; Betsy Clebsch - two of Sunday's garden tours; the garden owners for sharing their beauty with us, and Keith Park - guide at the Coonan garden; Julie Cain, Christy Smith, and Professor David Streatfield , speakers and garden guides; Margaret Mori, registration and relief guide at Green Gables; Barbara Worl and her able assistants Faith Bell and Virginia Kean for bringing Bell's Books to the conference; (we regret that Gretl Meier of Quest Rare Books was unable to participate - her husband has been very ill); Julie Harris and Mary Smith - preparation of breakfast buffet; Kathleen Craig, Margaret Mori and Noel Vernon - registration table; Noel for all the other instances where she pitched in to help as needed; all those who helped out in various ways at the cocktail party; Glenda and Carol Coate - garden group leaders; Julie Cain for finding an open bathroom on campus when it was really, really needed on Sunday morning; Glenda and Bill Grant - conference photographers; anyone else who helped with this event that we've inadvertently forgotten to acknowledge; and last but not least, thanks to two wonderful spouses who provided unending support from the "wings": Dick Jones and Gerry Flom. We couldn't have done it without all of you.

A rousing good time was had by all, in spite of such misadventures as being burned out of our Saturday night dinner location! Our undying thanks to those who attended with the expectation they would actually have a place to sit down while eating, and yet adapted so cheerfully to the last minute, rough and ready substitute site in a nearby public park. —*Conference 2003 Committee*