

---

# Department Notes

---



## **"100 YEARS OF STYLE" SHOWN AT ROBINSON GARDENS BENEFIT**

FOR MORE than 50 years, Virginia Robinson held extravagant parties at her Beverly Hills estate, establishing her reputation as one of the most popular hostesses in Beverly Hills and Los Angeles society circles.

At the Virginia Robinson Gardens premiere benefit sponsored by Friends of Virginia Robinson April 9, the names and faces were different, but the event, "100 Years of Style," still bore the elegant imprint of the late Mrs. Robinson.

The spring benefit was held both to raise money for repairs at the gardens and to celebrate the 100th anniversary of J. W. Robinson's, the department store chain founded by Mrs. Robinson's father-in-law. Robinson's, a generous contributor to the gardens since Mrs. Robinson bequeathed it to Los Angeles County, underwrote the cost of the party.

"We feel strongly that there is a commitment to give back some of what our customers give us," Michael Gould, president of Robinson's, said during his welcoming remarks.

On the evening of the celebration, an enormous white tent covered the entire lawn between the house and the pool. Several alcoves led off the

main tent, one of which enclosed the reflecting pool and spotlighted fountain.

David Jones, a leading Westside floral designer and a Friends mem-

ber, augmented the foliage around the tent with potted trees and bushes used earlier at a party given for Queen Elizabeth. In the towering centerpieces that he created for



*Paul Selwyn (left) and his wife, Joan, (far right) president of the Friends of Virginia Robinson Gardens, welcome County Supervisor Ed Edelman and Mrs. Edelman to the Friends' premiere benefit at the gardens April 9. The gala event, funded by the J. W. Robinson department store chain, raised \$45,000 to be used in restoring the historic buildings and maintaining the gardens.*



each of the 48 tables, Mr. Jones combined bird's nest ferns, Japanese maples and English daisies borrowed from the Arboretum.

Before feasting on an epicurean dinner highlighted by chocolate horns filled with raspberries and cream, the 480 guests gathered around the pool for a show of fashions by Miyake, Perry Ellis, Rykiel, Armani, Versace and Jessica McClintock. Models in clothes ranging from bikinis to pleated gold lame floats paraded on three lighted runways across the pool and a series of ramps that lifted them halfway up the facade of the poolhouse in the background.

County supervisor Ed Edelman, honorary Friends president, congratulated the Friends on their progress at the Gardens.

"The Gardens form an important element of the county's system of arboreta and botanic gardens," he said. "The Department performs unique research and educational

services at this historically important estate."

Friends president, Joan (Mrs. Paul) Selwyn, summed up the event when she praised the dedication of the 160 Friends members and thanked the guests for supporting the benefit. Their donations, she said, will help restore the historic buildings and assist in garden maintenance and development.

### FLOWERS AND SURPRISES FILL CAF TRIP TO ANTELOPE VALLEY

**S**PRING SUNSHINE was already warming the air when 150 people boarded buses April 16 for a day-long tour of wildflower fields in the Antelope Valley. Abundant spring rains set the stage for a dazzling wildflower display this year but delayed the curtain raising, according to leaders of the tour sponsored by the California Arboretum Foundation.

"Wildflowers need not only rain to leach out growth inhibitors from

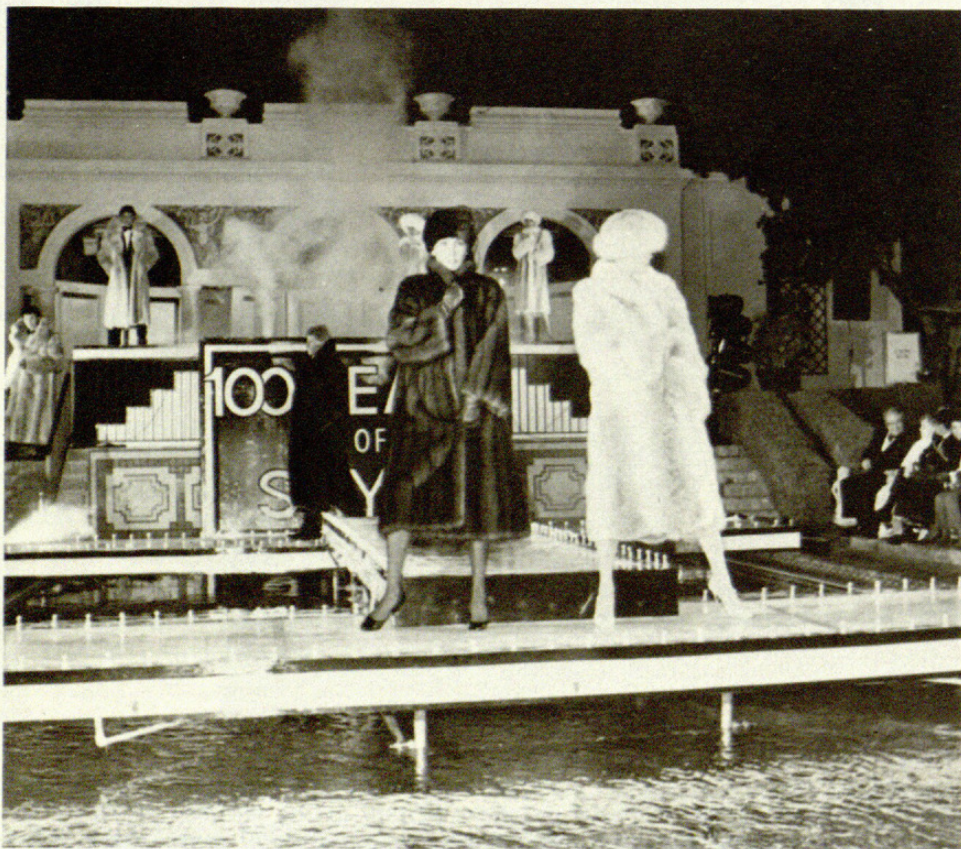
the seed coat but they also need sunshine to develop," said Suzanne Granger, Arboretum herbarium curator. Although the wildflowers were not as spectacular as they would be a week later, Ms. Granger considered this year's trip "a very nice show, nonetheless."

James Bauml, Arboretum senior biologist who led the other group, thought the display was impressive more for the wide variety of species blooming than for a profusion of flowers of any one kind.

The most unusual plant they saw was probably the squaw cabbage (*Caulanthus inflatus*). It is also called desert candelabra because the chartreuse stems look like tapering candles alight with intense wine-colored flowers at the tip. The only specimens of these eyecatching plants were seen near the Butte Valley Wildflower Sanctuary.

They did, however, find several widespread yellow carpets of common annual flowers during the 170 mile trip. Soon after entering the Antelope Valley they stopped to admire a field of tidy tips studded with the deep purple of wild hyacinths and heliotropes. The yellow flowers of tree poppies almost completely covered an old burn scar in the chaparral along the bus route. Later, near Saddleback Butte, they walked among golden coreopsis and goldfields. Just when all the strong yellow began to pall, a drift of delicate baby blue eyes appeared to cool the landscape.

Everyone had questions when, near Phacelia Wildlife Sanctuary, they caught sight of a series of floral bull's-eyes with clearly defined concentric rings of gold and purple around a center of waxy green. Ms. Granger explained that the creosote bush in the center releases a phytotoxin that poisons the soil around it, preventing other plants from crowding too closely and competing for water and nutrients. Since different plants vary in their sensitivity to



Models wearing designer clothes from J. W. Robinson pose on lighted runways over the pool with the poolhouse as a backdrop.





1983. "'100 years of style" shown at Robinson Gardens benefit." *Garden* 7(4), 5-6.

**View This Item Online:** <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/item/161526>

**Permalink:** <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/partpdf/125125>

**Holding Institution**

Missouri Botanical Garden, Peter H. Raven Library

**Sponsored by**

Los Angeles Arboretum

**Copyright & Reuse**

Copyright Status: In copyright. Digitized with the permission of the rights holder.

License: <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/3.0/>

Rights: <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/permissions>

This document was created from content at the **Biodiversity Heritage Library**, the world's largest open access digital library for biodiversity literature and archives. Visit BHL at <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org>.