

Virginia Robinson Gardens mansion refurbished

The historic home of Virginia Robinson now looks much as it did when her father, architect Nathaniel Dryden, completed it 78 years ago. Underscoring the timelessness of beauty, the reproduced color scheme looks surprisingly modern compared with the institutional gray that covered the residence when Los Angeles County inherited the Virginia Robinson Gardens a decade ago. It also blends well with the time-mellowed tones of the courtyard walls and playhouse facade.

Historically accurate colors were chosen after building restoration specialist Ron Reed completed extensive studies. Mr. Reed and historical architect Raymond Giregian even obtained specimens of the paint first applied in 1912.

The team determined that stucco surfaces of the house and walls had been a shade they describe as "bittersweet beige." A paler tint of the same color was applied to the balcony,

balustrades and columns. Wood trim around doors and windows was painted forest green and ironwork a blackish green.

The new paint finishes eight months of restoration work on the exterior of the main residence. Before painting, fissures in the surface of the cast concrete building were cleaned and filled with epoxy forced in under pressure. Badly deteriorated concrete balustrades edging the roofline were repaired or replaced. Weathered wood around windows and doors was restored and refitted.

Restoration of the interior and furnishings continues. So far 10 Persian and Islamic rugs have been cleaned and repaired with funds from the Friends of Robinson Gardens. The entire project has been financed with a \$65,000 grant from Los Angeles County and \$110,000 from the Friends.

Peacock Cafe renovation progresses



Concrete walls will buttress dining terraces when renovation of the Peacock Cafe is completed in late summer.



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