



GARDEN GAZETTE

The San Francisco Garden Club

Spring
2025

SFGC

Luncheon Meeting

Thursday, April 17

Presidio Golf &
Concordia Club

Calendar

April

Thursday, April 17

SFGC Meeting/Luncheon

Presidio Golf & Concordia Club

May

Thursday, May 15

SFGC Annual Meeting/Luncheon

Presidio Golf & Concordia Club

President's Letter



Dear Members of the San Francisco Garden Club,

I hope you are enjoying the March and April showers that will soon bring us beautiful blooms in May and throughout the spring and summer.

A heartfelt thank you to all our members, friends, and guests for your overwhelming support of our Ikebana Fundraising Event, “One World, Two Voices,” held on March 20th. As the SFGC’s first fundraiser since the 2020 COVID pandemic, organizing this event was an unprecedented challenge, requiring careful coordination of many moving parts. A four-hour event, held in an intimate venue with a maximum capacity of 80 guests and a large 8’ x 16’ stage, it was, by all accounts, a spectacular success! We raised an estimated \$15,550, with one generous member contributing an additional \$260 on the day of the event, bringing our net proceeds to \$9,000.

We were deeply honored to welcome the Consul General of Japan, Yo Osumi, and his wife, Misao Osumi, as our distinguished guests. A special thank you to Misao Osumi for her invaluable support in making this presentation possible by reaching out to the two co-presidents of Ikebana International San Francisco Bay Area. These two premier Ikebana masters, Mitsuko Suiko Maruyama and Ron Kodo Brown, captivated us with their dynamic demonstration, showcasing breathtaking arrangements while educating us on the principles of Ikebana and sharing little-known techniques for floral artistry. I encourage you to attend the Ikebana International San Francisco Bay Area presentations the 3rd Friday of every month, 12 PM - 2 PM at the County Fair Building in Golden Gate Park (1199 9th Ave, San Francisco).

Thank you to the “One World, Two Voices” committee members and allies:

Betty Voris (Chair) and Martha Woollomes – for creating a beautifully designed program.

Misao Osumi and Beverley Hayes – for their thoughtful table decorations, featuring Japanese-inspired centerpieces, books, and food items that enhanced the overall experience.

Betty Voris, Jane Evans, Gail McCollom, Lani Pringle, and Janet Cushing – for their warm hospitality, seamless registration, and expert coordination of guest seating.

Maureen Fox, Gloria Lynch, and Patti Mangan – for their diligence and hard work in managing ticket sales and guest counts.

Okada Ryan and Eva Monroe – for capturing numerous memorable moments through photography.

Tracey Lyons and the Concordia Club’s Event Staff – for creating a wonderful and welcoming space for our event.

Upcoming SFGC Programs:

April 17, 2025 – “An Unconventional Woman’s Vision for a Museum”

Presented by Virginia Ernster, a docent at the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco since 2011. With an impressive career as an epidemiologist and faculty member at UCSF School of Medicine, where she served as Chair of the Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics and Associate Director of UCSF’s Comprehensive Cancer Center, Virginia will present a fascinating discussion in honor of the Legion of Honor’s 100th Anniversary. Maureen Fox will introduce her at our program.

May 15, 2025 – Annual Luncheon Meeting

A cherished tradition, our annual luncheon encourages members to create and bring floral arrangements for a silent auction. This joyful event offers a wonderful opportunity to relax, connect, and celebrate together. Additionally, we will hold our Board Member elections for the 2025–2026 year—marking our 100th Anniversary!

Once again, thank you all for your unwavering support of the San Francisco Garden Club.

Remember to smile often, take care of yourselves and each other, and always show gratitude.

Happy Spring!
Verona



April/May Meetings



April 17th Program Speaker

Virginia Ernster

Docent Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco

Alma Spreckles

An Unconventional Woman's Vision for a Museum

Virginia Ernster has been a docent at the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco since 2011. Before undertaking the rigorous two year training program, she spent her career as an epidemiologist on the faculty of the UCSF School of Medicine, where she served as Chair of the Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics and Associate Director of UCSF's Comprehensive Cancer Center.

"Embark on a captivating journey through time and discover how one woman's bold vision brought European art to the heart of San Francisco. The Legion of Honor owes its existence to the vision of enterprising San Franciscan Alma de Bretteville Spreckels, who set out to build a museum to showcase French art and dedicated to the California men who died in France during World War I. This talk tells the fascinating story of how the museum was modeled after the Legion of Honor in Paris and would come to be built on a hill with a breathtaking view of the San Francisco Bay."

Fine Arts Museums San Francisco



Alma Spreckels

The Spreckels Sugar Company was founded by entrepreneur, industrialist, newspaper publisher, and railroad executive Claus Spreckels (1828–1908) in February 1899. He founded the company town of Spreckels, California, just south of the city of Salinas, California, in 1897. Claus Spreckels (born July 9, 1828 in Lamstedt, Kingdom of Hanover) was perhaps the most successful German-American immigrant entrepreneur of the late-nineteenth century. In 1908, Alma married the son of Claus Spreckels, Adolph B. Spreckels after a five-year courtship. Adolph was then head of the Spreckels Sugar Company.

May 15th Annual Meeting

Proposed SFGC Board of Directors 2025 - 2026

*Five positions to be approved at the
Annual Meeting on May 15th*

President: Lisa Harris (1 year to be approved)

Vice President: Beverley Hayes (1 year remaining)

Corresponding Secretary: Eva Monroe (2 years to be approved)

Recording Secretary: Tish Brown (1 year remaining)

Treasurer: Maureen Murray Fox (2 years to be approved)

Director: Allison Harrison (2 years to be approved)

Director: Lani Pringle (2 years to be approved)

Director: Ly Ly (1 year remaining)

Director: Jane Bradford Evans (1 year remaining)

Immediate Past President: Verona Boucher

Nominating Committee

Chair Bonnie Demergasso, Courtney Clarkson, Eva Monroe, Natasha Hopkinson, Lani Pringle

An Ikebana Journey



An Ikebana Journey



An Ikebana Journey

One World: Two Voices • A Successful Ikebana Journey

by Betty Packard Voris



“Elegant!” “Beautiful!” “They should take their act on the road!”

These were just a few of the comments following the conclusion of ONE WORLD: TWO VOICES, An Ikebana Journey. The sold-out San Francisco Garden Club fundraiser on March 20th took a circuitous path before reaching its goal at the Presidio Golf and Concordia Club.

The journey began in November when Beverley Hayes, program chair, mentioned that Misao Osumi, wife of the Japan’s Consul General, suggested having an Ikebana program. Beverley asked for help in contacting presenters and Misao talked to Mitsuko Maruyama and Ron Brown. Both agreed to present a program for the Garden Club.

Upon hearing that two prominent Ikebana designers were willing to present together, I said to both Beverley and Verona that this was more than just a simple monthly program, this was big. At the time the board was suggesting ways to raise funds for our philanthropic programs. “Make this a fundraiser,” I suggested. “This will give the members an exciting opportunity to donate.”

Misao, Beverley, Verona and I then took the idea to Ron and Mitsuko. Stunned, Mitsuko replied, “I would be honored.” “I would too,” Ron answered. As we were chatting about possibilities, Ron then offered, “This will be interesting since we have two different voices (of Ikebana).” I instantly said, “That’s it! One World: Two Voices.” And so it began....

The club board enthusiastically approved the program and planning started. Misao and Beverley would do the creative planning, including centerpieces, Verona and Betty, the details. All included several trips to the Presidio for planning with the staff. In order to give guests the best view possible, the decision was made to obtain risers. I chose the menu and began working with an outside company to recommend and supply the risers. Jane Evans, Lani Pringle and Gail McCollom began preparations for reservation name tags and welcome. Verona created a time table and kept everyone aligned and on schedule.

Misao wanted to donate the centerpieces and Jane agreed to place a dot under a saucer for a winner at every table. Martha Woollomes and I began work on creating the program handout. Mitsuko had a picture available but, because Ron did not, we took him outside into the Botanical Garden to pose for one.

Misao’s son, an art enthusiast, designed the centerpieces and Beverley and Misao carefully constructed them the day before. Delicate florals accented by a predominant rose were placed in three small wooden boxes from Japan, which actually are Sake drinking cups.

Maureen Fox kept track of reservations as they were paid. Premier seating rapidly oversold and committee members and their guests moved to the second row.

In the meantime, Mitsuko and Ron practiced several times in order to present both history and application of their respective disciplines.

March 20th arrived with the committee and presenters setting up, ready to go as guests lined up to enter. Beverley supplied Japanese cookies to enjoy. The no-host bar, which was scheduled not to open until lunchtime, quickly opened as enthusiastic guests began lining up at 10 am.

The Consul General of Japan, Yo Osumi, welcomed the audience with hope that the Japanese art of Ikebana would bring happiness to viewers. His wife, Misao, introduced Mitsuko and Ron. The Consul General’s enthusiasm spilled over into the program as presenter comments gave him the opportunity to add more insight with details. Especially interesting was that the number 4 in Japanese means fire and/or death and, like the #13 in the United States, is not programmed in elevators of hotels or buildings.

With humor interjected in their presentations, Mitsuko and Ron gave the audience a very personal peek into their friendship and a very informative concept of their “voice.” When first conceived, Ron commented that, although friends for decades, they had never presented together. His original idea that it would be exciting came through loud and clear. The final combination of their two disciplines meticulously shown in an amazing tropical display was greeted with thunderous applause. And so the journey came to a successful end.

While final tallies are not yet complete, approximately \$9000 will be available for this year’s community projects. Donations are still being accepted from those unable to attend or who would like to contribute to our mission of beautifying San Francisco.



SFGC Trip 2011

PHILADELPHIA FLOWER SHOW - "SPRINGTIME IN PARIS"

OUR TOUR TO THE PHILADELPHIA FLOWER SHOW WAS OUTSTANDING!

Clockwise from top left: SFGC members attending the Philadelphia show pose for a group picture; Bonnie Demergasso; Donna Kolkey; Nancy Hagopian; Eva Monroe, Bonnie Demergasso, Loraine Fulmer and Ann Funsten; a generous buffet luncheon was served at a historical home; Ann Funsten. Center: Eva Monroe and Sue MacDonald

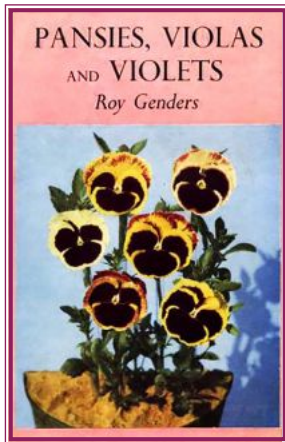


Horticulture Page

ROY GENDERS

Indefatigable English garden writer of the mid- 20th century

by Dr. Judith Taylor



If it be true that England is a nation of gardeners then it is equally true that garden writers must occupy a very special place in their hearts. Perhaps the most special place of all was reserved for Vita Sackville-West in the mid twentieth century. Given that she was a modern day female version of Lord Byron, it is not surprising that the class conscious British public was fascinated by her aristocratic glamor, vivid sex life and enormous literary talent. She and her husband, Harold Nicolson, had built the gardens at Sissinghurst Castle in Kent in the 1930s. The castle remains a place of pilgrimage to the present. In addition every week for many years she wrote the gardening column for The Observer on Sundays. No wonder the public sat back with its collective tongue hanging out.

Set this against a far different sort of writer who was working at much the same time. Roy Genders, 1913 - 1985, was almost the antithesis of Vita Sackville West. He came from a yeoman's background with many fewer advantages. In his day he was looked down upon scornfully by the horticultural taste-makers as the author of potboilers.

Refined gardeners read Christopher Lloyd, Miles Hadfield and Rosemary Verey. These were indeed excellent writers and made very important contributions to the field. This is slightly analogous to the gradations of taste among British gardeners. Many had a horror of vulgarity and saw the higgledy, piggledy collections of brightly colored flowers in a garden as beneath their contempt. If you have not read "Yew and Non-Yew" by James Bartholomew, I urge you to do so for further exploration of this theme. Of course, the cheerful homeowner in Pinner with his quarter acre filled with geraniums, snapdragons, delphiniums, carnations, marigolds and all sorts of other brightly coloured flowers did not know he dwelt in this outer darkness.

Roy Genders wrote books for this latter sort of gardener and they bought them in their thousands. The British Library at St Pancras has a copy of any book published in the United Kingdom. Roy Genders is listed more than a hundred and thirty times in its catalogue. Some of these entries are duplicates. While he is best known for his work in horticulture he was also an authority on cricket, fencing and dog racing. He knew about cricket first hand, playing both for Derbyshire and Worcestershire as a young man. What could be more bloke-ish than cricket and dog racing. He certainly had the common touch.

Experts consider his history of dog racing to be very sound. When he died one of the first places to publish an obituary was Wisden, the bible of English cricket.

Genders wrote about roses, annuals, bulbs, fruit trees, the cottage garden, scented flowers, herbs, growing mushrooms, creating cosmetics from nature, edible wild plants, dahlias, common annuals and many other topics all in the same down to earth, workmanlike prose, making everything clear. Each annual had its own back story of how it came to be in England and where it came from, making it much more interesting to the gardener. Many of his books also had apt epigrams of English poetry. He was particularly fond of John Clare.

It is partly because of who he was as a man that I am resurrecting his name at this stage. Such an enormous output of books indicates an extraordinary memory at the very least, something not to be sneered at. It is not clear how he came by all this encyclopaedic knowledge. Genders lived at a time when information was gained either from printed matter or the spoken word. The current short cuts using the Internet had not yet been invented. It was a slow, laborious process.

To correspond with one of his sons and learn more about Genders' daily life and activities has been a great privilege. The family had been in the timber business for some time but when Roy was born they were no longer so wealthy. His parents could afford to send him to private prep school where he shone at cricket. He joined the RAF at the beginning of WWII and afterwards began a business growing mushrooms. He also tried raising pigs with newly scientific methods, much to the annoyance of his deeply experienced neighbors in the country. The latter sniggered at how skinny Genders' pigs were.

His son William told me his father had a cherished collection of antique books about plants and gardens. They were the basis of his writing. He had a dedicated team of helpers which expedited his work: a devoted secretary who turned his longhand into typescript, a skillful photographer and a very acquiescent publisher. At various times Genders bought old properties which required a lot of work to become habitable. He enjoyed the physical labour. These were expensive whims and one of the reasons he had to produce so many books. He needed to pay the bills. One fixed business was very significant for him. He had a commercial nursery specializing in primulas and violets.

His book "Pansies, Violas and Violet" is on my desk right now. The jacket is enchanting. On page 12, he quoted Spenser, Shakespeare twice and Milton. This was no ordinary man.

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Spring Flower Show

Spring Flower Show & Silent Auction 2025

The SFGC has a tradition of members bringing floral displays and specimen cuttings for its Annual Flower Show Silent Auction.

Thursday, May 15

Flower Show & Silent Auction 10:30 am to 1:45 pm

Luncheon begins at 12:00 pm

Meeting to follow

Presidio Golf & Concordia Club

Cost: \$75

Members contribute floral arrangements and specimen cuttings for display in our Annual Flower Show. Available for the highest bid, any design or specimen can add beauty to your home or make an elegant gift. Plan to arrive early so that you can view the display and choose your favorite.

*Join the fun and complete the form below
Email to Janis Burke - kjmburke@gmail.com*

Spring Flower Show 2025

San Francisco Garden Club's Annual Flower Show Entry

Name: _____

Title of arrangement _____

I will contribute BOTH my design/specimen and container to the Auction _____

I will contribute ONLY my design/specimen (no container) to the Auction _____

Email to Janis Burke - kjmburke@gmail.com

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Garden Gazette

Spring 2025

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President: Verona Boucher
Vice President: Beverley Hayes
Corresponding Secretary: Eva Monroe
Recording Secretary: Tish Brown
Treasurer: Maureen Murray Fox

UPCOMING EVENTS AND DONATION OPPORTUNITIES

Regular Lunch/Meetings/Programs:

Social 11:30 • Lunch 12:15 • Presentation 1:00

If you prefer the vegetarian lunch, please advise Beverley Hayes:
beverleyhayes@sbcglobal.net by the RSVP date.

Thursday, April 17

Seated Luncheon Speaker Series Menu:

Chicken Enchilada or
Fiesta Bowl (V) Beans, Rice,
Roasted Vegetables, Cheese
Dessert: Chef's Bite Size Duo
Coffee or Tea

Cost \$75.00 per person
RSVP by April 7th - \$10 late fee

Thursday, May 15

Annual Meeting Luncheon Menu

Chicken Cobb Salad or
Sweet Potato Chickpea Bowl (VG)
Dessert: Chocolate Duet Cake
Coffee or Tea

Cost \$75.00 per person
RSVP by May 5th - \$10 late fee

Happy Easter
April 20



Name: _____

Phone # _____

Ways to pay

- Check sent to the SFGC Office
- On the SFGC website: sfgclub@att.net
- Through Zelle or PayPal

Donations

_____ The San Francisco Garden Club General Fund
_____ The Alice Eastwood Fund
_____ Civic Participation Fund
_____ In memory

GRAND TOTAL

Consider making a contribution to the Garden Club to support the Alice Eastwood awards for deserving students, or neighborhood beautification projects through Civic Participation grants.

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PLEASE INFORM THE

Corresponding Secretary Eva Monroe
by email of SFGC members' births, illness, or death,
so that the appropriate acknowledgment can be sent.
Email: evamonroe@me.com