



**BROMELIAD SOCIETY OF GREATER CHICAGO**

# **THE BSGC NEWS**

**March/April, 2019**

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Lori Weigerding

The March meeting was canceled due to the inclement weather. The next meeting is June 9<sup>th</sup>. We will definitely need to work on the schedule for workers for the July 12th-14th show.

## *President's Column*

*Well what crazy weather we've had this year! Mother Nature can't seem to make up her mind what the temperature and precipitation should be. I'm so glad i called off the meeting this month, that snow storm was something else! It started out early as little flakes and soon turned to a big fluffy storm that covered everything quickly. Hope everyone's emerging plants survived!*

*Hopefully everyone will be well and the weather will cooperate. We'll have our next meeting in June and get prepared for the show in July. We won't be meeting in May as that's Mother's Day.*

*Wishing you all well and Happy Mother's Day! Look forward to seeing you all in June. Take care and be safe.*

*Lori Weigerding*

Steve and I went to a Bromeliad Summit held at Lotusland in California on April 5<sup>th</sup>. On the 5<sup>th</sup>, we were invited to Jeff Chemmick's Aloes in Wonderland. What a beautiful place. We saw many people there from various California bromeliad Societies that we knew as well as some cactus people from the Phoenix area.



Jeff Chemmick's Back Yard. It goes down from here



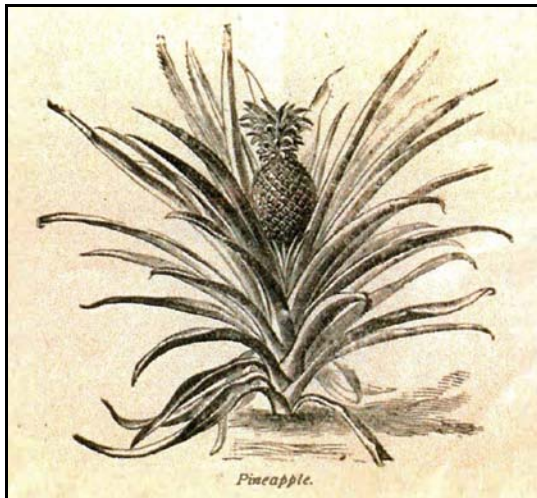
View looking out the entrance.



Cactus and Dyckias living together.

Lotusland is a non-profit foundation. One of the early owners of the Montecito property was Kinton Stevens who had his home and landscape design business on the site in 1885. He had the first catalogue in California devoted to tropical and subtropical plants. Steve purchased a reprint of his catalog from the Lotus land shop.

Here is the section on pineapple.



**PINEAPPLE.**

**Ananassa sativa.** (The Common West Indian Pineapple.) Large plants from one foot and a-half to two feet in height; will produce fruit in six or eight months; can be grown in sunny window in house or conservatory. Potted plants, 75 cts. each.

**A. Red Spanish Pine.** The hardiest of all the family; good for house culture. Potted plants, 50 cts. each.

**A. Black Spanish or Porto Rica.** The largest and finest variety grown; also the most difficult sort of all to have mature its fruit outside of bottom heat. Large plants, \$2 each.

**A. Green-leaved Sugar-loaf Pine Fruit.** Large and of pyramidal shape; flesh firm, deep yellow; fine-flavored; one of the best of the Ananassas. Potted plants, 50 cts. each.

**A. Egyptian Queen.** A good variety, and one that does well in house-culture. 50 cts. each.

**1893 Catalog Listings**  
**Inflation has come a long way from there!**

The last owner of the property was Ganna Walska who was born Hanna Puacz in Poland in 1887. She was an operatic singer in Europe and the U.S. She purchased the California estate in 1941 which was called Cuesta Linda at the behest of Theos Bernard who she later married and divorced. After the divorce she renamed the property Lotusland after the abundant flowers in the lotus pond. Madame Walska hired the well known landscape architect, Lockwood de Forest to renovate the neglected grounds. One of the things she had him do was find mature cactus to replace the traditional landscape in front of the house. Many were obtained from the estate of John Wright which was nearby. She consulted with Ralph Stevens whose father had previously owned the property. He had lived there growing up and later became the Superintendent of Parks for Santa Barbara. Some of the things he did was to oversee the construction of a new swimming pool with a shell-strewn beach, the creation of a Blue Garden and a horticultural clock.



Shell Pool



Entrance to the Main House

It was open to the public for viewing for the Annual Santa Barbara Garden Tour from 1943-1967. She also opened it for several benefit groups. In 1953, the Cactus and Succulent Society requested a tour during their biennial 1953 convention. Later the Bromeliad Society and Palm Society requested tours.

A stone mason, Oswald Da Ros obtained most of the stone that was added to the garden. He ordered the loads of blue slag glass from the Arrowhead Water Company which line many of the paths at Lotusland.



Lotus Land Plant Borders- Slag Glass

During the 60's Madame Walska began a collection of bromeliads. Most were purchased from Hummel's Exotic Garden in Carlsbad and Fritz Kubish of Jungle Plants and Flowers in Culver City. In 1968, she asked him to arrange them in the shelter of a live oak tree therefore creating the original Bromeliad Garden which could be viewed from the Pavilion. The Lower Bromeliad Garden was created by Charles Glass when the one near the Pavilion became over crowded.



Lotus Land Brom Tree



Note the Elephant Foot **Trees** behind the Bromeliad tree.

In 1972 Charles Glass and Robert Foster, co-owners of Abbey Cactus Gardens and Abbey Garden Press were asked to come and work in Lotusland since she bought many plants from their nursery. In 1973, they consented and began work on removing plants, amending the soil and mounded for better drainage. The beds were mulched with lava rock. Two years later they tackled the Aloe garden and raised the soil level even more. Glass later went on to create a cycad garden for her.

Ganna Walska remained active in supervising the garden until she became bedridden from a broken hip in 1982. In 1984, the Ganna Walska Lotusland Foundation assumed ownership after her death.

The garden brought her respect and recognition, something she did not find from her opera singing.



Ganna Walska believed in using a large number of trees together.  
This is a Dracaena Draco Forest!



Merritt S. Dunlap bequeathed his extensive cactus collection to the Garden. The construction began in 2003. As we visited, they were in the midst of reconstructing the Japanese Garden.

The Bromeliad Summit held on Saturday consisted of three seminars in the morning and three sessions in the afternoon with lunch and viewing the Garden for 2 hours.

The first seminar was Pamela Koide-Hyatt on the pre-conference tour she led with Jeff in May before the BSI 2018 WBC in San Diego. It was a super bloom year in Mexico. She was followed by Terrie Bert on the taxonomy of bromeliads and the many name changes that have been made recently due to genetic studies. Brian Kimble followed with his session on Puya which comes from South America.

In the afternoon, Terrie led with the distribution of some of the genera and the geographic ranges which gives us hints on how to grow them. She also talked about how long ago the different families were formed. Brian showed us many pictures of hechtias he had photographed while on trips in Mexico. He had asked Andy Siekkinen to help him identify some of them. This is one genus that requires much more study to identify and name many of the species. Pam finished the seminar with companion plants you can use in your California garden with your bromeliads. She donated tillandsias to everyone who attended.

Saturday evening we visited an estate St. Francis Ranch with many beautiful plants, a herd of zebra and some peacocks.

Sunday was a live auction at San Marcos Growers, two garden visits and then the nursery of Brian Kollenborn. I did not find any plants I wanted to bid on but Steve did get the book The Gardens of Southern California. Now I can find more gardens to visit. The two gardens we visited were very different. John Bleck is a collector and very concerned with the proper plant names. He said he would water some plants every other day because he had many bonsai and plants in small pots.. The second garden was a large estate where the owners hired a design architect as well as having gardeners. I bought Tillandsia magnusiana and a stand for it at the nursery.



T. Purpurea (Fragrant)  
donated by Pamela Koide-Hyatt to  
the Bromeliad Summit



John Bleck's Garden on the side of a Hill.  
The man must be a mountain goat to take care of  
it!



Even the space between steps is used in  
this Garden!



John Bleck Tillandsias



See more at the June Meeting!





Brom on a papaya stump.  
I hope it didn't stump you.



A delightful picture from  
Anne T Coughlan



Martha's T. Juncea



Martha's T. Juncea, side view

What do you have blooming? The dyckia I have planted in the ground here in Arizona started blooming at the end of February. The ones I have in pots bloomed March/April. The tillandsia junceas I got at the show last year have bloomed March/April.



Martha's Dyckia in Landscape  
Picture taken with Iphone by Martha



Martha's Dyckia flowers

Don't forget to renew your membership now, if you haven't already.

## Bromeliad Society of Greater Chicago Membership Application

(New Member) (Renewal)

Chose one below

Individual \$5.00 Annually Dual \$8.00 Annually

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

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Address \_\_\_\_\_

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Make your check or money order out to the Bromeliad Society of Greater Chicago  
Simply fill this form out and mail with payment to:

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