



December 2017 Holiday Party

Wednesday, December 13th, **Los Altos Youth Center, 1 N San Antonio Rd, Los Altos**

Please arrive by 5:30 pm if you can help with set-up

Agenda for the evening:

6:00 Hors d'oeuvres and wine provided by WHS board

6:30 Potluck Dinner (please bring dish to share if you wish to participate)

7:15 Tribute to longtime member Barbara Worl

7:45 Speaker: Phoebe Cutler, *Renovation of a Mission Garden*

8:45 Social time

9:15 Clean-up, *please stay to help with this if you can*

9:45 Close the doors

WHS will provide a turkey along with hors d'oeuvres, wine, hot cider and non-alcoholic beverages

Please bring a dish serving eight to share - side dish, salad, entrée, or a dessert. Bring your own plate and eating utensils.

Share the holiday spirit, bring canned or dried food for donation to Second Harvest Food Bank.

Program: Phoebe Cutler, Renovation of a Mission Garden



Phoebe Cutler

Phoebe Cutler is a landscape historian and author who resides in San Francisco. Phoebe has been working in the field of landscape history for 30 years. She is on the editorial board and is a frequent contributor to *Eden*, the journal of the California Garden and Landscape Society. She is the author of the book, *The Public Landscape of the New Deal*. She consults and lectures on subjects of the 1930's such as the National Park Service and CCC projects.

This evening she will be showing slides and discussing a landscaping project at Mission La Purisima in Lompoc, CA that took place from 1934 to 1941. There was a great deal of contention between federal and local authorities in how to restore this 1820 garden. The resulting restoration was one of the Calif. Conservation Corp's showcase projects.

The project involved two noted landscape architects from Berkeley and a well-respected English gardener, Edward Denys Rowe, from Santa Barbara. Various groups from Santa Barbara were involved. The idea was to plant native plants on the bare ridge behind and to recreate the mission's garden where the *lavanderia*, or laundry pond, was with historically appropriate plants. Olive trees were brought in from another mission. In spite of the difficulties in the execution, Phoebe describes the project in her book as "the most convincing 18th century landscape in CA."



Central courtyard at Mission La Purisima

October Speaker Notes

It's not often a member of WHS is invited to speak at our monthly meeting, but thus time we were delighted to hear one of our own, Roberta Barnes, present with authority "Pruning Shrubs"

Roberta began her talk describing the purpose of pruning being creating beauty or promoting health. As a subject near and dear to this author, I can certainly attest to this. Pruning is both horticultural science and a sense of artistry and beauty; a skill mix not readily attained. However, practice can make (near) perfect.

A quick review of tools used and demonstrated by Roberta includes: hand (bypass) pruners, a handsaw and hedge shears. Our speaker mentioned the importance of keeping the blade of pruning tools clean and sharp, as it greatly enhances the results.

Roberta provided our audience with a very handy sheet of pruning guidelines, one which I feel most of us will refer to for years to come. She also pointed out that the (often mis-) information that the public receives (often from nurseries) a plant's ultimate height and width can lead to poor pruning. The width factor is of primary concern; people often will shear a plant to death to fit it in a space where it had no business being planted in the first place. Removing the shrub is often a better solution, Roberta mentioned.

Speaking of shearing, Roberta pointed out that plants with close internodal spacing respond better to this than ones with longer internodes. In hedge pruning, Roberta advised keeping the top narrower than the bottom, both for aesthetic and health reasons.

Another area of pruning that Roberta touched on was plant types and the best pruning for each:

Mounding- selectively shorten branches inside of the shrub

Can growing- prune out old canes at the base to encourage new growth (i.e. Nandina)

Treelike- use thinning cuts, removing entire branches to the point of origin

Roberta also spoke about rehabilitative pruning, that is recreating a natural shape after years of shearing or other poor pruning techniques. Best left to an experienced pruner, it usually requires skillful thinning and removal of dead wood, not to mention patience. A "rehabilitated" plant worth saving might become a multi-year project, but if one has the time and interest, what better way to spend a few afternoons with some physical exercise to boot? ~Mark McCabe

November Speaker Notes

A great departure from our usual plants and practices, combined with an animated and inspiring speaker was our treat this month when Lisa Waud presented "Flower House: Beauty from Blight".

Ms. Waud is the founder and owner of Pot and Box, a floral design and horticultural décor studio in Detroit. Taking us through a multi-year journey from planning to installation, our speaker began with her inspiration. She wanted to do something on a grand scale similar to French designers like Christo and Raf Simons, whom she admired. Her idea was to decorate an entire house with flowers.

Not being able to shake this crazy idea, Waud began looking for abandoned homes for sale at auctions to construct her "Flower House" within her budget constraints. While dilapidated houses are fairly easy to come by in Detroit, the project that Lisa had in mind was anything but simple. A combination of headstrong determination propelled her to buy not only the "Flower House" but also the house next door as a practice house. This was the easy part.

Numerous slides depicting the advance decay of the houses clearly showed that Ms. Waud had her work cut out. Weeks of cleanup and shoring-up had to be done, along with many meetings with a structural engineer from the city(who, at the beginning of the project was very skeptical, but became a moved supporter, even writing a very touching poem about the final project.) Waud, with a knack for the theatrical, enlisted the public's support producing several videos, eventually catching the eyes of the likes of Martha Stewart, The NY Times, and 287 million viewers on the internet.

Lisa Waud's presentation was as much about an idea carried to fruition as it was about the successful 3 day exhibition itself, a magnificent expression of donated American-grown fresh flowers and plants. After listening to her speak, one came away impressed with a woman full of self-confidence yet engaging and not conceited. A proud resident of Detroit, Lisa Waud, gave her city a much needed P.R. shot in the arm showing what the beauty of plants and flowers can do for a community in need of so many things. I hope that she sticks around the motor city for a long time. ~Mark McCabe

November 2017 Plant Notes

Katie Wong from San Jose brought:

Hakea laurina (pin-cushion Hakea) - This fast growing, native SW Australian, evergreen tree or shrub belongs to the Protea family. It is a very beautiful and hardy plant and it grows best in full sun and in well-drained soil. You could try planting it in light shade, but the top might be sparser and it may not produce many or any flowers. It gets to be 18' tall by 8' wide. Katie likes to train it to be tall and narrow. Alternate green lanceolate leaves have simple margins. Fragrant red flowers begin to appear in the summer and fall followed by showy seed pods. In the fall your tree will have both blooms and seed pods on it.

Katie says that it is very easy to start from seed. Just wait for the seedpod to open and then plant the seed. It is frost and drought tolerant. Even though the flowers fade away after a day, the leaves are very long lived, sometimes lasting for months in floral arrangements.



Hakea laurina (Pin-cushion Hakea)

Nancy Schramm brought some nice examples of fall color from Gilroy:



Acer buergerianum (Trident Maple)

Acer buergerianum (trident maple) - This monoecious, deciduous maple tree is native to China and Japan. It grows in full sun to part shade (zones 5-10) in well-drained soil. It grows to be 25' tall and wide and can grow as much as 3 feet per year when it's young. It can be used as a specimen tree, in bonsai or you could make a hedgerow of trees with it. Some trees have been known to live between 50-150 years. The 3" glossy green trident leaves appear in the spring and are followed by both male and female tiny yellow flowers. It provides fall color with the leaves having a mixture of dark red, orange and yellow and the 1" long samaras falling in the autumn.

Crataegus phaenopyrum (Washington hawthorn) – This deciduous tree grows to be 30' tall and wide. It grows in full sun (zones 5-9) in well-drained soil. You can use it as a small shade tree, for Bonsai or en masse as a screen. The green, alternate, ovate, simple leaves are 2-4" long and have serrated margins. Showy and fragrant (some would say smelly) white blossoms start appearing in clusters in the spring and are followed by small red edible fruit. In the fall it provides good fall color as the leaves turn a copper tone. It provides food for birds and butterflies and the only downsides are that it is poisonous to dogs and has long ugly thorns.

Vitis vinifera 'Purpurea' (purple-leaf grape vine) – This vigorous deciduous vine can grow to be 30' long. It grows in full sun (zones 5-9) in well-drained soil and needs moderate amounts of water until it is established and then it can get by with occasional watering. Gorgeous 6" green lobed leaves start appearing in the spring. Flowers start appearing in the spring and are soon followed by clusters of blue-black grapes. It is one of the best vines for providing fall color and the leaves turn to a crimson-red in the fall. The grapes are sweet enough to eat off the vine and it makes great grape jelly.



Crataegus phaenopyrum (Washington hawthorn) & *Vitis vinifera* 'Purpurea' (purple-leaf grape vine)



Salix arenaria or *Salix repens* var. *argentea* (Argentea creeping willow or silver willow or downy-mount willow)

Salix arenaria or *Salix repens* var. *argentea* (Argentea creeping willow or silver willow or downy-mount willow) – This small dioecious deciduous shrub grows to be 3' tall and wide. It grows in sun to partial shade (zones 5-9) in well-drained moist soil. Small green oblong to lanceolate leaves turn to silver and have a downy/tomentose look to them. The plant either has female or male flowers and seeds are the result of fertilization by bees. Nancy rediscovered this survivor that she had brought from her dad's nursery and it survived in an orange pot for ten years until she took cuttings from it. Today she brought in the bright yellow male catkins.

The five to seven, palmately arranged leaflets start shiny green in spring and turn bright red in fall. Inconspicuous flowers are followed by small purple-blue berries in the fall that are enjoyed by many bird species. The berries are toxic for humans and the leaves may cause a rash. This ivy adheres itself to surfaces by its strong adhesive pads/disks at the end of the tendrils. Marks will not be visible when pulled off of stone surfaces but if pulled off of fences, small pad marks may be visible. To prevent fence damage cut the vine at the base and then the pads will deteriorate and fall off when they finally release their grip.

Parthenocissus quinquefolia (Virginia creeper or five-leaved ivy) – This prolific deciduous creeping vine can grow up to 50' high and 10' wide. It grows in full sun to part shade (zones 3-9) in any type of well-



Parthenocissus quinquefolia (Virginia creeper or five-leaved ivy)



Parthenocissus tricuspidata (Boston ivy, grape ivy or Japanese ivy)

Parthenocissus tricuspidata (Boston ivy, grape ivy or Japanese ivy) – This ivy has similar requirements and grows very similarly to the Virginia creeper. However, its palmately arranged leaves have 3 leaflets and turn a scarlet red to scarlet purple in the fall. Nancy has seen this used as a companion bonsai plant.

~Ana Muir

Plant Table

There will be no plants for sale at the December Holiday Potluck. Keep plants growing for our January sale! We welcome members' well grown plants and garden items for our Plant Table. Please remember that we need botanical names for the plants.

Thanks to all who donated plants in November. Special thanks those who donated garden planters and pots including Bob Young and Janet Hoffmann. ~Judy Wong

Get Your Propagation Suit On!

Everyone looks forward to the silent auction of Hot Plant Picks in April. But let's make our May plant sale at the WHS meeting just as special. Sherry Hall and I took many cuttings from Barbara Worl's garden in October, and will be bringing some of Barbara's plants to the plant sale table in May. We would like all of Western Hort to join us in this effort. Have you started seeds from one of Katie's plants? Have you started one of the abutilons from the armfuls from Ted? A salvia from Betsy? Got an extra orchid from one of Dick's plants? Please propagate some plant(s) that you've gotten because of WHS. Please label with both the plant name and the WHS member you got it from in the first place. Let's make our May meeting a time to share plants and friendships both. ~Nancy Schramm

28 Years Ago

Western Hort Society met in December, 1989 for "...our famous holiday party!"

But since I seem to be missing that particular newsletter, I'm glad I still have to catch up with the previous month's news. On November 8, 1989, WHS heard *For Succulents, Go to Madagascar*, presented by Inga Hoffman, a woman who "has been on plant-hunting expeditions all over the world with several botanic gardens". At the time she was a member of the International Organization of Succulent Plant Studies. Her talk was preceded at 7pm by a demonstration on grafting by Ed Carman.

Other announcements included requests for members to pay dues, a notice of the Heritage Rose Society meeting and plant sale, welcome to new members, and the presentation by Betty Young, WHS President, of the slate of five people for election to the board of directors. These fine people included Dorothy & David Rodal, Elizabeth Garbett, Roz Bray & Bob Young.

Many interesting plants were shown on the plant discussion table. Dorothy Rodal brought *Brugmansia versicolor* 'Frosty Pink', a richly scented selection with the color of "unripe watermelon", Sherry Austin brought *Hebe ochracea*, a New Zealand native with tiny, olive-green colored leaves. "For some unknown evolutionary reason this brownish color is common in many New Zealand plants." A lovely dwarf pomegranate, *Punica granatum* 'Nana' was shown by Bob Young. "The plant grows very slowly to five or six feet; 70 year-old plants of this size can be seen at Filoli, but it is easily kept to two or three feet by pruning. Claire Steede Butler brought *Chrysanthemum pacificum* "worth growing for its foliage alone" (Claire says it can grow nearly two feet tall) and a justicia, perhaps *J. rizzinii*. "Jean Struthers showed a lavender of unusual

foliage that she bought as *L. canariensis*...but is probably *L. multifida* v. *canariensis*. This lavender is a native of the Canary Islands. Betsy Clebsch shared six different roses that bloom repeatedly all summer in about three-quarters sunshine: 'Mme. Alfred Carriere', 'Mrs. Joseph Schwartz', 'Duchess of Brabant', 'Claire Rose', 'Mary Rose' and 'Iceberg'. One other "show-off perennial for a shady, damp place or container" on display was *Ligularia tussilaginea* 'Crispata' (probably from Dick Dunmire's front porch). ~Nancy Schramm

Upcoming Meetings

January 10, 2018 – Kate Frey, Sustainable and Organic Gardens, Hopland, CA
A Habitat Garden, by Design

February 14, 2018 – Mike Evans, President, Tree of Life Nursery, San Juan Capistrano, CA
Natural Gardens in Small Spaces

March 14, 2018 – Sue Bell, Garden Designer, San Jose, CA
Producing Food and Beauty Around Your Home

Strolling Around the Internet

Here is the second installment of plant lover's favorite websites and blogs. Please send me ideas for where YOU go to drool over plant pictures or to learn about what's new in the plant world! ~Nancy Schramm

Leslie Dean: likes Monterey Bay Nursery <http://montereybaynsy.com> for plant info and even Monrovia's website <http://www.monrovia.com> On the Monrovia site, you can try and do a search to find a plant that fits your needs. San Marcos Growers has this same feature but Monrovia has more plants, though many are not drought tolerant.

Ginny Hunt: suggests Plant Delights <https://www.plantdelights.com/> and Annie's Annuals <https://www.anniesannuals.com>

Lynn Chan: has recently been hooked on BBC Gardeners' World on YouTube <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCyPm93yd02fV5fwv3tV7TKw> for inspiration, fun, and some landscaping. She also discovered the USDA Agricultural Library with completely free searchable content <https://naldc.nal.usda.gov/naldc/search.xhtml>. What a goldmine of fun stuff to read!

Mary Kaye: "You might add fbts.com to your list. It is the site for Flowers by the Sea in Elk, CA, up in Mendocino County. I have ordered Salvias (their specialty) and been very pleased with the quality."

Margery Edgren: told me there is a website she likes for the sheer pleasure of looking at it. It's a wonderful, ongoing collection of alpine plants in their natural settings.

<http://botu07.bio.uu.nl/temperate/?gal=AlpenPix&id=3735>

Horticultural Happenings

Calhort's Annual Seed Exchange starts in January 2018 (Distribution will be in March 2018)

Requesting seeds is formally limited to Cal Hort members, however they have issued an invitation to **WHS members** who are not Cal Hort members to participate this year. At the beginning of January, the seed list is posted on line at calhortsociety.org, and the request form can be printed from that source. ~Dave Tivol

Wednesday, Dec. 6: Making a California Native Holiday Wreath, 6:30-8:00 PM, Pacifica Library, 1111 Terra Nova Blvd., Pacifica, Sherri Osaka or **Monday, December 18,** 7-8:30 PM, Sunnyvale Public Library, 665 W. Olive Ave., Sunnyvale, Deva Luna, sponsored by the Gardening with Natives group of the SCVCNPS. By selecting a variety of native foliage and berries from your garden, you can create a beautiful holiday wreath and recycle materials that you have on hand. Come watch while the speaker discusses what types of native plants to use, shows how to secure your greenery to a frame, and then demonstrates how to tie a big beautiful bow before hanging it up

December 9: Bi-monthly meeting of the Rare Fruit Growers of Santa Clara Valley, Emma Prusch Park San Jose. Open to all. Meeting starts at 1:00. Come early for chatting and snacking. Topic will be on feijoa with Mark Albert. If you have some feijoa fruit or some feijoa treats to share, please bring them!

The San Francisco Flower & Garden Show returns to the Cow Palace next year! Mark your calendars now: **April 4-8, 2018**. Western Hort will again present the highly acclaimed Hot Plant Picks exhibit at the show. This gives us the first look at some of the coolest plants around town. In addition, The SF Show is looking forward to welcoming a new highlight of the show—fourteen or more small, specialty nurseries. This exciting addition will pave the way to a renewed focus on plants at the Show. I will be working on my booth so we need WHS volunteers to help with the Hot Plant Picks. If you are available to help out in set up or during the show, please contact me! ~ *Nancy Schramm 408-847-2313*

Another Loss for the Horticultural World

On behalf of The Ruth Bancroft Garden and the Bancroft family, we are saddened to announce the passing of our beloved founder, Ruth Bancroft. Ruth, who was 109 years of age, died at home surrounded by family, and by the extensive, amazing private and public gardens she created and tended over 76 years of her lifetime. Mrs. Bancroft gained international recognition for her pioneering work in horticulture, demonstrating that a dry garden in the heart of a busy urban, inland corridor could be lush, diverse, and striking in design. Her garden was the inspiration for the founding of The Garden Conservancy in 1989, a nonprofit organization dedicated to preserving private gardens for public use. The Ruth Bancroft Garden was its first preservation project in 1992.

The Bancroft Family and The Ruth Bancroft Garden will host a celebration of Ruth's life in the Garden when weather permits in early 2018. Friends of Ruth and the family, supporters of the Garden, and admirers will all be invited to attend. In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations in honor of Mrs. Bancroft be directed to benefit the mission of The Ruth Bancroft Garden, Inc. at 1552 Bancroft Road, Walnut Creek, 94598 or sent to the Garden via the website: <http://www.ruthbancroftgarden.org/rbgard.../pages/support.html>

Volunteer!

Carrie Parker and Liz Calhoun have served out their terms as co-presidents and we thank them for all the work that they have done! However, if no one steps up this month, we are going to be without a president to take their place. We as a board have been seeking a replacement for the past 3 months (someone may already have talked to you about stepping up.) One alternative that we have been discussing is separating out the meeting set-up, AV, and take-down duties from those of the board president. So if you are someone who regularly attends meetings or can pair up with someone else so that one of you can commit to be at every meeting, perhaps you would like to be our new Meeting Coordinator(s). If you would be interested in this or joining the board or taking on the role of president, please contact any of the other board members listed below.

~*Janet Hoffmann*

Officers and Board Members:

Co-presidents: Carrie Parker and Liz Calhoun
Vice President: Judy Wong
Secretary: Leslie Dean
Corresponding Secretary: Laurie Scofield

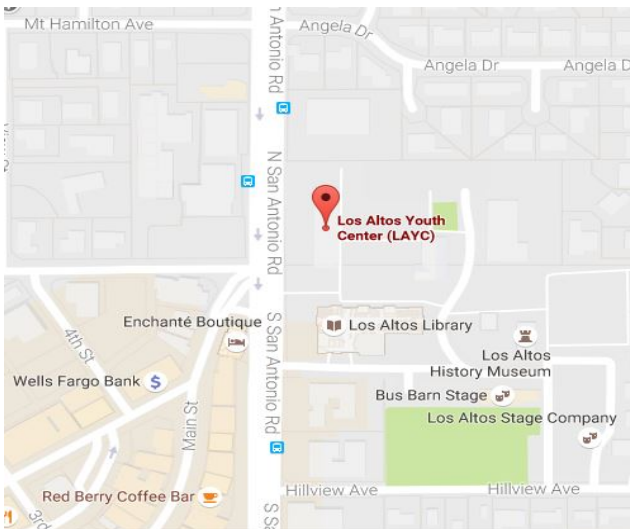
Treasurer: Jennifer Doniach
Other board members:
Janet Hoffmann, Laura Wilson, Katie Wong

About membership in Western Hort: To join or renew, send your name, address, phone number and a check made out to "Western Horticultural Society" to: Western Horticultural Society, **PO Box 166, Mountain View, CA, 94042. (Note: we have a new PO address)** **Membership Rates:** A one-year membership (Sep-Aug) includes four issues of Pacific Horticulture magazine. Regular membership is \$35, Family membership is \$50 for two or more members at the same address and a Student rate is \$20. **Please visit our website at [2017-18 WHS membership form available online here](#)** for a membership form. To contact us, please send email to: westernhortsociety@gmail.com or snail mail to address above



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First Class Mail

VISIT US AT WESTERNHORT.ORG



MEETING LOCATION
Los Altos Youth Center,
1 North San Antonio Rd.
Los Altos, CA 94022

Main entrance and parking are on the north side of the building. Turn off San Antonio at the sign for the City Hall and Police Dept.

Please look here next month for an update on our meeting location, which will be changing to a new location in Los Altos starting in January 2018.

Newsletter Submissions

The newsletter publishes on the first of the month. Due to the holidays the deadline for submissions for the January newsletter is **December 18th**. Submissions after this date will appear in the next month's newsletter as your editor is going to be away enjoying the holidays. Send submissions to: Janet@hoffmann.net, or Janet Hoffmann, 826 Lana CT, Campbell, CA 95008